The attempt to apprehend the components of a society as an intimate ecosystem has reached new dimensions due to the impact of science and technology over the new mechanisms of socialization, urbanization, and globalization. This impact shifted the social paradigms in unanticipated directions, as the new relationships are now increasingly determined by a clinical separation by lines of professional interests, hobbies, sports and cultural passions, at the expense of sharing an intimate space. At the same time, the new puzzles triggered by the empirical realities of the physical world, in concert with spiritual consciousness and cultural meaning, seem to converge toward a unified worldview. Therefore, new questions are now raised in reference to what it means to be a human being living in a holistic society of the 21st century.

Ioan–Gheorghe Rotaru is an educator and a theologian specialized in the philosophy of religion, human rights, church law, and the practice of religious liberty. He is an Associate Professor at 'Timotheus' Brethren Theological Institute of Bucharest, and an ordained pastor in the Adventist Church in Romania, North Transylvania Conference, where he worked for 18 years as director of the Public Affairs and Religious Liberty program. He holds two undergraduate degrees (Reformed Theology and Law), one masters degree (Theology) and two doctorates: a PhD in Philosophy (awarded by the Romanian Academy, in Bucharest, Romania) and a PhD in Theology (awarded by the Faculty of Orthodox Theology of "Babeş–Bolyai" University in Cluj–Napoca, Romania.) He also holds the degree of *Doctor Habilitatus* in Theology. Rev. Dr. Rotaru authored six books, and over 200 studies and scientific articles. He is a member in various scientific organizations, serves as a peer reviewer for over a thousand two hundred international journals and conferences, and is a member in various committees and academic boards in over forty countries. (contact: dr_ionicarotaru@yahoo.com)

Denise Elaine Burrill is a PhD candidate at CTS-IARSIC, CORHIS 7400, Université Paul-Valéry Montpellier 3, in France, where she is working on a doctoral thesis on networking for interfaith dialogue. Ms Burrill is a co-founder of the Institute for Peace Studies in Eastern Christianity (IPSEC), and currently serves as the Chair of its the Board of Trustees. IPSEC is a non-profit organization located in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and it is affiliated with Harvard Divinity School as a field education site. Ms Burrill holds a Masters of Liberal Arts in Management from Harvard University. Upon graduating from Harvard, she was awarded the Harold V. Langlois Outstanding Scholar Award for "demonstrated exceptional academic accomplishment and promise as a manager," and was the recipient of the Dean's List Academic Achievement Award from Harvard University. She has more than sixteen years of working experience in the financial and technology sectors. She has taught Business courses at Hellenic College in Brookline, MA, and currently creates and teaches MBA courses on Management, Human Resources, Organizational Behavior, and Leadership at Fitchburg State University in Massachusetts. She is the Company Project Manager at a Payroll/HRIS company in the Boston area. (contact: denise_simion@post.harvard.edu)

THE HOLISTIC SOCIETY:
MULTI–DISCIPLINARY PERSPECTIVES

Proceedings of Harvard Square Symposium

Volume 3 | Year 2017

Scientific Editors

Ioan–Gheorghe Rotaru
Denise Elaine Burrill

The Scientific Press, Cambridge, MA

Foreword

The attempt to apprehend the components of a society as an intimate ecosystem has reached new dimensions due to the impact of science and technology over the new mechanisms of socialization, urbanization, and globalization. This impact shifted the social paradigms in unanticipated directions, as the new relationships are now increasingly determined by a clinical separation by lines of networks of professional interests, hobbies, beliefs, sports, politics, and cultural passions.

At the same time, new puzzles triggered by the empirical realities of the physical world, in concert with spiritual consciousness and cultural meaning, seem to propose a new convergence of variables meant to promote a unified worldview.

Under the action of such variables, the world becomes increasingly stretched and compressed by movements of trendy mercantilism, political extremities, new military alliances, conflict and economic migration, predictable and unpredictable leaders, and organized religions which are increasingly abandoned in favor of individual spiritualities. National societies are subjected to severe stress tests of identity, and the original sense of patriotism is impaired by disillusionment with the public servant, or the narrative of patriotism is simply stolen by political extremism.

Under such conditions of social fluctuations, new questions are raised in reference to what it means to be a human being living in a holistic society of the 21st century. Attempts to answers some of the questions implied by these new realities are provided by scholars coming from several fields of social sciences. Their answers are nothing more than contributions to a common definition of what a holistic society should look like. Therefore, the third edition of the Harvard Square Symposium was suggestively framed as, "The Holistic Society: Multi-Disciplinary Perspectives," and welcomed papers authored by prominent academics from several countries.

Beyond restrictions of academic performance, the contributors made a concentrated effort to generate and imprint a sense of global resonance by encouraging some arguably conservative views to be expressed not necessarily as a countercultural intellectual undertaking, but more so as an attempt to balance the opposing views. While cultural and spiritual loyalties remain visible, the contributors are also sensitive to the needs of particularities to be explored and expressed, at least for the sake of their own validation.

Countering the current tendencies for isolationism and suspicion toward the other, the authors are more than intentional in generating a meaningful global dialogue. Their efforts fall in line with the very goal of the Harvard Square Symposium to reunite promising and well established scholars in formal and informal creative environments, to propose holistic ways of thinking by nurturing the engagement of the global intellectual elite into conversations meant to tackle the new challenges faced by the mankind. The contributors to this volume remain nevertheless skeptical about the sustainability of some contemporary cultural trends to unite divided societies and to create a holistic society.

Scientific Editors
Ioan–Gheorghe Rotaru
Denise Elaine Burrill

Contents

The Development of Skills to Secure Motivation in an Ever–Changing Society

Samuiel Bâlc, PhD
Theological Baptist Institute, Bucharest, Romania
samybalc@gmail.com

ABSTRACT: The present times brought about immense socio–economic transformations with major challenges in the sphere of the dynamic human adaptation to these changes. The consequences of the contemporary technical–scientific evolution in the sphere of renewing the volume of information, has directly affected how information is presented. This paper emphasizes that these changes generated the challenge of an individual's inability to adapt, and the incapacity to actively participate in the social and personal transformation. A change of mentality presupposes assuming risks, sustained effort, stress, conflicts, and endurance. To be efficient, such a change needs to take place at the individual level, and then continue by developing skills and securing motivation in the context of an ever–changing society. At the same time, this paper emphasizes that the mere existence of an ideal is insufficient unless there is a willingness to adapt by making changes. When we pass from the mentality that says "if I had, I would do and so I would be," to "I am, so I will do and I will have," one can say that a very important step has been made for reaching the goal.

KEY WORDS: skill, motivation, society, change, education.

In the context of an ever–changing society, the family, as well as, the school and the church will be faced with a growing number of diverse problems. For this reason, the stimulation of flexibility is extremely important, coupled with the necessity of continual adaptation to the changes made. At the same time, a distinctly

important aspect that can contribute to the development of society is the change of mentality. Such a change has a determining role in the developing of skills and the securing of motivation in the context of an ever–changing society. Without a doubt, such a change takes time, but, as Lazar Vlăsceanu remarked:

> As separate as social time and space are, as far removed from each other they are also. Communication is more and more cross–bordered and intermediated. Individuals become more and more autonomous and busy with the construction of their own identity and styles. Individualization is slowly taking the place of socialization. . . . The social groups and networks are multiplying and transforming quickly and permanently in new social movements, even global. The social systems and its actors are unplugging themselves contextually and eventually reform themselves through crossing some social and cultural borders, especially because of migration which is more and more intense.[1]

In order for the change to be adequate, education needs to also be awarded special attention.[2] It is known that education is indispensable to human existence, social development, and to the evolution of each individual. Education not only secures a continuity of human civilization, but also aids in research and innovation necessary for social progress. Over time we can observe an evolution in the educational realm. For example, in the medieval period, the foundation of the education ideal was established in the formation of the knight, which presupposed the developing of physical and esthetical characteristics, joined with some of the moral virtues.

In the enlightenment period, a change of mentality took place. This can be deduced from the promotion of the formation of the man who was a creator of culture, an enlightened man. In the 19th century, the pedagogical movements considered that the educational ideal was founded on personality; conceived as being deeply human; harmoniously developed; which was accounted for by an integral education along with self–education. Thus, the evolution of education, together with available conditions and resources made the adaptation of man and change of mentality possible..

Speaking about the evolution of human responsibility, Serban Iosiffescu, Paloma Petrescu and Constantin Vitanos were emphasizing the fact that this is done in the following cycle: to know; to learn how to do; to want to be; to learn how to be with others; to learn to be and to become.[3] In the contemporary society, education is a complex development of the personality from all perspectives. This is made concrete through the maximum capitalization of the human personality.

A distinctly important problem in the education process has become assuring an education that contributes to the development of skills and security of motivation.

> It has become obvious, Serban Iosifescu said, that, no matter how well scientific work is organized; no matter how good the material conditions of work; and no matter how great the incentives of rewards' system would be; the performances do not grow at the expected level, but on the contrary, they grow even less. Most of the time, the reasons for these situations are the human relationships involved in that specific organization, which are at least as important as planning, organizing, operational leading, and control–the classic core functions of the scientific management.[4]

To the question: "Can the bureaucratic organization face the turbulent times that we live in?" The unanimous answer, of the managers, as well as, of the researchers in the area, is a negative one. Thus a switch is needed from the management that is "centered in control" (specific to bureaucratic organizations), to the management that is centered in commitment. These objectives of the school, organization, and church, are more rapidly and easily attainable.

Surely, in this context, questions like these can arise: "Can the school unit lead without a rigorous control? How do I know what motivates people to work? Why do some work out of passion while others work for supplementary advantages? How can I motivate people given the material conditions that we live in?"

To answer positively to each of these questions, intelligent management is needed which can have set its goals in developing skills and securing motivation.

Douglas McGregor in his work "The Human Side of Enterprise", which appeared in 1960, identifies two sets of presuppositions about people and their work which he named, "The X Theory" and "The Y Theory".[5]

The X Theory	The Y Theory
Man dislikes work and, if he can, he avoids it.	Work is a natural activity and it is necessary for the spiritual development of man.
Man needs to be forced or bribed to make necessary effort.	Man desires an interesting work and if he has good conditions, will work with pleasure.
Man prefers to be lead rather than accept the answers.	People orient themselves towards acceptable duties and in the proper context accept the answers.
Man is motivated, especially by money and by the insecurity of his safety.	In proper conditions man is motivated by his will to fulfill his dream.

Unquestionably, Serban Iosifescu said, that man is a complex being, his activity being the result of the intervention of a series of determining and favorable factors. Still, what motivates us to act one way or the other? In other words, the motives for our actions (and of our peers) are essential for our living together in the sphere of an organization, as well as, for the realizations of its end. For this reason, knowing some of the theories of motivation can be an explanatory factor and an extremely useful leaning point for the concrete action.[6]

Regarding the way to motivate the ones involved in the educational process, helping them at the same time to develop necessary skills, Abraham Maslow proposed the theory of "hierarchy–zing the human needs"[7]. In building this theory, the author starts from these premises:

> • Human behavior is directed by those needs that are not met.
> • Man is never fully satisfied: once some of his needs are met, others take their place.
> • There is a certain order (hierarchy) in the apparition and the satisfaction of the needs, generally the same for all people.
> • Generally, not meeting some less important needs blocks the more important ones from rising.[8]

The fact needs to be pointed out that the activity of learning, in itself, is motivation if it meets the needs, fulfills the interests, and completes the experience of the ones involved in the educational process. This fact is so much more important, as Lazar Vlăsceanu said, given the fact that:

> For all the observers of the contemporary world, individualism, an invention of the Enlightenment and of modern society, is growing and the maximization of the personal liberties has become a purpose unto itself, with little correlation between it and the responsibilities toward others. While the possibilities of association have grown with no limits, because of social mobility and the internet, interpersonal trust or trust in the traditional institutions has grown smaller proportionately. The consequence is visible: the growing freedom of association is being combined with a poorer life as a group; along with an increasing isolation and an incapacity of engaging morally that is shrinking. All of the actual statistical–empirical data are convincingly illustrating that the level of criminality and social disorder has grown; that family and family relationships are no longer sources of social cohesion; and that the levels of interpersonal trust in traditional institutions have reduced to alarming levels.[9]

A different theory of motivation, initiated by Victor Vroom is the "theory of expectation". According to him: "people are not merely ATMs or "black boxes" that react determinately to stimulus depending on the situation in which they are. They come with different experiences, with attitudes, value systems and their own models of behavior; in one word, they come with their own personality.[10]

According to Serban Iosifescu, the premises of this theory are:

> • The human behavior is not determined by reality, but the way in which this reality is perceived by each individual;
> • Relating to reality is influenced by the preferences of the person, and by the value which they attribute to one or more elements from the perceived reality;

• Each person has expectancies regarding the possibility that certain actions will bring certain results;

• Thus, actions are instruments which need to result, generally, in what the person wills for and perceives as rewarding.[11]

The fundamental concepts of this theory are the expectancy that a certain action will lead to certain results; and the value which a person attributes to the results of those certain actions, directly correlate to the measure in which those results are desired.

In *Sociology and modernity, Transactions towards the reflexive modernity,* on the subject of the individual's identity and responsibility in an ever–changing society, Lazar Vlăsceanu accentuated these:

The individual has come to be alone regarding a de–constructing and re–constructing universe. Choosing a course of action presupposes, before all else, to know who he is and what he wants. By discovering who he is, he will find a proper way of acting. Violent actions can also be seen as illustrations of identity crisis. The construction of identity precedes action, and then it derives from it. Indeed, not every action is derived from the constructed identity. Socialization and professional formation is achieved, already internalized. Beyond these, the diversity of the field of action and of social openings are multiplying. Identity processes generate the ways to be and to act in order to test; possibly change; to remain in construction; to signify; and to fix a direction. The construction of identity appears to be a cognitive activity which organizes the necessary information for self in regards to a course of action. Individual failures in transition are, actually, failures in building the identity. Two diseases seem to be the source of these failures: depression and confusion. The first is derived from the explosion of freedom and from the multiplication of cultural references; of consuming; of action; etc. This is manifested through uncontrolled inflation of the aspirations and options; and through a growing subjectivity. Personal freedom and autonomy confronting a multitude of possible options risks to generate a state of action and a continual prospection: too many possible options and none mobilizing; too many ways of actions and no option for an alternative;

a permanent reflection and no decision; the calling of the imposed way, its non–existence and subsequent falling into depression. The disease of depression converted in inaction is actually the identity reverse of the lack of construction of self and of the lack of support in the structural protection which no longer exists. The other disease is generated by value confusion and by the anomic state specific to transition. It is the disease of value confusion. We know that any normal action is conditioned by the selection and orientation of value so that disorder in action is congruent with a coherent value system. In transition there is no "exterior power" capable to introduce order and equilibrium in the system of value and norms. The only agent capable of fixing the coherent value sphere and to eliminate the anomic redundancy is the individual himself through his own identity construction. Identity becomes the condition of the efficient action, the way of overcoming the disease of confusion which corresponds to the anomic state the agent responsible for successes. The individual self, trusting his own strengths, builds his own identity, becomes an agent of efficient actions because otherwise it will be lost in the meanders of transition. Unfortunately, the proportion of those late in identity construction and affected by the disease of depression or value confusion is still numerous. The inequalities do not seem to stagnate or to enter in recession, but they are instead growing, reaching epidemic proportions.[12]

Thus, skill development allows each individual to efficiently confront the requirements and challenges of daily life. Forming life skills offers the opportunity to assume initiative and responsibilities for one's own life; helps one think critically and creatively; brings solutions to conflicts; develops toleration towards others; builds relationships; and enables efficient communication with one's peers.

When considering the dynamic of society coupled with personal needs, motivation is extremely important in the choices that one makes, as well as, the integration in society, and the socio–professional evolution of each one. Motivation stands at the base of the behaviors and the actions done by an individual in a group. It can be said that motivation represents the agent which helps us go forward when changes come unexpectedly. Consequently, we need to give it special attention.

NOTES

[1] Lazăr Vlăsceanu, *Sociologie și modernitate. Tranziții spre modernitatea reflexivă* (București: Editura Polirom, 2007), 9.

[2] Ioan-Gheorghe Rotaru, "Educația – prin prisma ideilor unor filosofii moderne," in *Educație: Educație specială* (2011 nr.1): 5–10.

[3] Șerban Iosifescu, Paloma Petrescu, Constantin Vitanos, "Proiectul: descriere generală și concepte fundamentale," in *Management educațional pentru instituțiile de învățământ* (București: Ministerul Educației și Cercetării, 2001), 313.

[4] Șerban Iosifescu, "Comunicarea managerială," in *Management educațional pentru instituțiile de învățământ* (București: Ministerul Educației și Cercetării, 2001), 46.

[5] Douglas McGregor, "The Human Side of Enterprise," in *Managementul educațional pentru instituțiile de învățământ* (București: Ministerul Educației și Cercetării, 2001), 47–48.

[6] Iosifescu, "Comunicarea managerială," 49.

[7] Teoria lui Maslow este cea mai cunoscută teorie a motivației și are aplicații în toate domeniile relațiilor umane.

[8] Iosifescu, "Comunicarea managerială," 49.

[9] Vlăsceanu, *Sociologie și modernitate*, 72.

[10] Victor Vroom, E. Deci, *The Human Motivation*, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1975.

[11] Iosifescu, "Comunicarea managerială," 53–54.

[12] Vlăsceanu, *Sociologie și modernitate*, 169–170.

Romania's Holistic Development in its Transition from Totalitarianism to Democracy

Eugen Jugaru, PhD
Pentecostal Theological Institute, Bucharest, Romania
ejugaru50@gmail.com

ABSTRACT: This paper offers a perspective on the holistic development of Romania, a former communist society which collapsed more than a quarter century ago. The transition from a totalitarian regime to democracy in Romania was the most violent transition out of all political changes in Eastern Europe, leading to the execution of the dictatorial couple Nicolae and Elena Ceaușescu, and the sacrifice of 1166 lives (IRRD). Within this *status quo*, in which the dictatorship was replaced by democracy and the centralized economy by a free capitalist economy, the holistic development of the society was still a strenuous process because there were no clear social and political patterns to follow. In this context the author refers to the development of education, the importance of innovation, technology, administration and ecology. The holistic development of society continues today in spite of being obstructed by bureaucracy, corruption and various patterns of thinking inherited from the past. The conclusion of this paper is that the holistic development of society is an ongoing challenge, paving the way toward a better society.
KEY WORDS: holistic development, communism, democracy, society

Introduction

The holistic development of the society is an important concept for any group within the society as a whole and for every community within a country. In this process of development, areas such as

education, economy, environmental friendliness, material wealth, democracy, play an important role. Unlike democratic countries, that promote a multiparty political system, and open economy, in former communist countries was promoted a totalitarian political model while the individual initiative was choked, the economy was centralized, information was censored and freedom of expression was suppressed.

The year 1989 remains in the collective memory of Eastern Europe as the year of the fall of communist regimes and the transition of these communist countries from totalitarian political systems to democratic and capitalist economic systems. The fundamental problem of the transition from communism to democracy, from centralized economy to open market economy was the lack of practical models and examples. History has recorded transition from capitalism to communism, but was very poor in relation to information on the reverse process. In this way we can explain the difficult process of transition from communism to democracy which lasted decades. To be able to talk about a modern society in this context we must first refer to the past-time of Romanian society under the communist regime, and secondly to the challenges of the transition from communism to democracy.

The Romanian Society under Communism

The Romanian psychotherapist and writer Dan Gogleză explains the emergence and development of communism in Romania as a promise that fascinates, as a falling in love, when love gets him or her "in a trance", where emotionality feelings plays an important role.[1] Communist propaganda, according to the Marxist vision, developed a strong social emotionality trend, by suggesting personal happiness and social equality between people following the principle *from each according to ability, to each according to his needs*.

In his *Manifesto of the Communist Party,* Karl Marx presented his political ideology, his view about economic and social development that would represent the basis for a new socialist society (with no distinction between social classes), that would replace the capitalist

system represented by the bourgeoisie with another system that praises egalitarianism. Among the measures proposed by Marx, his *Manifsto* include:

> 1. Abolition of property in land and application of all rents of land to public purposes. 2. A heavy progressive or graduated income tax. 3. Abolition of all rights of inheritance. 4. Confiscation of the property of all emigrants and rebels. 5. Centralization of credit in the hands of the state, by means of a national bank with State capital and an exclusive monopoly. 6. Centralization of the means of communication and transport in the hands of the State. 7. Extension of factories and instruments of production owned by the State; the bringing into cultivation of waste-lands, and the improvement of the soil generally in accordance with a common plan. 8. Equal liability of all to work. Establishment of industrial armies, especially for agriculture. 9. Combination of agriculture with manufacturing industries; gradual abolition of all the distinction between town and country by a more equable distribution of the populace over the country. 10. Free education for all children in public schools. Abolition of children's factory labor in its present form. Combination of education with industrial production, etc,."[2]

It is important to emphasize that communist ideology is not characteristic to the Romanian society; this ideology was imposed by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) in the aftermath of World War II. As a political ideology, from the outside of Romania, communism was "a regime of occupation imposed by force, that has survived through force and by the exercise of terror. Communism was thus forced on people and not something accepted willingly; disavowed not admitted; rejected not supported."[3] Before being a communist country, Romania was a monarchy, with a capitalist economy system. From the moment when the communists came to power, they have consistently pursued implementation of the new Marxist political direction: abolition of private property, centralization of credit in the hands of the state by means of a unique national bank, centralization of means of industrial production, transport and communication, extension of the number of factories

owned by the State, uninspired relocation of people from villages to cities, free education for all children in public schools and so on.

The development of the communist system in Romania received a local flavor after 1960 when Romania has tried to distance itself from the USSR. The peak of this distancing policy was reached in 1968 when dictator Nicolae Ceaușescu strongly condemned the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia.

During communism in Romania political pluralism was annihilated and political party leaders were arrested, many of whom were beaten, tortured or physically excluded. Also, the private property was dissolved, all means of individual production was taken by force and passed to the State heritage. Gradually, a new privileged class, known as nomenclature, developed; it was a class close to political leaders.

According to Grudem, out of all economic systems, communism is the most dehumanizing system ever invented by man because enslaves people, destroys human freedom of choice and the entire nation becomes a huge prison.[4]

The persecution under communism was directed toward religious and ethnic minorities; at the same time, the culture of the country has been politicized being an important weapon in the arsenal of political leaders. No doubt that communism, like any ideology, requests a price to be paid, its effect lasts for a long period of time. Norman Geisler lists some of these tragic consequences of communist leaders ideas: the fascist ideas of Hitler results in more than twelve million lives during the holocaust, the Marxist ideas of Stalin suppressed at least eighteen million lives.[5] Freedom of expression, which is a fundamental right in any democracy has been suppressed, the strong censorship developed and watched carefully to stop sneaking any kind of anticommunist ideas or concepts in newspapers, magazines or books. As W. Grudem underlined, freedom of speech has to be protected by the government because in this way human liberty, religious speech, the ability of the individuals to decide issues for themselves, to prevent the abuse of power by the government and to enable government to be chosen by the people, are protected.[6]

Accordingly, to legitimize communism, the political leaders forged the history of Romanian people, especially the history of monarchy, negating its legacy, at the same time praising "the benefits of communism." The songs got a profound but inexpressive patriotic language, and the National Day was changed from May 10, the day of independence of Romania (May 10, 1877) to August 23 when the Romanian army switched against Germany and allied with Soviet Union (August 23, 1944).

Communist persecution did not even spare the Romanian intellectuals, who did not agree with the new policy and therefore were not enlisted in the Communist Party. Many of them were persecuted, humiliated and arrested. An open wound, that cannot be cured even after a quarter century since the Revolution of 1989, was the existence of orphanages for disabled children who were actually true concentration camps where children were beaten, tied to the bed, let to languish in misery, uncared for and starved.

During the communist regime there was almost a "starving the population" policy, with empty stores where meat, butter, cheese, coffee and fine soaps were a true luxury available just for some privileged people. Bread was rationed according to the number of family members. The fuel as petrol and diesel were also rationalized, the drivers could buy up to 20 liters of petrol per month and motorcyclists between 5 to 10 liters, depending on their engine power.

But not only the poverty was widespread at national level. The entire population was suffering of hunger and low temperature during the long winter time because the gas pressure was very low. Electricity was frequently interrupted and TV programs, highly politicized, lasted between 4 and 5 hours. Besides all these shortcomings, there was a state of general distrust between people, the population was kept in tension, a continuous terror because of the secret police or security. The dictator Ceausescu developed the so called "systematization project of the country" aiming to destroy 8000 villages and relocate the entire population to towns and cities.[7] To save Romanian villages from destruction, a group of journalists, photographers, architects, economists formed in Belgium the organization Opération Villages Roumains which encourages mayors of villages from Europe to adopt Romanian villages.[8] Following this

purpose they wrote tens of thousands of letters to Romania which slowed the crazy plan of destruction villages.

In conclusion communism was a drama experienced by the former communist countries and their societies. The failure of communism is most evident and proved by the generalization of poverty, by trampling and violation of human rights. None of the former communist countries experienced economic development comparable to the capitalist economy of western countries.

Suggestions for Holistic Development
The Difficult Road from a Communist to a Capitalist Society

Intentionally, in the first part of this article, we offer relatively a wide space for presentation of social life during communism in Romania, in order to show the difficult way from communism to democracy, from a centralized economy towards a capitalist open economy, towards a holistic development of society.

In the heyday of communism almost no one believed that this political system, which affected all social strata, will collapse one day irretrievably. The year 1989 remains in recent Romanian history as the year in which the people went out in the street, risking their life under a real rain of bullets, to change a totalitarian system with a democratic one, it remains as the year when the colossus of communism crashed. In Romania this uprising against communism was powerful and general; there were thousands of injured people and 1166 dead people.[9] Finally on the 25th of December the dictatorial couple Nicolae and Elena Ceauşescu was shot, in other words "we (Romanians) broke up of communism just as we began, by a crime."[10]

The fall of communism has left a political vacuum which was required to be filled as soon as was possible. The abrupt transition from dictatorship to democracy was a social shock, it was like the sudden transition of some prisoners sentenced to life imprisonment to total freedom. An unusual new situation for that former prisoners, living in the new context of liberty, they will have for a while "the nostalgia of prison, which offers them some security, will make them

to wander a while like Ulysses."[11] The wander of Romania toward democracy lasts more than we, citizen of this country, imagined.

Communism left an unwanted legacy for Romanian population, a political deprivation, poverty, environmental degradation, a centralized economy, lack of jobs, a lot of closed factories, political external isolation and lack of information. Besides of that, we inherited from communism: bureaucracy, abuse of power, corruption, dishonesty, lack of respect of the law. The process of transition was slow, it takes a lot of work to recreate the self esteem, to restore the respect for individuals and to develop ethical behavior that included undoubtedly respect for law and for the people. Paul Johnson noticed that the changes in Romania was more a change of person than a change of political regime while the old communist nomenclature has retained political and military power, changed its name and the title of parties, regained control of newspapers, radio and television stations.[12]

Soon after the fall of communism the National Salvation Front (FSN), a new political body, assumed responsibility to pave the way for free political elections, and created the opportunity for the old traditional liberal and democratic parties to emerge. The society which lost the exercise of freedom during communism, chose during that political elections many of the former communist leaders, only a few people who were not affected by the virus of communism succeeded in politics. There it was also a tendency to determine the former communist leaders of Communist Party to step back from politics, but unsuccessfully.

The fall of communism was followed by a long period of transition marked by various reforms which aimed to transform Romanian society after the pattern of the Western European model. There was a general consensus that Romania had to turn back from communism forever and develop a new society following the Western model, to follow the way of transition from communism to capitalism and switch from the centralized state economy to an open market economy. W. Grudem says that the free market has better results than the centralized economy because it meets better the desire of the population, gives liberty to the employer to hire employees which are best suited for the job, and allows

freedom for the people to work where they fit better.[13] According to sociologist and political researcher Vladimir Pasti, in 2004, after 15 years of efforts for Romanian people, the process of transition from communism to democracy, from centralized economy to capitalism system ended.[14]

An important component of the holistic development of society is the development of education. If communism focused on transmission of theoretical information and the peoples' ability to memorize this information, the holistic aspect of education involves training toward practical transformation, development of personal gifts and inclinations, in other words to help the person to develop himself. Also the formation of different kind of networks for sharing of ideas or information is an important component of holistic development, which is in opposition to individualism and competition promoted by communism.[15]

Finally, finding a practical framework for the application of knowledge, and not just the accumulation of theoretical knowledge, help to develop holistic society. Considering these prospects, the holistic education aims to find different ways for the development of individual identity. It is interesting to note that according to some social analysts, the social maturation has as an indicator not the intelligence but the empathy, the emotional ability of resonance to the environment. Reduction or absence of empathy is dangerous both for individuals and for the mentality of the nation.[16]

Holistic development of society requires recognition of the importance of innovation and the influence of technology on society, especially for the younger generation. As we know, modern technology is used today on a large scale in business and administration. The impact of technology is beneficial because it makes life easier, saves time, helps to develop business, opens opportunities for communication between students, people, politicians and society as a whole. Technology exerts a powerful mirage in this postmodern time, it permits companies to search world-wide for capital, for lower costs on products and for raw materials. But, in spite of that, we have to be cautions using technology because it can hinder the direct relationship between people, it can affect trust between employees and employer since it affects, in a way the privacy of

people, the first having the feeling of being watched during working time.[17] Today, Romania is a European country with great openness for technological development, is a country where there are a large number of large companies from all over the world.

Holistic development also requires a harmonious development, a good balance between the rural and the urban areas. Unfortunately, in Romania, the rural areas where agricultural activities happen, which is a major one, didn't know as a profound development as the urban areas. A lot of means for working the land remained largely rudimentary, many irrigation systems were damaged and many young people left the village to study at universities in the cities, or to work in urban areas where salaries are higher.

Aiming the holistic development of Romanian society in its new democracy, we can't avoid talking about a high level of conscience, a clear ecological commitment and a real fight against air and water pollution. The conscience of people in society, especially of the moral conscience, according with Carl Henry is like a mudlark in contemporary life, its paternity is questioned, its existence is troublesome, its claim for attention and responsibility is burdensome.[18] The duty and the imperative of this generation is to show respect for the environment, „an ethical imperative of respect not only for the right of the present generations to a healthy environment, but also the right of future generations to inherit from present generations, a healthy and ecologically balanced environment"[19] The earth is rich in minerals and raw materials, according to J. Stott, God stored in this planet different resources as water, food, clothing, shelter, energy and has given to people the domination over these resourced.[20]

Unfortunately, massive deforestation, water and air pollution are some of the challenges that the current generation must solve both for the sake of our present time and for our children's future. Exploitation of natural resources must be done in a reasonable way, not in a selfish and greedy manner, according to theologian W. Grudem, people possess ingenuity in discovering and developing new sources of energy in such a way that „the amount of energy remaining in these sources will last even beyond the current predictions."[21] More and more people in former communist countries develop today

a friendly attitude toward nature, they start to use more products that are environmentally friendly and to recycle materials as glass, metals and paper. People of the third Millennium have to exercise a good stewardship which involve living with an awareness that „we are managers not owners; that we are caretakers of God's assets, which he has entrusted to us for this brief season here on earth."[22]

Conclusions

Holistic development of the Romanian society, released from the communist political regime after 45 years of oppression, represents the major challenge in the last quarter of century. Since the revolutions and riots against the communist political system during the year of 1989, the people in this Eastern European country hope for a better standard of living, for an economic development of the country following the example of Western European countries. We noticed that the transition from a totalitarian to a democratic system, which is an obligatory transition for a holistic development of society, was neither easy nor simple. Many Romanians were disappointed by political class, by the price of transition, by bureaucracy, and as a consequence they have gone to work abroad for a better-paid job and for an easier life. We are optimistic about the holistic development of the country because it is a continuous process, sometimes hindered by the scourge of corruption and lack of vision, but the holistic development continues to put its mark on society more strongly today as ever, now at the beginning of the third millennium.

NOTES

[1] Dan Goglează, „Preluarea trecutului comunist. O răfuială analitică cu moștenirile de mentalitate," în *Viața cotidiană în comunism,* ed. Adrian Neculau (Iași: Polirom, 2004), 347.

[2] Cf. https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/download/pdf/Manifesto.pdf (Last accessed: October 19, 2014)

[3] Alexandru-Florin Platon, „Între descriere și analiză. Repere ale unei istorii sociale a vieţii cotidiene în comunism," în *Viața cotidiană în comunism,* ed. Adrian Neculau (Iași: Polirom, 2004), 31.

[4] Wayne Grudem, *Politics-According to the Biblie* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010), 262.

[5] Norman Geisler, *Systematic Theology,* vol. 2 (Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House, 2003), 18.

[6] Grudem, *Politics-According to the Biblie,* 4.

[7] Paul Johnson, *O istorie a lumii moderne 1920–2000* (București: Humanitas, 2005), 735.

[8] Dennis Deletant, *Istoria României* (București: Editura Enciclopedică, 1998), 565.

[9] Cf. http://www.agerpres.ro/social/2014/05/29/institutul-revolutiei-romane, (Last accessed: November 4, 2016)

[10] Goglează, „Preluarea trecutului...," 366.

[11] Ibid., 359.

[12] Johnson, *O istorie a lumii moderne*, 736.

[13] Grudem, *Politics*, 277.

[14] Vladimir Pasti, *Noul capitalism românesc* (Iași: Polirom, 2006), 21.

[15] Cf. http://fizcom.blogspot.ro/2008/03/despre-o-abordare-holista-in-educatie.html (Last accessed: November 4, 2016)

[16] Goglează, „Preluarea trecutului...," 365.

[17] Scott B. Rae, Kenman L. Wong, *Beyond Integrity*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2004), 420–421.

[18] Carl F. H. Henry, *Etica reştină personală* (Oradea: Cartea Creștină, 2004), 591.

[19] Cf. http://www.omicsonline.com/open-access/approaches-and-strategies-for-holistic-social-development (Last accessed: October 18, 2016)

[20] John Stott, *Issues Facing Christians Today*, 4th ed., (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2006), 148.

[21] Grudem, *Politics,* p. 361.

[22] Randy Alcorn, *Money Possesions and Eternity* (Carol Steam IL: Tyndale House Publishiers, 2003), 152.

The Holistic Literary Character:
The Body and the Soul
The Holistic Medicine in Literature

Simona Liutiev, PhD
Independent Scholar, Romania
liutiev.simona@yahoo.ro

ABSTRACT: Intimacy in fiction is an aesthetical, symbolical and emotional choice. Medicine and novel writing seem to prolong the disease nature has given to mankind. Some writers' propensity for structural themes and motifs from pathology can be considered both a professional and a somatic diagnosis predisposition. Life as a fate leading to death was a general idea at the end of the 19th century. To suddenly utter, that the soul is the body could have destabilised humanistic sciences, and it meant the decentralisation of literary character, the shift of narrative techniques, the conversion of psychology to physiological analysis emphasising the authenticity of sensation. Hortensia Papadat Bengescu's characters are so fleshless, that it's easy to see their soul. Illness is their only connection to the world. Each character tragically aspires to a common life, refused to all of them by their psychological or physiological condition.
KEY WORDS: somatic diagnosis, intimacy, authenticity, character decentralisation, holistic medicine

Psychoanalysis and Aesthetics

The physical aesthetics, the sensorial discourse mostly or completely visual is an archaic type of communication, usually related to narcissism and its avatars or to the concept of body

image. But good is not necessarily beautiful and beautiful is not implicitly good, as Jung pointed out. The ideal of an I–self in which the appearance plays an important role and the ideal I–self featured as a hypertrophic body image can transcribe the most profound suffering. "And this most honest existence, the I–it speaks of the body, and still wants the body, even when it poetizes and raves and flutters with broken wings."[1]

When a character talks about his/her physical image, doe he/she talk about something else? The body image concept, explained by Schilder (*L'image du corps*, Paris, Gallimard, 1968), and then by Francoise Dolto (*L'image inconsciente du corps*, Paris, Seuil, 1984) has its roots in childhood, when "it includes almost entirely the unconsciousness and it lends itself to all dichotomies: psyche–soma, affect–pulsion, life–death, and consciousness–unconsciousness."[2] Reality is a conscious option. Does body language express in a metaphorical–symbolical manner a personal silent defence? The more the bodily representation becomes standardised, the more the way a person talks about his/her appearance expressing dissatisfaction for any body part in the mirror, "the body image, crossing every second with the physical type, our existential sub–layer in the world"[3] becomes a defensive mechanism against anguish. "The body image as a self image is pulsional, dependent upon the language and updated by transfer,"[4] hence the inoculation of insecurity and the pathologies of *donjuanism* or *femme–fatale*. In psychoanalysis, beauty and narcissism are not synonymous.

Hortensia Papadat Bengescu's characters cannot free themselves from the tyrannical look into the mirror, this is the essential element filling their solitude and at the same time giving them a sense of autophilia. The tremolo of sensations is conveyed not only to other characters (Lenora, Rin, Lina, Nory) but also to places such as the mansion that "apparently consumed that day in its body the drama of life together with all the beings it had incorporated."[5] Freud considered narcissism as a common feature of all people, and Jung noted that "whoever goes to himself risks a confrontation with himself. The mirror does not flatter, it faithfully shows whatever looks into it; namely, the face we never show to the world because

we cover it with the persona, the mask of the actor. But the mirror lies behind the mask and shows the true face."[6]

In Hortensia Papadat Bengescu's first texts, the mirror is particularly the lonely woman's accessory, since "the love for me hurts nobody's heart;"[7] whether static or made for the lady bag, the mirror is "a magnifying glass meant for autoscopy and a reflector carried through the grey outer events,"[8] just like in Herta Muller's text the handkerchief replaces "the person's acute loneliness"[9] and it confers the necessary maternal protection (discourse at receiving the Nobel Prize for Literature). Aimée has a Super Ego which she fiercely cultivates. "Aimée's arrogance came mostly from the belief in her beauty, a belief made stronger in front of the mirror and maintained by the admiration she stirred among her mates at the boarding school. A doll with no character, no expressivity in beauty, but perfect and especially distinct in the material used by mother nature . . . a statuette upon which the eye lingered without impressions, simply annoyed by the immobility of a yet living creature."[10] Everything she feels is only the tension of her own vexed will, even "that subversive triangle of sensations"[11] the Persu sisters have prepared especially for her and the incestuous flirting with Walter, it all seems to be a mandatory repayment of "some kind of carnal compromises taxation."[12]

Actually, the intimacy subject itself is an auctorial game of mirrors supposed to halve, to be accomplice to yourself or someone else, to free a multiple self (a third Freudian I), a sort of taking into possession in which "the exterior is structured by the interior pattern"[13] hence the idea of symbolically representing the soul in the shape of a house/place. It's more difficult nowadays for a writer to successfully keep the distance between inner withdrawal in auto fiction and slipping into para–literature through radical schizoid auctorial forms (in the case of Romain Gary who won twice the Goncourt prize with the novel *La vie devant soi*, under the pseudonym Emile Ajar). Intimacy is an aesthetic symbolic choice full of emotion, and this is the great paradox of its excessive coverage, since the exterior has already been worked upon, relating it to the alterity and adapting it to the scale of unique non-repeatable person, disclaiming "the violence of exteriority, objectivity, truth."[14]

To Hortensia Papadat Bengescu, the aesthetic choice of subjectivity overbidding has been not only a temperamental constancy but also a trick ensuring her credit into the literary man-dominated world, "a passionate disguise,"[15] a physiological problem that she turns over again and again, giving the false impression that "the complete objectivity may result from two subjectivities."[16]

Spiritual Body or Psychoanalytic Interpretation of Literature

After Freud shattered the theories about ego instances in 1933, Merleau–Ponty wrote that "with psychoanalysis, the spirit moves into the body and the other way around, the body moves into the spirit."[17] "Body am I, and soul—so says the child. And why should one not speak like children?"[18] This seems to be the oldest literary dilemma, periods of continuous castling successively proclaiming one author or another's supremacy, surprising every time, though they merely restated the same theories. After Nietzsche and Freud in modern times, the New Age theories talked about the almighty spirit, the mental supremacy over physical, and the powerful motivation capable to transform the physical body, the illness and the destiny, even to prolong life; the theories of hypnotic regression that can change the body and its organs, the divination and angels era, somehow bringing back the Oriental theories of levitation and preparing the spirit for immortality, the spiritual era carrying since early days, even *ab nuce*, the stigmata of disease, the astrologers and healers era. The body may not count if one has the right attitude, not ignoring but loving and accepting a shell that plays its own part in strengthening the soul.

The body–sensitivity inadequacy or the quarrel between soul and body, this sub–substance of sensible living carries different names in humanistic sciences: mind–dust, unconsciousness—in psychology, Holy Spirit—in theology, the open core of being—in Buddhism, magnetic flux—in neurobiology. Hortensia Papadat Bengescu's characters fall ill after they fight anaesthesia of their inner self which eventually claims its rights. They become so fleshless, "the character is transparent, we can see through him or

her without noticing the face,"[19] that one can easily recognize the spiritual body; the world is merely a projection for such characters. "The only reality they are aware of is their soul becoming sensitively physical."[20] Seen as "the ultimate frontier of postmodern times, the soul as a projection of codes, socio–cultural patterns and body"[21] has been sometimes clearly separated from the body, and sometimes identified with it. Antonio R. Damasio, head of Neurology Department of Iowa University, rejects the Darwinian theories in a clinical analysis of corporality, marking that there is no delineation between the flesh and blood body on one hand and "the ethereal soul"[22] on the other. The soul, the engine of the ontologically fallen body, the illness as an anticipated sin, "the body that enslaves us and shuts down our reason, and takes into possession life"[23] has been given cultural meaning by Stoicists and this has ultimately lead to a perfect identification of the two components. Damasio, Diogenes Laertios, Epicur, Lucretiu proved to be Naturalists *avant la lettre*, before Descartes gave the first methodical definition of the body and soul dualism, finding the pineal gland as the place where the two meet. This was the birth of the *living body* concept, an anatomical metaphor that has influenced all modern and postmodern phenomenology in humanist science. That meeting point between soul and body in which we want to place our inner self might actually be an empty space, and the literary updating of this junction is in fact the existential crisis which has been an intersection for numerous arts. Following in the footsteps of his master Ortega y Gasset, the psychiatric–phenomenologist Lopez Ibor concludes that "the I–self has an executive disposition"[24] and places itself on the trajectory of a necessary fate; Unamuno and Alfred de Vigny have already emphasized this idea.

Throughout the whole Hallipa series, Hortensia Papadat Bengescu seems to reject the solution of harmonization between body and soul, she destroys the material support in all her characters out of a generation neurosis, some sort of social alienation blocks any communication between inner and outer body, particularly any way of living in a unified body where they can hear their intimacy or privacy. The spiritual body, in Papadat Bengescu's novels, corresponds to William James' concept of "mind–dust,"[25] also called

continuous consciousness that clinically detects the inner breaches and is clearly opposed to the unconsciousness in psychoanalysis. Even the most intelligent characters, such as Elena Drăgănescu, who attempt to listen to their I–self and harmoniously unite the two coordinates, end up dramatically. Ov. S. Crohmălniceanu has taken over the ingenious Charles Mauron's idea of psychoanalytic interpretation of literature and has consequently overlapped the author's texts in order to find similarities, without "translating into symbols, forcing the profound self to take a definite traceable shape,"[26] starting from the notion of *dishevelled maiden* (in novels, old pages of prose and poems in French) that became an emblematic expression used as a title and considered "oxymoronic, since the second term makes the first one ambiguous up to nullification."[27] To suddenly utter, in the cultural context after the First World War, that *the soul is the body* could have destabilised the whole area of humanistic sciences, and it meant the decentralisation of literary character, the shift of narrative techniques, the conversion of psychology to physiological analysis emphasising the authenticity of feeling, of sensation, "the evocation through analytical but also sensitive methods."[28] Doctor Walter recommends sleeping (reminding of Wagner practicing hydrotherapy for his neurosis), taking care of the person's mood, coquetry and gymnastic, yet the functions of life seem to be more complicated than that. "Neither could she separate the soul from the body, in the same way she couldn't separate that spider web of nervous system from the flesh and the muscle. Still she believed in a different, spiritual body. What kind of body? Around those fibres of the nerves like tentacle, their function was creating a yet impalpable substance which was to be proved real. That substance emanated from sensitivity could take various forms at various living creatures and thus it made an organism."[29] After all, we are just a ball of flesh twisted on a spiritual core and death is the only one that ultimately cuts them off.

Interferences between Literature and Medicine

Some writers' propensity for structural themes and motifs from pathology can be considered both a professional and a somatic

diagnosis predisposition. Writing is a somatic technological literary extension of the eyesight; they all complete each other and merge into a new vision of the world, a new "somatoprosepoem."[30] There are numerous examples of medics writers: Augustin Buzura, Vasile Voiculescu, Friedrich Schiller, M. Bulgakov, C. D Zeletin, Bourget, Verga, Lampedusa, Cătălin Vasilescu, Thomas Mann, Tolstoy, Dostoyevsky, and Chekov, who found in suffering a refined source of inspiration for great literature and successfully turned it into fiction. Choosing such a theme doesn't automatically guarantee a valuable work, since it's harsh, cruel, repugnant, and also artistically difficult, because it requires a longer incubation period. Blending medicine with literature is the Naturalists' and Physiologists' aim; such writers went beyond their field and invaded science, achieving a strangely natural, even monumental unity. The theme is best expressed in Marin Sorescu's lines: "Doctor, I feel something deadly/Here in the region of my being,/All my organs hurt,/At daytime, my sun hurts,/And at night my moon and my stars hurt,/I feel a pain in the cloud on the sky/That I haven't even noticed before/And I wake up every morning/With a winter feeling./Uselessly have I taken all sorts of pills,/Have I hated and loved, learned to read/And I have read some books for sure,/Uselessly have I talked to people and thought/Have I been kind, have I been beautiful…/All these haven't had any effect on me, doctor,/And I've wasted so many years on them/I think I've fallen ill with death/One day/When I was born."[31] We all fall ill, some of us more seriously and dying fast, others more gently and living longer.

Life as a fate leading to death, this is the theme of great writers and critics, Gasset's and Lopez Ibor's (in his essay about "penetration of the body into the intimacy field")[32] subject which was intensely discussed last century and already theorized by sociologist and philosopher Julien Freund. It was a general state of mind at the end of the 19th century and beginning of 20th century, "the exhaustion of living, the sickly prostration, the feeling of decay, the sarcastic sadness, the disillusion, the sensuousness of suffering and the grimace of facing reality,"[33] so Papadat Bengescu aligned her works with European writers. Survivor of some intimate catastrophes, she really elaborated pathologies of intimacy "to express the order of a world that lacks its original meaning."[34] Moreover, the Romanian

writer was aware she belonged to a climate which needed a rebirth: "People with Renaissance souls, we all live a life of overstimulation and psychic restlessness amid irritating events. I kind of wait and want the brutality of war as a healing for my frail pains, I prepare my soul to belong to an active nurse who takes care of physical wounds and saves lives, I'm convinced I'm probably more guilty of giving back life than the calamity which shortens it and I see in the passion for charity a way of displaying an unused or unsaturated passion."[35] Illness is a specific aspect of life and we all live under its threat with a "natural apprehension;" as long as man is the essence of life and creation, consequently of literature, why should illness be expelled by literary works and artists? Does a work of art stop being artistic just because not everybody likes it? Hortensia Papadat Bengescu herself saw disease as something so inherent to life, that she didn't think she had a preference for it; she simply had medical eyesight, "a spirit that clearly possessed the privilege of seeing."[36] "I'd never thought I might have a tendency towards illness, but a natural apprehension . . . it just came to me extemporaneously . . . I confess I have a double curiosity about illness and ill people: a nurse's and a doctor's curiosity, so to speak, because I do not read medical books, or psychological books, I couldn't have the patience to do it. But I do have the patience and the passion for my own investigation, an equal curiosity about the physical and psychic drives . . . Still, illness and ill people was never *the sole* subject of any of my writings . . . To be honest, I look them under the magnifying glass or under the microscope, maybe that's why they seem obsessive."[37] The new scientific tendencies in favour of transdisciplinary facets of knowledge, way beyond parallels, influences, patterns, social or cultural functions, show nothing but the interaction between various medical fields, recently interpreted from the New Age point of view, bringing spirituality and psychology to the fore (Dumitru Constantin Dulcan, Serghei Lazarev, Brian Weiss, Dan Mirahorian, Valeriu Popa, Anatol Basarab, Louise Hay, Doreen Virtue) both in diagnosis and causes, since illness is seen as "a pre-ordered way of self-destruction;"[38] "I'm an emotional person. But when I write, I cannot favour any of my characters; I cannot favour either life or death, because a ruthless sense of reality, a terrible weakness of

seeing reality just the way it is takes away my subjectivity. World and life remain organs on my dissection table."[39] Cognitivism and neurosciences say that perception and expression of reality depend on the structure and patterns in human brains, "extension and nexus of a new body surpassing pure animalism."[40] Exploring the body is a merciless, surgical act, accordingly to Foucault's episteme of man: man = body + solitude, the body can be seen and touched but the solitude is universal and common to everybody. The limit and the pointer of ontological solitude in postmodern society is love itself, an unsacred, invented, pure biological love, a body inferno.

Thanks to Hortensia Papadat Bengescu's works, the Romanian literature gained the richest medical vocabulary, the physiologic man is shown with a rather technical skill, from a biologist's and a clinician's point of view, acknowledging that any suffering of the body is mainly a suffering of the soul. This clinical study of various illnesses is a critical *no*, all these individual disorders reflect the social disruptions since we carry deep within our subconsciusness the endowment of the whole human beings. "Every person is a spiritual history of the world"[41] or, as Blaga said in a poem, "in the nameless country every human being will have to start/learning once again/the forgotten stories of the blood./Man is nothing but the measure/of a complete journey."[42]

The last novel of the series, *The Stranger*, is a proof of "the most severe pathology, the history pathology."[43] Magdalena Popescu saw in this novel a virgin and rich source for the psychoanalytical criticism, while G. Călinescu marked that "an ill creature arise interest for clinicians only." Whatever the critics say, there's no question that nobody has ever seized in a more subtle and comprehensive way the state of illness, in a world doomed to perish by all physical, social, moral, aesthetical meanings. The characters' lineage doesn't go further than two generations, and according to the cyclical rules, after the extinction comes a superior new level, why not the life after death, much better than anything they've lived and tried in the narrated life, as Kahlil Gibran's prophet says: "You would know the secret of death. But how shall you find it unless you seek it in the heart of life? . . . If you would indeed behold the spirit of death, open your heart wide unto the body of life. For life and death is one,

even as the river and the sea are one . . . and when the earth shall claim your limbs, then shall you truly dance."[44]

In many novels the hero is usually punished in the end by illness or death, but the novels of this series start with illness and, in an "imitative polyphony of a dominating leitmotif endlessly proliferating,"[45] with every breaking up of a couple, they inevitably go to the downfall of a whole generation, not as pain or punishment but as release, in Edgar Allan Poe's words "the crisis . . ./And the fever called Living/Is conquered at last."[46] One doesn't pity them and isn't afraid of becoming tainted, but rather relieved. If birth is a pain for two, shared between mother and newborn, death is a pain for only one, anyone. In front of death we all stand alone, empty handed. We simply surrender. When we come into the world our fists are tight, expressing the will to live, to fight for victory, and then when we die we open our hands expressing surrender and showing the others we carry nothing out of this world. Waiting for the death to come in a conscious manner is a terrifying experience, so the death is ultimately a release. "We are ourselves both in winning and in dying."[47] Blaga thought that talking about death is talking about life, beauty, rising high, flying, about the invisible thread that bonds man to God. Thinking about death is enjoying the gift of life, not waiting in sorrow for the death to come and take you away. Only around death you find the true measure of life. Those lying in hospital beds are no longer frightened, they long for death. Suffering is the wisest and the hardest teacher, it opens our eyes to the most unsuspected paths, "through pain the sky and earth separate themselves in us."[48]

The unsettled war between masculine and feminine, between master and slave turns into the fight between desire and hatred, life and death, author and character. "In order to continue living after he saved himself through his character, the author has to sacrifice the character."[49] Art is, according to Buddha, the safest madness on the way to salvation, and according to Goethe "the safest way to break ourselves from the world and yet the safest way to tighten ourselves to it."[50] To those who do not like this theme and refuse to think like children do, that "body am I, and soul," Nietzsche answers in *Thus Spoken Zarathustra: a Book for All and None*: "To the despisers of the body I want to speak. I would not have them learn and teach

differently, but merely say farewell to their own bodies—and thus become silent."[51] The work of art is not to be confused with the aesthetical value, it includes, it stores different forms of aesthetical value and only one of them can assure the entire artistic value of the work. The work of art is an asset; the aesthetical phenomenon is a value. "Being a product of the human spirit, the work of art is closely related to the creative act, it can never detach itself totally from the creative process, between artist and his work there's an organic relationship, full of consequences for the total understanding of the work."[52] On the other hand, Ion Caraion distinguishes the literature–aesthetics–life trinity which gives back the writer his old status. "Besides the shaded supple fragile attributes of literature, under the multicoloured intelligent hat of aesthetics there come to sit now the virile bristled harsh intense attributes of life."[53] The writer has to sketch an abstract drawing out of the memories he kept in his skin, an intensive drawing made up of the impressions of mingled bodies, invisible sensual tattoos. Literature has discovered the soul of this surface. Writing and expressing are inseparable from the body. "The text is contaminated by the body."[54]

Hortensia Papadat Bengescu is defined by this type of writing, the way she chose to write is a kind of *trade mark* seemingly anticipating the linguistic theories about the dissolution of the language. "The letter is dead, the body is alive. As I like to say, the word comes to life only after it is given a body. When I say word, I actually mean sense. Well, this sense has to spring out of your flesh, your somatic sensitivity."[55]

The Anamnesis of Body and Soul Illnesses. The Pathological as Narrative Art (Pathology with Medical Record/Hidden Pathology)

Reflecting upon diary as taciturn writing, Eugen Simion agreed that an ugly person is also mean, but he went further combining these two features with stupidity: "What face does stupidity combined with malice have? Not a bright face."[56] These reflections have their roots in the antic Greek tradition, which held in honour

the correlation between appearance and soul. In the 19th century the German philosopher Lavatter came back to the physiognomic doctrine, influencing the writings of Balzac and even Dostoyevsky. The attempt to derive human nature out of the physiognomy and the certitude that an ugly person can only be mean just like a beautiful person can only be good, have gone a long way and they are easy to recognise in Papadat Bengescu's texts.

How could the Hallipa series be bright if it has darkened the author's face? Throughout the pages of the novels the malice goes hand in hand with ugliness, inner and outer deformity, depicting monsters or giants who cause nothing but pain and show nothing but ignorance, "l'homme–enfant, un parfait imbécile, un automate, une statue immobile et presque insensible."[57] Everything is normal here as far as it is pathological, and the degradation by illness and death, though seen as a superior sensuousness, is socially experienced, reminding of Thomas Mann's *Magic Mountain*. This paradox is explained by Michael Riffaterre as a reversal between semantic semes, between the comparison terms, that ends up eliminating the differences and a "similitude in identity;"[58] the imitation becomes the main referent and the natural comes out of discussion "by being replaced with the artificial, since the Decadentism produces a subversive comment of an interpretation it deconstructs using a second grade referent, a copy."[59] Because not every human character is illustrative of the society, the writer was forced to resort to certain individual types. Even the unconsciousness has a historical feature, due to the fact that every person takes over the whole psychic structure of the ancestors. "What comes to us from outside, and, for that matter, *everything* that rises up from *within*, can only be *our own* if we are capable of inner amplitude equal to that of the incoming content. Real increase of personality means consciousness of an enlargement that flows from inner sources. Without psychic depth we can never be adequately related to the magnitude of our object. It has therefore been said quite truly that a man grows with the greatness of his task. But he must have within himself the capacity to grow; otherwise even the most difficult task is of no benefit to him. More likely he will be shattered by it."[60]

Should it be only by accident that we meet, sometimes over hundreds of pages, not a single positive character? They are representative of this fake *haut–societé*, eager whether to gain or to maintain their social status, and therefore it was necessary that the inner individual drives to be adequate to the social mechanism, in other words to be a perfect congruity between the internal and the external biography. "The individuals' fate can no longer be separated, from various points of view, from the fate of the category and the group they belong to and they project themselves further on the historical canvas depending on these relations"[61] Somehow rebellious, Vladimir Streinu called these writers quakers, using the English term for the religious society of friends, taken from the spinning dervishes and all sorts of mystics in trance. So, after pathetically confronting life, death, fate, nation, God, "livid with fear, they experience the existential happiness of morally convulsing, and they tend to impose to our entire culture the twisted formula of their soul . . . these formulae with a strict individual and even biological content have vulgarized philosophy making it handy. Could this style of desperation, of dry suffering, be the disease of our century? Where did these quakers come from, sparing our Church but invading our Culture?"[62] And when a "complete study of health dissonance"[63] adds to all these, the man being looked upon as a succession of interdependent physiological and psychological phenomena, it's more than obvious that the author is a legitimate spokesperson of her time, as Mircea Zaciu notices: "The process of bourgeoisie disintegration, under all its pathological aspects, has found in this female writer a lucid, then ironic, then sarcastic interpreter who is no stranger to the human suffering side of a tragic impossible aspiration towards the purity Johann Sebastian Bach's music symbolizes."[64] One step from the grotesque, the writer doesn't reach the Naturalists caricature, but "a tragi–comic both horrible and humorous."[65]

Papadat Bengescu's propensity for pathological study, that Călinescu talked about, can be explained by Naturalism influence, since "pathology suited very well the mechanical determinism that the school of Médan saw in life."[66] Physiology always leaves a psychological mark. Disease is never the same, never simple, never cured, reason of fears and self-analyses. Disease and its psychology

seem to be mainly related to "the crazy state of mind in the world;"[67] otherwise, the characters refuse to understand that "everything that's on the plate/has to be lived."[68]

A woman, Hortensia Papadat Bengescu, records all the physiological misery of some bodies crying out for help. Most often, the fragile nervous system is the one that suffers, the neuron being the only cell not able to regenerate. One can seize the interest for what remains unexpressed, for the will that doesn't come into act and its repression can establish a biography. One of the artistic accomplishments the writer uses to make the mentally ill person a drama character is repression, his/her illness, however easy to be recognized, doesn't eventually get any name, because anyway "the moral disorder and degeneration go hand in hand and mingle."[69] With her *stirring* style, Hortensia Papadat Bengescu sort of affiliates herself to the Naturalist writers who make a physiological art that "doesn't step back in front of indecency or humiliation or the most shameless rudeness."[70] The Naturalism came into the literary scene when the writers tried to compete with the scientist, invading the hospitals with the pen in their hands and recording the detail, sure that they were making educational work. The pathological conditions are Hortensia Papadat Bengescu's favourite field too but, unlike Naturalists, in her texts the body is revealed through soul, and these motifs are inseparable, nobody else until her has ever insisted so much upon these two and related the physiology and psychology to the social life. After Freud elaborated the principles of psychoanalyse, the interest for the hidden life of soul has become common and has been proudly accepted by the writers, as another proof of "how serious the novelist's work is."[71] So, to make science in a novel comes to be a real literary merit. Proust said that medicine is the one that prolongs the disease nature has given us. Perpessicius adds: medicine *and novel*, talking about the clinical applicability and likely in Papadat Bengescu's novels.

We often hear that the writer has to avoid the contact with psychiatry and leave to the medics the descriptions of psychical states. In reality, no writer has taken this into account and it was impossible to do so because a writer's main mission is to describe the universe within so that, one way or another, the writers have

always been predecessors of science. More so the border between the normal and the so called ill psychic is, first of all, a conventional delimitation, and, secondly, so instable that each of us can cross over it several times during the day. On the other hand, psychiatry is concerned not only about illnesses (understandable solely in relation to healthy state), but also about merely disorders. That way, the writer cannot avoid the psychiatrist and the psychiatrist cannot avoid the writer, and the literary approach of a psychiatric theme cannot harm the aesthetic value. Georges Dumas said that "the real master of the psychiatrist is the novelist."[72]

Referring to the hidden pathologies study, Perpessicius places their literary approach in front of psychiatry: "Either there's a case of perhaps innocent hysteria, favoured by certain disorders and as a consequence of sexual shyness, or there's a case of intellectual obnubilation, where the dysmnesia of evoking is accompanied by a complex of symptoms, whatever the psychiatry may say, how many diagnoses it may make, how many conclusions and analyses it may draw, nothing makes it equal to the novel of this case, that only Mrs. Hortensia Papapadat Bengescu could make up of so many hidden fibres and so much weightlessness, well-rounded and human."[73] These words synthesize in the best way the theme of the novels. The medical record makes way for the real characters of the book: *the anomalies* of any kind, a catalogue of absurdities that ends up with the transformed character living in a mechanical, sleepy, paralysed state, a mechanical reduction of the human being typical for the Naturalist literature. The diminished mobility of mind and body depicted by the novelist gives life to "the monumentality and the mystery of nature itself."[74]

Ovid. S. Crohmălniceanu yet thought one *can* live among these people who are able to show in distress "the slice of humanity within them."[75] Each character tragically aspires, in his/her own way, to a common life, refused to all of them by their psychological or physiological condition. So, in Hortensia Papadat Bengescu's work, there are a hidden pathology and a medical recording pathology, two groups that gathers all the characters of the Hallipa series. Papadat Bengescu's human being is defined by a social universe. The Hallipa, the Drăgănescu and the Valter families climbed but also crawled

their way on the social scale and end up with deep scratches, in Ovid. S. Crohmălniceanu's words. Their attempt to dominate this social universe results in a psychical falsification, and illness is nothing else than "the solution" the author found to "restore" the frustrated personality on the conscious way to death. Nory, one of the characters, actually spreads the idea of a class privilege of suffering. Is the disease a restoration? Yes, in the sense that only through disease man eludes the striving of defending his social status, that has taken all his power, and the spirit is "the life that cuts out right in the flesh of life."[76] Conventions, obligations, everything is dissolved in the miracle and "the nobility" of illness. Towards the universe the illness reveals, the man is ultimately freed. Liberty or the illusion of liberty can only be gained by escaping the metaphysical. There's a double escaping, hence two kinds of illnesses and ill characters: some of them are "luckier" and completely free themselves from universe (incurable disease such as Maxentiu's phthisis), while the others are ill as a sign of weakness, of psychical disablement to bear the social constraint, and this is a pathetic way of being free (Lenora, Drăgănescu find their shelter in Walter's hospital). They are the only one to share the human feelings of self–pity. Accordingly to Emil Cioran, man has three lives: intrauterine (unconscious), extrauterine (conscious) and postmortem (afterlife), and without the last one it would all be foolish and meaningless. At birth, the soul comes not in order to be happy, but to serve its time, because happiness is to be found up there, around the divine being, and no experience on earth can compare to that. Man "comes with a certain purpose in this world, he comes to take his dose of bitterness and sadness, to change something at mankind."[77]

When the author questioned about the ways to make her characters free and searched a solution to restore them, choosing illness as an answer is really tragic because, on its conscious way to death, illness cannot be a solution, it is nothing more than "a vague mysticism of moral purgation through suffering."[78] There's no escaping even with doctor's help. The few chameleonic recoveries (actually, the agonies before dying) the ill character has are due to his own psyche making a last effort. Medics are, in the Hallipa series, "the most seriously ill characters the author has imagined."[79] Either

impostors in practicing medicine (dr. Rim, the twin bacteriologists Hallipa, professor G.), or eminent clinicians in a field which is by excellence ambiguous, that is psychiatry (dr. Walter and Cojan), or with a clear specialization (dr. Răut—TBC. and dr. Caro—infectious diseases), they perform their own healing. Some of them solve their inferiority complexes (Rim and Caro), others—their frustrations. That's why the most serious illnesses are analysed relatively independent from the curative medicine and closely dependent on psychology, and their concern for the disease gives a sense to their lives, saves them from the existential dissatisfaction. True death is not rottenness but repulsion to life, indifference to feelings. "Man is forced to struggle with the daily death of his body in order to transcend it."[80] That's why people's death is different from animals', and only the most unlucky people die like dogs, not like humans.

NOTES

1   Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spoken Zarathustra: a Book for All and None*, trad. Şt. Aug. Doinaş (Bucureşti: Editura Humanitas, 1994), 90.

2   Gisele Harrus Revidi, *Psihologia simţurilor*, trad. Nicolae Baltă, (Bucureşti: Editura Trei, 2008), 104.

3   Cf. F Dolto; see Revidi, 105.

4   Ibid, 107.

5   Hortensia Papadat Bengescu, *Fecioarele despletite*, ediţie. îngrijită de Gheorghe Radu, prefaţă de Eugenia Tudor (Bucureşti: Editura Pentru Literatură, 1966), 154.

6   C. G. Jung, *Collective Works 1. The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious—Opere complete 1. Arhetipurile şi inconştientul colectiv* (Bucureşti: Editura Trei, 2003), 29.

7   Mihaela Stanciu Vraja, *Hortensia Papadat Bengescu în oglinda prozei de tinereţe* (Bucureşti: Editura Pro Universitaria, 2015), 127.

8   Corina Ciocârlie, *Femei în faţa oglinzii* (Cluj–Napoca: Editura Echinox, 1998), 28.

9   *Caiet. Herta Muller la Bucureşti*, 27–28 sept. 2010 (Bucureşti: Editura Humanitas Fiction & Centrul de carte germană, 2010), 5–20.

10   Hortensia Papadat Bengescu, *Opere*, Academia Română, Fundaţia Naţională pentru Stiinţă şi Artă; ediţie, note şi comentarii de Gabriela Omăt; studiu introductiv de Eugen Simion (Bucureşti: Academia Română, 2012), 864.

11   Ibid, 1029.

12   Ibid, 1033.

13   Gaston Bachelard, *La poetique de l'espace,* Presse Universitaire de France, Paris, 2007, p. 23;

14   Jean Baudrillard, "La sphere enchantee de l'intime," in *Autrement* (nr. 81, 1986): 15.

15   T. Vianu, "Hortensia Papadat Bengescu," in *Sburătorul* (an II, nr. 23, 30 oct. 1920); also in *Scriitori români ai sec. XX* (Bucureşti: Editura Minerva, 1979), 216.

16   Simona Sora, *Regăsirea intimităţii* (Bucureşti: Editura Cartea Românească, 2008), 89.

17   M. Merleau-Ponty, *Signes* (Paris: Gallimard, 2001), 290 as quoted by Sora, *Regăsirea intimităţii*, 82.

18   Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spoken Zarathustra*, 89

19   Dana Dumitriu, *Ambasadorii sau despre realismul psihologic* (Bucureşti: Editura Cartea Românească, 1976), 194–195.

20   Nicolae Manolescu, *Arca lui Noe*, vol. II (Bucureşti: Editura Minerva, 1981), 11.

21   Andrei Bodiu, Georgeta Moarcăş, *Trupul şi litera. Explorări critice în biografia şi opera lui Gh. Crăciun* (Cluj–Napoca: Editura Casa Cărţii de Ştiinţă, 2012), 57.

22   Antonio R Damasio, *Eroarea lui Descartes. Emoţiile şi creierul uman*, trad. Irina Tănăsescu (Bucureşti: Editura Humanitas, 2004), as quoted by Sora, *Regăsirea intimităţii*, 44.

23   Marc Richir, *Le corps. Essai sur l'interiorite*, Optiques Philosophie (Paris: Hatier, 1993), 44.

24   Juan Jose Lopez Ibor, *El descubrimiento de la intimidad y otros ensayos*, Coleccion Austral (Madrid: Espasa–Calpe, 1952, 38.

25   William James, *The Principles of Psychology*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981), as quoted by Sora, *Regăsirea intimităţii*, 93.

26   Ovidiu S. Crohmălniceanu, *Cinci prozatori în cinci feluri de lectură* (Bucureşti: Cartea Românească, 1984), 160.

27   Elena Zaharia Filipaş, *Studii de literatură feminină* (Bucureşti: Paideia, 2004), 44.

28   Tudor Vianu, *Arta prozatorilor români*, vol II (Bucureşti: Editura pentru literatuă, 1966), 209.

29   Hortensia Papadat Bengescu, *Fecioarele despletite*, pref. Eugenia Tudor (Bucureşti: Editura pt. Lit., 1966, 188.

30   Gheorghe Crăciun, "Mircea Nedelciu şi curtea interioară a literaturii. Corpuri netransparente, sociografii narative, tratamente ambulatorii, in Pactul somatografic," in *Observator Cultural* (nr. 133): 74.

31   Marin Sorescu *apud* Maria Bâgiu Marino, *Oameni şi oameni* (Braşov: SC Imp SA, 2003), 24.

32   Juan Jose Lopez Ibor, *El descubrimiento de la intimidad y otros ensayos, Coleccion Austral* (Madrid: Espasa–Calpe, 1952), 38, as quoted by Sora, *Regăsirea intimităţii*, 18.

33   Carmen Georgeta Ardelean, *Hortensia Papadat Bengescu „marea europeană" a literaturii române. Pledoarii* (Cluj–Napoca: Editura Eikon, 2013), 42.

34   Sora, *Regăsirea intimităţii*, 34.

35   Hortensia Papadat Bengescu, *Scrisori către Ibrăileanu*, scrisoare din 10 iulie 1916, ediţie îngrijită de M. Bordeianu, Gr. Botez, I. Lăzărescu, Dan Mănucă şi Al. Teodorescu (Bucureşti: EPL, 1966), 52.

36 36 Viola Vancea, *Hortensia Papadat Bengescu: universul citadin repere și interpretări* (București: Editura Eminescu, 1980), 40.

37 Dan Petrașincu, "Cu scriitoarea Hortensia Papadat Bengescu despre romanul Logodnicul și despre creație," in *Vremea* (anul VIII, nr. 389, 26 mai 1935): 9; reprinted in Dan Petrașincu, *Romanul românesc în interviuri*, (București: Editura Minerva, 1984), 639–640.

38 Carmen Georgeta Ardelean, *Hortensia Papadat*, 42.

39 "Cu scriitoarea Hortensia Papadat Bengescu despre romanul Logodnicul și despre creație," in *Vremea* (anul VIII, nr. 389, 26 mai 1935): 9; reprinted in Dan Petrașincu, *Romanul românesc în interviuri*, (București: Editura Minerva, 1984), 636–637.

40 Alexandru Mușina, *Șase cuvinte cheie pentru proza lui Gh. Crăciun* in *Trupul și litera* (Cluj–Napoca: Casa Cărții de Știință, 2012), 53.

41 Marino, *Oameni și oameni*, 49.

42 Ibid.

43 Andreia Roman, *Hortensia Papadat Bengescu–Vocația și stilurile modernității* (Pitești: Editura Paralela 45, 2007), 108.

44 Marino, *Oameni și oameni*, 345.

45 Ardelean, *Hortensia Papadat Bengescu*, 105.

46 Marino, *Oameni și oameni*, 122.

47 Ibid., 126.

48 Ibid., 313.

49 Liliana Truță, *Aspecte ale androginiei textuale la Gh. Crăciun*, in *Trupul și litera, ed.cit.,*p. 116;

50 Thomas Mann, *Pătimirile și măreția lui Richard Wagner*, trad. Alexandru David, (București: Editura Humanitas, 2013), 44.

51 Nietzsche, *Thus Spoken Zarathustra*, 89.

52 Cf. an article authored by Victor Iancu and published in *Preocupări literare*, an VII, nr 8–9, august–septembrie 1942): 458–466; as quoted by George Ivașcu, *Cumpăna cuvântului 1939–1945. Mărturii ale conștiinței românești în anii celui de–al doilea război mondial*, (București: Editura Eminescu, 1977), 322–323.

53 Ion Caraion, "Războiul artei," in *Orizont* (an I, nr. 6, 1 februarie 1945): 5, in Ivașcu, *Cumpăna cuvântului*, 549.

54 Cezar Gheorghe, "Intersecțiile literaturii cu filosofia în opera lui Gheorghe Crăciun" in *Trupul și Litera. Explorări critice în biografia și opera lui Gheorghe Crăciun*, eds. Andrei Bodiu și Georgeta Moarcăs (Cluj–Napoca: Editura Cărții de Stiință, 2013), 215.

55 Gheorghe Crăciun, *În căutarea referinței*, (Pitești: Editura Paralela 45, Colecția 80, Seria Eseuri, 1998), 242.

56 Eugen Simion, *Fragmente critice I* (București: Editura Grai și suflet, 1998), 280.

57 Jean Jacques Rousseau in Radu Petrescu, *Meteorologia Lecturii*, (București: Editura Cartea Românească, 1982), 150.

58 Michael Riffaterre, *Decadent Paradoxe*, in *Perennial Decay: On the Aesthetics and Politics of Decadence*, p. 66, in Angelo Mitcheivici, *Decadență și decadentism*, (București: Editura Curtea Veche, 2011), 56.

59 Oscar Wilde, discourse *The Decay of Lying–Decăderea minciunii*, traducere și note Magda Teodorescu, prefață de Mircea Mihăieș (Iași: Polirom, 2001) in Angelo Mitchievici, *op.cit.*, p. 57;

60 Jung, *Opere Complete 1*, 128.

61 Marin Manu Bădescu, *De la Nicolae Filimon la Marin Preda* (Pitești: Editura Zodia Fecioarei, 1998), 99.

62 Cf. Vladimir Streinu's article in *Preocupări literare* (VII, 8–9, aug–sep 1942): 417–421, as quoted by Ivașcu, *Cumpăna cuvântului*, 328.

63 Liviu Petrescu, *Realitate și romanesc* (București: Editura Tineretului, 1965), 96.

64 Mircea Zaciu, *Masca Geniului* (București: E.P.L., 1967), 198.

65 Ion Bogdan Lefter, *Scurtă istorie a romanului românesc* (Pitești: Editura Paralela 45, 2001), 50.

66 Ovid. S. Crohmălniceanu, *Literatura română între cele două războaie mondiale*, vol I (București: E. P. L, 1967), 445.

67 Mircea Nedelciu, *Zodia scafandrului* (București: Compania, 2000), 60–61.

68 Mircea Nedelciu, *Proză scurtă: Aventuri într–o curte interioară* (București, Compania, 2003), 19.

69 Constantin Ciopraga, *Hortensia Papadat–Bengescu* (București: Editura Cartea Românească, 1973), 155.

70 George Călinescu, *Cronicile optimistului* (București: E. P. L, 1964), 143–144.

71 Mihai Zamfir, *Cealaltă față a prozei* (București: Editura Eminescu, 1988), 25.

72 Nicolae Manolescu, *Arca lui Noe* (București: Editura 100+1 Gramar, 2000), 181.

73 P. Perpessicius, *Scriitori români*, vol. III (București: Editura Minerva, 1989), 284.

74 Radu Petrescu, *Meteorologia Lecturii* (București: Editura Cartea Românească, 1982), 148.

75 Crohmălniceanu, *Literatura română*, 449.

76 Nietzsche, *Thus Spoken Zarathustra*, 315.

77 Marino, *Oameni și oameni*, 272.

78 Ibid.

79 Roxana Sorescu, *Interpretări* (București: Editura Cartea Românească, 1979), 208.

80 Marino, *Oameni și oameni*, 70.

Self–Leadership: A Theological Approach

Timotei Rusu, PhD
Baptist Theological Institute of Bucharest, Romania
timoteicorinar@gmail.com

ABSTRACT: It is not a secret that the leader is the strategic person in a community. But what is the one secret of a leader that really make a difference for the society? The thesis of this article is that the self–leadership is one of the important keys to personal development and to the development of a society. This paper surveys the self–leadership quality of the spiritual leaders, and focuses on the particular ingredients of self–leadership as described by Apostle Paul in the New Testament.
KEY WORDS: self–leadership, character, family, community.

Every person should be a leader. Even somebody is not in a position of a leader or hold an office as leader he must lead himself. There are so many decisions to be made every single day and so many targets to be reached and everyone needs wisdom, determination and action. So, self–leadership is a must have quality of every person.

This is even more so for visible leaders, the one who have responsibility to move others toward a better future. By definition a leader is the one who go before others, show the way, pave the way, lead the way and live the way. For this reason the self–leadership for leaders is so critical. Real leadership, when people follow out of respect, is impossible if the self–leadership is absent in the life of a leader.

Even it is obvious, it is important to ask whether or not is biblical to speak about leadership, especially in churches. Does God, through the Bible say anything about leading? Also in the postmodern society, we may ask if somebody has the right to tell others what to do? This challenge is real because "in the age of pragmatism in the secular world, where the ends justify the means, the temptation is for leadership to prostitute Christian character for the sake of success. Moreover, in a culture that increasingly extols success at any cost and puts down virtues as a worthy goal, leaders may unwittingly pursue the glitter of success and lose the joy of serving Christ."[1] To responding to this situation and to answer this question is very important for this thesis. Alex D. Montoya presented four biblical guidelines in this regard:

> • The entire history of God's dealings with His people is actually God's involvement with a particular person whom He uses to accomplish His will. When God wanted to accomplish something, He was looking for a person to lead His people;
> • The New Testament spells out in clear terms that God has a designated leadership for His church. The apostles were the first designated leaders (Matt. 10:1–42; 18:18–20), then the elders are overseers of the congregation (Acts 14:23; 20:17; Titus 1:5; Phil. 1:1; 1 Tim. 3:1) Leading is listed among the gifts given to the church (Rom. 12:8; 1 Cor. 12:28);
> • Certain charges addressed to individuals in the New Testament indicate that these men were to exercise leadership in the church. Both Paul and Peter gives clear exhortations to elders (1 Tim. 5:17–25; Titus 1:5–9; 1 Pet. 5:1–5);
> • The church has received special exhortations regarding treatment of church leaders (1 Cor. 16:16, 18; 1 Thess. 5:12–13; Heb. 13:7, 17, 24.)[2]

In this article we will concentrate on spiritual leaders, as the highest form of leadership,[3] but the principles apply very well to any kind of leader. The most condensed text in the Bible concerning self–leadership is 1 Tim. 3:1–7. David Guzik introduces this passage by saying: "Leaders are not to be chosen at random, nor just because they volunteer, nor because they aspire to the position, nor even

because they are "natural leaders." Instead they should be chosen primarily on how they match the qualifications listed here."[4] Here is the biblical text:

> Here is a trustworthy saying: Whoever aspires to be an overseer desires a noble task. Now the overseer is to be above reproach, faithful to his wife, temperate, self–controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him, and he must do so in a manner worthy of full respect. (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church?) He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil. He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil's trap.

This passage refers to the needed qualification of a spiritual leader, either a overseer, bishop, elder, pastor, or a more general term—minister.[5] Most of these qualifications are not about what he will do, but what he will be. Even this preoccupation was present through the centuries; the twentieth century of Christian church history has witnessed an increased emphasis upon the spiritual life of the pastor as the main spiritual leader. When Jesus called people to discipleship, He first called them *to be*, followed by *to do*. In the New Testament, especially in the texts where the pastor's role is described, the first and most important part is the description of his character. Ministry is not a job, a way of making a living, nor a profession. These types of sentiments have been increasingly stressed in recent literature.

In the 1980s, the Leadership Network conducted a study to determine the characteristic of the pastors who are most crucial to the development of a vital congregation. The first requirement for a pastor of a congregation with 1,000+ members was: "The pastor must adhere to private spiritual disciplines, develop 'holy habits,' love God with a passion—he or she must live in the Scriptures, pray, love God with fidelity and integrity."[6] But this expectation is not only for pastors at the large churches. In 1989–90, McCormick

Theological Seminary conducted a large nationwide study to explore the expectations of congregations and judiciary executives regarding the role expectations of the pastor in congregations of all sizes. "The survey discussed and ranked twenty–one possible ministry roles. The roles are listed in rank order: personal integrity, preacher, care giver, worship leader, sense of call, interpersonal skills, personal Spiritual renewal, wisdom, spiritual guide...."[7] This survey makes clear that the first expectation for a pastor from many is his character, his integrity, and his spirituality. A pastor's activity is a reflection of his character. Even preaching, care giving, and worshiping are ranked higher than homiletics, charity, and music by those responding to this survey.

Others think differently. Robert C Anderson, surprised by the manner in which the people enter into ministry, wrote:

> During the course of each school year dozens of inquiries came across my desk regarding men who are being considered by churches.... Without exception, each inquires as to the abilities of the person being considered, his personality traits, and the talents of his wife. Rarely does a questionnaire deal with character traits.... Although the Bible often states the kind of things that elder, pastor, or overseer do, nowhere does it specify the talents we may expect in them.... Although they need those qualities to perform their duties, the Bible's major emphasis is in an entirely different direction; instead of insisting on how well a person is able to perform a certain function, it focuses instead on what kind of a person he is.[8]

It becomes clear that the first question is: "Who is the pastor?" or, "What kind of person is he?" Thomas C. Oden presented two possible mistakes as far as thinking about a minister is concerned: "*reductionism*, the characteristically modern misjudgment about ministry, attempts to reduce the essence of ministry to a human social function or the philosophical insight or to moral teaching or to psychological counseling or to political change advocacy. (Failure to understand divine commission) . . . and *triumphalism*, a habit more characteristic of pre–modern consciousness. It loses track of the human, finite side of ministry in the interest of inordinately stressing its divine origin and eternal purpose."[9] The pastor is not a divine

being, and at the same time, is not a person who decides by himself to become a minister. A balanced definition of the pastor could be: "he [the pastor] is an ordinary person who knows the Lord Jesus Christ as a personal Savior, has experienced the call of God in his life for full–time Christian service, and knows that he is fit for such service because he meets certain biblical character qualifications."[10] In other words, the pastor is a saved, called and qualified person.

Above Reproach

This quality is seen as essential by many for a modern pastor. John MacArthur said: "There, the single, overarching qualification of which the rest are supportive is that he is to be 'above reproach'. That is, he must be a leader who cannot be accused of anything sinful. All the other qualifications, except perhaps teaching and management skill, only amplify that idea."[11] "It is common for employers," said Edwing Louis Cole, "to be impressed with man of charisma, talent, ability, and as a result, commit some aspects of management or church life to the man. Then they suffer the chaos and loss from his unfaithful practice. Faithfulness is the cornerstone of character."[12] Gardiner Spring, in his chapter "The Personal Piety of a minister," lets us see his concern about the subject and his disappointment concerning the way this subject is received. "There is no topic on which the writer addresses his brethren in the ministry, either young or old, with more reluctance and shamefacedness, than that which is here indicated. ...True piety is its own evidence wherever it exists in the soul."[13] James Stalker presented that the purpose of a minister in a parish "is not to cultivate scholarship, or to visit the people during the week, but it is to live among them as a good man, whose mere presence is a demonstration which cannot be gainsaid that there is a life possible on earth which is fed from no earthly source, and that the things spoken of in the church on Sabbath are realities."[14] This standard is very high, but not too high with the help of God. When we look at the areas in which the pastor should work, we find that he is supposed to pass three tests: (1) the test at home, (2) the test in the church, and (3) the test outside the church, in the society.

The Husband of *One* Wife

The spirit of this text is not saying that a pastor must be married. To be married is not a spiritual qualification. God is saying something even more than just that a pastor should have a monogamous marriage. Lynn Anderson noted that in the family, the leader's true character comes through. Being the husband of one wife means first of all moral purity and fidelity of thoughts and actions. The positive part is that the husband is a lover and makes the wife feel securely cherished and valued. They have a healthy intimate relationship and are happy together. The husband demonstrates by the stability of his marriage that he can keep covenants.[15] Concerning being pure, Robert Anderson said that the pastor "should avoid the things that corrupt the mind and erode conscience. He should be careful not to view films or television indiscriminately, and under no circumstances should he feed the prurient recesses of his mind with pornography."[16] David Guzik is very explicit when he points: "The idea is that is love and affection and heart is given to one woman, and that being his lawful and wedded wife. This means that the Biblical leader is not a playboy, an adulterer, a flirt, and does not show romantic or sexual interest in other women, including the depictions or images of women in pornography."[17] The idea of purity is to be held even if a pastor is not married yet, purity not only of the body, but also of his heart, mind, and eyes.

"Managing his own household well" is a big umbrella over the activities at home. The pastor has to keep his children under control with dignity. He is to gain the respect of his children. "If an elder cannot inspire the love and respect of his adult children, why should he expect the love and respect of the church?"[18] His wife plays an important role in this. They are supposed to be a team and work together and be an example of loving discipline. Surely the kids are not to be perfect, but they should not be accused of dissipation or rebellion.

"Hospitable," that love of strangers or guests, is the key that opens the house for others. Spiritual relationship with others deepens best as people are gathered in each other's homes. This

does not mean to have a lack of privacy. Rather, it means to offer an example for the church members to follow.

"Temperate" holds the idea of being strong and self–controlled, especially in the area of appetites. The key thought here is moderation. No excesses are commendable, even in his work.

"Prudent" has a connotation of sensibility. He will not do certain things that will offend others. "He is not loud or rude or boisterous in places and situations where such behavior is not considered acceptable. He does not flaunt a 'macho' image to convey exaggerated images . . . he is not overly competitive in his activities."[19]

"Respectable," or of a good behavior, holds the idea of orderliness of personality, modesty and decorum. There is no room for vulgarity of speech, offensive actions, or any indecent dress.

"Able to teach" is not necessarily a gift of teaching. Rather, it means to be 'at home' in the Bible, and to know how to teach, advise, and correct. It indicates a person who loves the Bible, reads the Bible, memorizes the Bible, and lives the Bible. The pastor should be morally qualified to teach before he should be a gifted speaker. It is also a matter of being pleasant and having a good reputation so that the people will love to hear him or ask his opinion on a certain issue.

"Not addicted to wine" is a matter of controlling the appetites, an idea larger than only wine. Lynn Anderson notices than some Christians consider that they have the freedom to drink without becoming addicted. "But let us say emphatically that people who are obsessed with looking for freedoms, especially those freedoms that could jeopardize the call of God, are not people with a heart for God!"[20] They are slaves of their freedom.

"Not Pugnacious" means to avoid fights and to control the temper. The leader is not to be easy provoked, and, by no means, to hurt somebody in any way. Close to this qualification is "uncontentious." The pastor is not "to glory in a good argument,"[21] not to devastate opponents with words.

"Free from the love of money" is also an issue of control. The pastor should control the money, not let the money control him. He "wants no part in 'ill–gotten gain'. He makes sure that his money is earned fairly and honestly."[22] Money are deceitful because they promise a security and happiness they cannot offer. The most

precious goods in life cannot be obtained with money: health, knowledge, peace, forgiveness, joy…!

"Not self–willed" is a restriction against arrogance and selfishness. A pastor is not to be concerned about his satisfaction nor the accomplishments of his goals. An opposite of this bad trait is humbleness. To be humble means to accept the will of God gladly and to understand that God is in control. "A humble spirit is the hallmark of the man God uses."[23]

"Self controlled" is the last fruit of the Spirit. This characteristic is also very broad. Many other qualifications can stay under this umbrella. "The person who by the help of the Holy Spirit can control himself certainly will have no problem succeeding in any task that God had in mind for him to do."[24]

A pastor is to have a "good reputation with those outside the church." This means that he is to be a good neighbor who demonstrates the love of God to them. How is he known among his business colleagues? How does he treat people outside the church? The pastor represents the church in the society. The expectations of people are big concerning a spiritual Christian leader. Bob Russell implies the fact that purity is not only for the ministry in the church, but outside the church. "When we fail to live lives of purity, the world mocks."[25]

All these qualifications, presented in the three tests, describe what a pastor should be in order to start doing ministry. If these are passed successfully, there is a great chance to have a wonderful church with excellent leadership. But what are the functions of the pastor? Even the most spiritual pastor is of no help if he does nothing. So, what is a pastor supposed to do?

In conclusion, we have found that the character of the spiritual leader is the highest priority. He is a person with a calling from God and with a godly character. Above reproach is the main and all–inclusive characteristic of a pastor. He must be a self–leader being an example of a faithful and loving father and husband, managing his own house, being an example of character and spiritual wisdom, and having a good reputation among the people from outside the church. Only in this way, a spiritual leader is a role model for self–leadership, which is so needed in our society today!

NOTES

1 Cf. Alex D. Montoya, "Leading," in MacArthur, Jr. John, et al. *Rediscovering Pastoral Ministry, Shaping Contemporary Ministry with Biblical Mandates*, (Dallas: World Publishing, 1995), 286–87.

2 Montoya, *Leading*, 285.

3 We called spiritual leadership as a highest form of leadership, because, in spiritual contexts leaders can not use any means of urging people to follow or take action. They have only the power of their character and example. People follow because they want, not because they have to!

4 Cf. https://www.blueletterbible.org/comm/guzik_david/studyguide_1ti/1ti_3.cfm (Last accessed: November 10, 2016)

5 I will use the term "pastor" as the inclusive term for any type of spiritual leaders.

6 Norman Shawchuch, *Leading the Congregation* (Abington: Roger Henser, 1993), 115.

7 Shawchuck, 116.

8 Robert C. Anderson, *The Effective Pastor, A Practical Guide to the Ministry* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1985), 3–4.

9 Thomas C. Oden, *Pastoral Theology, Essentials of ministry* (San Francisco: Harper & Row Publishers, 1983), 55.

10 Anderson, *The Effective Pastor,* 4.

11 John MacArthur, Jr., *Answering the Key questions about Elders*, (Panorama City, CA: Grace to you, 1988), 14.

12 Edwin Louis Cole, *On becoming a real Man* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1992), 86.

13 Gardiner Spring, *The Power of the Pulpit, Thoughts addressed to Christians Ministers and those who hear them* (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1986), 145–47.

14 James Stalker, "The Preacher and His Models," in Anderson, *The Effective Pastor,* 4

15 Lynn Anderson, *They Smell like Sheep, Spiritual Leadership for the 21st Century* (West Monroe, Louisiana: Howard Publishing, 1997), 144–46.

16 Anderson, *The Effective Pastor,* 6.

17 Cf. https://www.blueletterbible.org/comm/guzik_david/studyguide_1ti/1ti_3.cfm (Last accessed: November 16, 2016)

18 Anderson, *They Smell like Sheep,* 149.

19 Anderson, *The Effective Pastor,* 7.

20 Anderson, *They Smell like Sheep,* 162.

21 Anderson, *The Effective Pastor,* 12.

22 Anderson, *They Smell like Sheep,* 161.

23 LeRoy Eims, *Be the Leader you were meant to be, Biblical Principles for leadership* (Wheaton IL: Victor Books Publishing, 1975), 31.

24 Anderson, *The Effective Pastor,* 19.

25 Bob Russell, *When God builds a Church, 10 principles for Growing a Dynamic Church* (West Monroe, Louisiana: Howard Books, 2000), 76.

Orthodox Church–State Relations in the European Context

Marian Gh. Simion, PhD
Harvard University Divinity School, USA
University of Pretoria, South Africa
msimion@orthodoxpeace.org

ABSTRACT: This paper surveys the historic relationships developed between Church and State in Eastern Europe during the past two millennia, and claims that—in light of their *path dependence*—the Orthodox Churches can play a positive role within the solidification process of the European Union. Based on ecclesiology, spirituality and historical records, national Orthodox Churches had been consistent assets in the public life; never attempting to eliminate (completely) the secular political power, but always willing to work it. A hiatus is also introduced with regard to the ambivalent relationship between nationalism and Orthodoxy.

KEY WORDS: Eastern Europe, Church–State, Third Way, nationalism European Union

Mircea Eliade once wrote that "we cannot conceive a European culture reduced to just its Western forms. . . . Europe is the predestined place of multiple, varied, and complementary creations, both spiritual and cultural. Europe is not—nor can it ever be—a monolith."[1] With these words in mind, Europe's unification was a dream that haunted generations of nations that lived on the European continent. This "unification" was often attempted by sword, through empires and states trumping religious, ethnic and cultural identities, or by peaceful methods, such as today with the unionist model of the European Union. Published initially under

the title, "Beyond Huntington's Gate: Orthodox Social Thinking for a Borderless Europe Preliminary Reflections,"[2] this paper surveys the historic relationships developed between Church and State in Eastern Europe during the past two millennia, and then claims that—in light of their path dependence—the Orthodox Churches can only play a positive within the solidification process of the European Union. Based on ecclesiology, spirituality and historical records, the Orthodox Churches had been consistent assets into public life, never claiming to replace,[3] but always willing to work with the secular authorities.

Church–State in Eastern Christianity

In Eastern Europe, since the creation of the nation states—a nineteen century project designed to defeat the Ottoman Empire—the Orthodox Churches have never experienced secularism in the way that the Anglo-Saxons did, merely as an 'armistice' between Church and State based on mutual non-involvement. This is because the East-Europeans have never been divided by religion in the way that the Anglo-Saxons were, for the Anglo-Saxon model to become a necessity. With the Orthodox Church representing anywhere from seventy to ninety-nine percent of the population, the state was merely interested in controlling, befriending, and even oppressing the Church rather than in separating itself from it. In the words of Teodor Baconsky, a Romanian theologian turned statesman, the nation state feared the Church to the point that it systematically mistreated and humiliated the Church, never offering an apology for its crimes. As Baconsky writes,

> Wearing a republican hat, burdened with the memory of the murders it has committed, and thrilled by its alleged mysticism, the modern state offers—on matters of religion—the gloomiest alternatives. It either *visibly persecutes the Church* (as Communism did recently), or it *entrenches the Church into political partisanship* and *manipulates it* for electoral purpose, transforming the Body of Christ into a resonance box, and into a docile voting machine. . . . Compared with

its previous record, the post-totalitarian state became a *bon enfant*. The ex- communists started handling the catechism swiftly, the television comforted us with 'pious' documentaries, and the public life became heavily loaded with 'worshipful' personalities always present at religious festivals, albeit their visible non-Christian behavior.[4]

Teodor Baconsky's determinism caricatures the behavior of the state as purely oppressive and Machiavellian, while somewhat overstating Church's vulnerability to political manipulations. Should this have been the case, one could have noticed it in the polls conducted in Romania to measure the trust level in public institutions where the Church ranks consistently higher than the State. Following the collapse of Communism, the numbers recorded by polling institutions such as *The Gallup Poll* indicate that the Romanian Orthodox Church has consistently enjoyed the top level of trust, followed by the National Army and Mass Media.[5]

It is for these reasons of mutual influence that neither the State nor the Church accepted the Anglo-Saxon version of secularism, regardless of the character of the incumbent political regime. The Church never ceased seeing itself as a moral warrant and as the defender of the weak, particularly because the Orthodox Church has always been a *Volkskirche*, or the people's Church.[6] With married priests usually assigned in their home village, the Church often functioned outside its institutional framework—more like a spiritual movement, occasionally influenced by elders living in nearby monasteries.

Historical Perspective on Orthodox Church-State Relations[7]

The decisive factors which determined the nature of Church–State relations in the history of Christianity emerged during the first three centuries, when the Church interacted with the State on positive and negative grounds, which were both religious and secular in nature.

The positive religious factors were related to the Church's ability to promote an innovative social doctrine that worked across the social strata, fostering an ethical equalitarianism, and bringing

a superior juridical thinking. Superior to all existing Greco–Roman religions, Christianity brought the promise of an imperial cohesion, strongly desired by the Romans. The positive secular factors included the sanctioning of state sovereignty by the Church as legitimate and divinely ordained ("Render to Caesar what belongs to Caesar and to God what belongs to God." Matthew 22:21). Second, the state redefined its social structures in contrast with the precepts of Christianity. Third, the state started promoting a lay culture in opposition to the religious culture promoted by the Church.

The negative religious factors emerged from a clash between Christianity and Greco-Roman pagan religions.

First, paganism served as a symbiosis between the Roman State authorities and polytheism to the extent that the State identified itself with, and eventually served as an element of accusation against the Christians, as these were often regarded as offenders of the emperor's public image and authority. In this case the State saw itself forced to defend paganism and punish Christianity.

Second, the pagan religions felt threatened by Christianity because their civic privileges decreased with the loss of membership into the Christian faith. Consequently, false accusations were often the easiest weapon against the Christians.

Third, the initial close relations between the Christian and the Jewish communities from the Roman Empire led to negative relations with the Romans. As the initial Christian missionary activities targeted the Jewish communities, the Jews were often troubled emotionally and ready to denounce the Christians to the Roman authorities. Most of the early Christian passion narratives, such as the martyrdom of Saint Stephen (Acts 6:8–8:3) and the *Martyrdom of the Holy Polycarp*[8] depict the Jews ready to denounce and even persecute the Christians. Fourthly, the anarchical and quasi–nihilist attitude of some millennial Christians led to disobedience towards the Roman authorities. Just to paraphrase Professor Floca, in the expectation of Christ's Second Coming, numerous early Christians were "filled with a religious zeal which pushed them into emotional disequilibrium, as they often displayed attitudes of rejection towards social establishments, civic authority and public order."[9]

The negative secular factors emerged from the strong sense of equalitarianism promoted by Christianity which altered the established class relations between slaves and their owners (threatening monopoly over property and workforce), ethnic groups (threatening the citizenry status), and spouses (social order)—all posing a real threat to the social establishments of the Roman State. Secondly, Christianity were usually labeled as a "Jewish sect" meaning a religious force that had access to masses, and a presumptive ally of the enemies of the Roman State. During A.D.55–56, Emperor Claudiu ordered the expulsion of all the Jews from Rome for reasons of public disorder and this included Christians of Jewish origins as well. Furthermore, less than 10 years after the Jewish revolt from Palestine, Emperor Nero ordered the bloodiest persecution against the Christians on similar accounts of anti-Jewish suspicion.[10]

1. The Roman–Byzantine Era

Following severe persecution against the Christians, one of the first imperial attempts to befriend the Church was a rather unsuccessful edict endorsed by Emperor Galerius in A.D.311, which abolished all the laws incriminating the Christians. As Eusebius of Caesarea writes in *De Vita Constantini*, "Galerius, in terror of death, issued the famous edict of toleration." Emperor Galeriu's edict declared that "Christians are allowed to exist again," and that the Christians, "will be able to hold from now on—freely—all their *conventicula* (gatherings); to build churches only under the condition that they would not disturb public order, and do not break the State laws." In exchange for this privilege, the Christians were required to pray to their God for the health of the Emperor, for the prosperity of the State, as well as their own prosperity.[11]

Two years later, a more successful edict issued this time by Constantine and Licinius granted the Christians with the right to exist and the recognition of their religion. Yet, this edict received strong opposition and was never implemented throughout the Roman Empire.

It was only two years later in A.D.313 through the Edict of Milan granted by Constantine and Licinius that Christianity became a religion equal to all other religions within the Roman Empire. The reasons invoked by Constantine and Licinius were those of public security.[12]

Emperor Constantine transformed the Christian Church into a dominant religious power even in relation to the official Roman cult despite his retaining the religious title of *Pontifex Maximus* until his deathbed, when he was baptized Christian. Admired for his wisdom, Emperor Constantine was proclaimed *sanctus* by the Christians and *divinus* by the pagans.[13] As a result, the Church not only became a public institution, but the concept of *freedom of religion*[14] was inaugurated for the first time, with the State as a neutral superseding warrantor of it. The succeeding barbaric invasions fostered a closer relationship between the Church and the State—particularly in the East—ensuring their mutual collaboration on issues of dogmatic unity and imperial defense.

The emperors usually called for ecumenical councils to ensure that the Church preserved its dogmatic unity, while their theological decisions were enforced through public law. If under Emperor Constantine the Church becomes one of the state religions, in A.D.380 Emperor Theodosius I (A.D.379–395) decreed that Christianity should be *the only* State religion. Starting with the second ecumenical council, every dogmatic decision became State law and the Church turned into the main political ally of the Roman Empire. As a political partner, the Church used its influence not only to consolidate the State's power internally, but also to cautiously sanction the State's policies of defense against the barbaric invasions, which began during the second half of the fourth century. In return, the State defended the Church against the pagans and heretics through the *nomocanons* and *novelas*, whereby the State rather than the Church was the one to enforce dogmatic orthodoxy. In A.D.418, Emperor Theodosius II (A.D.408–449), also known as "Theodosius the Young," elaborated *Codex Theodosianus* which included all the canons and dogmatic decisions from all Ecumenical Councils.

The Byzantine Emperor Flavius Marcian (A.D.450–457) inaugurated a new phase on Church-State relations. If by this time all the canons and dogmatic decisions of the Ecumenical Councils were already turned into public law, Emperor Marcian took a step further by declaring that the laws of the Church supersede the laws of the State, wherever a dispute might arise between the interests of the Church and those of the State.

The epoch of the Byzantine Emperor Justinian I (A.D.527–565) represents one of the most excruciating phases in the development of Church-State relations—a partnership emphatically known as *symphonia*, or the harmonious power sharing between the patriarch and the emperor. As the emperor becomes the civil ruler of the Church, all the bishops become state dignitaries. As direct representatives of the emperor the bishops were further invested with authority beyond that of public judges inherited insofar. Emperor Justinian called the Fifth Ecumenical Council in A.D.553 not only for doctrinal clarifications, but more for the purpose of strengthening the unity of the Church. Furthermore, he requested that all future bishops be highly erudite. A rather illustrative observation of Emperor Justinian's involvement in Church affairs is offered by Professor Floca, when he writes that,

> "by renewing strategic confessions of Christian faith either through State laws and regular legislation, or through the forewords and the introductions to his collections of laws (*Codex* and *Novele*), by adding other confessions through which the content of Nicaeo-Constantinopolitan the Symbol of Faith is reproduced, and by declaring all dogmatic decisions of the first four ecumenical councils as equal to the Scripture, Emperor Justinian appears in the posture of a Pontifex Maximus of the Church."[15]

The most notable piece of legislation inherited from Emperor Justinian are the *nomocanons*, which are mixed collections of Church canons and State laws concerning ecclesiastic affairs.

Under the Byzantine Emperor Heraclius (A.D.610–638) the relationship between Church and State intensified as a result of the Persian and the Arab attacks, yet political jealousy led to the first attempts for power separation. Despite the Church reaching its peak as a political power, its authority started diminishing. The

superseding authority of the Church laws inherited since Emperor Marcian found its decline with the *iconoclastic* crisis. This crisis put the Byzantine State not only in a posture of hostility towards the Church, but the Church was simply persecuted by the State. This crisis was resolved only under Ecumenical Patriarch Photius (835–867; 877–886). Yet, the legislation that was favorable to the Church stayed in force until 1453, when the Byzantine Empire vanished under the Ottomans.

2. The Post–Byzantine Era

With the collapse of the Byzantine Empire under the Ottomans in 1453, the new rulers did not eliminate the Church, but offered a *guaranteed inferiority*[16] and *captivity*.[17] In light of viewing authority as divinely ordained, the Church accepted the Islamic rule as legitimate, offering its obedience.

Although the Orthodox Church lost numerous assets, it recognized the right of the sultan to invest the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, and it retained its key positions inherited from the Byzantines, such as the recognition of bishops as State dignitaries with authority over the Christians only. During the Ottomans, all Slavic states along with the Romanian principalities inherited the Byzantine Church–State model of political relations. The Prince (or the Czar) was given the honor of a Byzantine Emperor, while the Metropolitan received that of a Patriarch's. The *bi-cephalous* Byzantine model was implemented in the feudal states with no hesitation, whereby bishops and abbots were respected as state dignitaries and feudal seniors. All political issues were discussed in councils that included both political rulers and religious leaders, with the Metropolitan as an honorary president. The main Byzantine legislation inherited by the feudal states included the typical Basilicals and nomocanons.

The *sultans* assumed the privileges that rested with the Byzantine emperors as heads of the State, and recognized the Ecumenical Patriarch not only as a religious leader of the Christians, but also as their political leader, or *ethnarch*.

Nevertheless, with the nationalist movement in South Eastern Europe, the Ecumenical Patriarchate started losing not only its fiscal control, but also its political authority in South-Eastern Europe as some prominent nations, such as the Greeks (1833), the Romanians (1865) and the Albanians (1922–1928–1937), broke away and established their own autocephalous churches, even patriarchates as in the Romanian case. The "Resolution" of the Great Local Synod of Constantinople of 1872 that incriminated nationalism (a.k.a. *ethnophyletism* or love for one's kin) as sinful and conflict-generating remained unsuccessful.

Religious pluralism, imposed by the secularist movement that came along with nationalism, opened new venues for western missionary activities to be conducted in South-Eastern Europe not only spontaneously by the Protestant churches, but more systematically by the Roman Catholic Church through *Concordats* or 'international' agreements signed between the Vatican and the new nation States.

Towards a Theory of Adaptability[18]

There is a general consensus amongst the Orthodox ethicists that the Orthodox Church does not have a clear definition of the State, beyond that of an ephemeral, worldly authority. For instance, the standard textbook on orthodox ethics used in the Romanian theological schools with the endorsement of the Holy Synod of the Romanian Orthodox Church states that,

> "According to the ethos of our Church, the Christian Ethics is concerned with the State only within the framework of the State's mission as a 'political and juridical unit of human society on a limited territory.' Therefore, the Church does not have its own concept of State, which would be imposed into the consciousness of the faithful. According to our teachings, it is the authority of the State itself and not of a particular political system or doctrine that has divine origins. 'Let every soul be subject to the governing authority. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are

appointed by God.' (Romans 13:1)" The Church regards the State—whose organic basis is given by the people living on a specific territory—as a 'moral and organic unit' entrusted with the mission of defending and promoting the common good, through laws and policies, which are the general social premises necessary for progress."[19]

This is because in its history, the Orthodox Church has been subject to a variety of governing systems which manifested completely different attitudes toward the Church, ranging from persecution to power sharing. Therefore, one can only have a clear perception of the relationship between Church and State in a historical context, rather than limited to a particular period of time. The later approach can only lead to reductionism and confusion, as one expert in the field puts it,

> Whenever one speaks of Byzantium, one instinctively contemplates over two main sources of authority, the Emperor and the Patriarch of Constantinople, or the Empire and the Church. This relationship representing the two sources of power, the profane and the spiritual, is usually reduced to one single pejorative term: *caesaropapism*. This term is as obsolete in the history of statehood ideas as the term *theocracy* itself.[20]

While in the West, the destruction of Rome in A.D.410 by the Visigoths left a Church immature and vulnerable to embracing claims for political governance, in the East, the Church faced this political vacuum only a thousand years later when the Byzantine Empire fell under the Ottomans in 1453. By that time the Eastern Church already had a compelling record on how to handle political power and accepted the Ottomans as a legitimate authority, yet only within the constraints of Paul's endorsement of political obedience. (Romans 13:1)

Following the destruction of Rome by the Visigoths, the Western Church took upon itself the duty of governance at the expense of its spirituality, while Augustine's *Civitate Dei* ceased being viewed in its eschatological dimension. In the absence of an imperial power, the Western Church had no option but to adopt the concept

of just war[21] for the purpose of defending its community *externally* (against the barbarians) and *internally* (against the lawbreakers). Later, with the "Germanization of Christianity," the Western Church became sociologically vulnerable to a culture of "a high level of group solidarity and a warrior aristocracy,"[22] which led to the Crusades and the turmoil which erupted into the Protestant movement and religious nationalism.

The Eastern Church disposed of its responsibilities with the policing and defending the community because it never faced a vacuum of imperial power. Unlike with Alaric the Visigoth, Mehmet II the Conqueror had a far more sophisticated understanding of Christianity, as Islam saw itself as an Abrahamic faith, sharing limited affinities with Christianity. In other words, while the name of Jesus was completely meaningless to Alaric, for Mehmet II the Conqueror, Jesus was the last greatest prophet before Muhammad.

Looking comprehensively into the relationships between Church and State in the history of Eastern Christianity, one can easily agree that this relationship was always a moving target. Emerging from the concept of *hypostatic union*, whereby Jesus Christ was recognized as fully divine and fully human, the Eastern Church defined itself as a *divine* and *human* institution. In practical terms, this meant that when the human aspect of the Church was under severe jeopardy (anti-Christian persecutions under the Romans, Ottomans and Communism), the divine aspect of the Church (the Triumphant Church), was able to thrust sufficient sense of spiritual triumph into the hearts of its flock.

In other words, the Orthodox clergy never governed in the public life in terms of policing and defending the community due to inherent theological constraints imposed by the nature of the Eastern Church. Besides, under conditions of persecution, the divine nature of the Church turned this institution into a timeless moral force which transformed a martyr into a saint.

Based on these preconditions, the relationship between Church and State developed on the ground of specific historical and theological constraints. According to an Orthodox canon lawyer, "in order to fulfill its mission, the Church performs its work through people, and the people live under the conditions of time."[23] Conditions

of time imply the existence of cross-pressures and regulations imposed by the world in which the members of the Church live. In this context Christians must find ways to remain obedient to their authorities, and yet make their decisions on the principles of the Gospel, since none can serve two masters. (Matthew 6:24)

Regardless of the guaranteed obedience that the Christians offered to the state, the Church was treated more or less friendly, as its loyalty resided with the principles of the Gospel.

This "moving target" type of relationship is best described by a proverbial expression recorded by a medieval Moldavian chronicler, Miron Costin, who rhetorically wondered whether people live under the Age, or the Age under the will of the people. As implied by this expression, the members of the Church dangled between imposing their moral will within the state—when conditions were permissible—and being subjected to State oppression whenever their religious beliefs posed threat or discomfort to state policies. The great success of the strategy of adaptability consists in the fact that it ensured the survival of the Church, as it neither antagonized the political power, whenever it proved completely hostile to the Church, nor accepted to be instrumentalized, whenever the political power proved friendly. This is because, while the Church endorses and legitimizes the State as divinely ordained authority, it does not pledge its loyalty to it. This is the reason why, the Church neither revolutionized against the State, nor obeyed it whenever the State demanded something contrary to the Gospel.

Leadership between Religion and Secularism

During the past four centuries, the model of statehood proposed by Hugo Grotius (1583–1645) was mainly an armistice meant to end sectarian violence in Western Europe over the issues of Christian doctrine and political loyalty which emerged from *cuius region, eius religio* ("Whose rule, his religion") disputes. It was only in 1648 that this model found practical applicability with the signing of the Peace treaties in the Westphalian towns of Munster and Osnabruck. These treaties contributed to Europe's fragmentation

in the way that they legitimized the existence of Lutheran and Calvinist States, they have crystallized a political distribution of power between France, Sweden and Netherlands and somewhat Germany (split into several small States),[24] and they led to the emergence of nationalism as a political ideology.

Nationalist ideology proceeded to the invention of tradition,[25] and to the creation of the myth of common descent.[26] Furthermore, nationalism shifted the notion of sacredness from a universal language (Latin) to indigenous languages which became sacred in their own respect, and endorsed a sense of group superiority that solidified the idea of a nation state.[27] The Peace of Westphalia engineered the secularist movement which led not only to a separation between the Church and the State, but to a declaration of war against organized religion itself. By removing organized religion from the political epicenter, West European secularism created an existential vacuum of meaning and loyalty that was filled by the ideologies of nationalism and patriotism, both built on the dualist model of 'insider versus outsider,' or 'us versus them.' Europe's fragmentation was further ignited by the concept of state sovereignty which justified the concentration of power internally. This process was hastened by the effects of the German *pietism*, as detailed by Koppel S. Pinson in his highly documented 1934 book, *Pietism as a Factor in the Rise of German Nationalism*.

> "Pietism," says Pinson, "brought into the eighteen century Germany an emotionalism and enthusiasm which were hitherto lacking. This provided the emotional basis for subsequent nationalism. In addition, Pietism introduced and diffused the concepts of individuality and of multiplicity and variety, which provided the doctrine of nationalism with a philosophic basis. Pietism, therefore, in appealing to the lower classes gave them the greater feeling of self-respect and prestige and thus helped to cement the widely separated classes into a unified whole. The appeal to the lower classes involved, in turn, a more intensive cultivation of the language of the lower classes, German, as opposed to the learned Latin and the aristocratic French, a more concentrated effort at public education and an increased concern with social welfare and philanthropy."[28]

Consequently, the leaders of the state became accountable only to their own citizenry when they acted internationally, rather than to universal moral norms imposed by religious ethics.[29] The main consequence of the war against organized religion was the state's claim to fulfill the duties towards the public. In other words, the state replicated the Augustinian version of *God's City* which found expression in the Church's assumed responsibilities towards the public such as social justice, policing and defense. In the absence of religious ethics, secularist ideologies argued over the distribution of wealth, leading to totalitarian extremes such as Fascism (corporate control of wealth), and Communism (proletarian control of wealth.) Sobbing over these historical realities, a Romanian theologian wrote recently that

> All these years, our continent was haunted by the destructive gamut of totalitarian ideologies and utopias, which were based on race-hating (Nazism) and class-hating (Communism). By illegitimately mixing theology with politics in a *sui generis* fusion of a 'secularized' religion and a 'religious' politics, these utopias represented 'perverse imitations' of Judaism in Nazism and of Christianity in Communism.[30]

Currently, with the rapid diminishing of the Grotian statist model in Europe one should look into revitalizing the Kantian universalistic model, *not apart from, but in alliance with* Christian universalism— "there is neither Jew nor Greek" (Galatians 3:28) —which will solidify Europe's new identity. In the absence of Christianity, the EU might become subjected to a limited vision and to a guaranteed failure because the current loyalty to a dogmatic secularism fails to build durable coalitions.

As the Kantian model encourages a more cosmopolitan outlook, stressing trans-national solidarity (*jus cosmopoliticum*);[31] one has yet to wrestle with questions of procedure imposed by the current fiscal expression of globalization. One can make the case that with the collapse of communism, even the fiscal expression of globalization has chances to succeed once it manages to denounce the corporate ideology which currently dominates international trade. Or, in the words of Richard Falk, in creating "regional compassionate

states"—as the EU attempts to become—one should undoubtedly legitimize a grassroots type of globalization "from below" rather than a globalization "from above" dictated by corporate interests.[32]

Globalization is very complicated not only for cultural reasons, but more so for economic reasons. The economic challenges imposed by globalization are best identified by Richard Falk who emphasizes that the integrative process of globalization affects the world as whole, not just particular states or unions of states. Second, in Falk's view, globalization is often associated with the rise of financial trade and markets which are not subjected to the territorial control of governments. Third, the private sector has become increasingly transnational, diminishing the importance of territorial boundaries. Fourth, international institutions such as the United Nations are anachronistic with contemporary realities, because the UN was designed when states had full control over trade and financial markets. Fifth, the transnational private sector along with the global civil society has no right of participation or representation within the UN.[33]

On the other hand, globalization is a thorny phenomenon because of its potential in creating cultural and religious mutations. These mutations might damage the stability of societies whose outlook on life is grounded in values now trumped by fiscal interests. In the words of a prominent Orthodox theologian, Ioan Ică, Jr.,

> "The destiny of cultural traditions and religions in a global world is symptomatic. Folk traditions are turned either into themes for ethnocentric essayistic speculations, or into folklore and objects of ethnography. Folk traditions become products for entertainment, being degraded into artisan manifestations, folkloric tourism, or into a type of entertainment aimed to the private consume of a community that sees itself as a warrant for historical consensus. Religions, on the other hand, either replicate themselves in a collectivist fashion based on identity and extreme, superseding, and anti–modernist movements of fundamentalist fashion—case in which they are ready to display a radical, exclusivist and polemic character— or they melt into a diffuse individual religiosity which is eclectic, relativistic, anonymous and syncretistic, as well as institutionally and politically disengaged."[34]

The Third Way

In the new political theories of Europe, the alternative to Richard Falk's proposal for a "compassionate state" based on *social democracy* is often referred to as *The Third Way*. This concept is often credited to the *EU's Founding Fathers*, such as Alcide de Gasperi, Konrad Adenauer, Robert Shuman, Jean Monet, and Denis de Rougemont who are currently the most influential Christian Democrat political philosophers.

The Third Way is a political concept of social democracy which mediates between the *left–wing* politics, based on *democratic socialism*, and *right–wing* politics, based on *laissez–faire capitalism*. According to Anthony Giddens of the London School of Economics, The Third Way values 'equality,' 'protection of the vulnerable,' 'freedom as autonomy,' 'no rights without responsibility,' 'no authority without democracy,' 'cosmopolitan pluralism' and 'philosophic conservatism.'

> "The overall aim of third way politics," says Anthony Giddens, "should be to help citizens pilot their way through the major revolutions of our time: *globalization, transformations in personal life* and our *relationship to nature*. Third way politics should take a positive attitude towards globalization—but, crucially, only as a phenomenon ranging much more widely than the global marketplace. Social democrats need to contest economic and cultural protectionism, the territory of the far right, which sees globalization as a threat to national integrity and traditional values."[35]

It is often contended that this political concept originated from the *Subsidiary Principle* of the Catholic social doctrine in symbiosis with Communitarian Personalism.[36] This Subsidiary Principle argues that between the state and the citizen there should be a multitude of intermediary and autonomous groups working towards the common good. Or, in the explanation of a Catholic ethicist, David Hollenbach, S.J.,

> "When communities are small or of intermediate size, they enable persons to come together in ways that can be vividly experienced. The bonds of communal solidarity formed in them enable the persons to act together, empowering them to shape some of the contours of public life and its larger social institutions such as the state and the economy. In a democratic society, the government does not rule but rather serves the social 'body' animated by the activity of these intermediate communities."[37]

Built on the principle of non-trust, a *Subsidiary State* is designed to be decentralized precisely to diminish the natural tendency of power gravitation towards central monopoly. In other words, as the Romanian Orthodox ethicist, Ioan I. Ică, Jr., puts it,

> "The Subsidiary-State is designed to protect both the state against abusive individuals, or groups of individuals, as well as to protect the civil society and its groups against the abuse of the State."[38]

Despite a visible appeal to religion displayed by the EU's Founding Fathers, the first draft of the EU Constitution continued the battle against religion as the text refused to acknowledge Europe's religious past. Loyal to a dogmatic secularism, the EU still refuses the obvious, thus placing the EU on the grounds of Anglo–Saxon historic resentments against the Vatican. Furthermore, with the inclusion of Romania and Bulgaria into the EU, two more Orthodox Churches bring their political influence and rhetoric on a public debate that seeks to recognize Europe's religious values. Obsessed with the remembrance of the Thirty Years Wars and with anti-Vatican resentments, West European secularist ideologues are neither accustomed to the East European religious experience in the public life, nor do they care learning about it.

A United States of Europe: *A Two–Factor Proposal*

This question was pluckily raised by one of the most influential Orthodox theologians, Dumitru Stăniloae[39] during World War II in response to a proposal of appeasement made by the Archbishop of

York.[40] In Stăniloae's reading, the Archbishop of York suggested that, for purpose of cost, it should be in the interest of smaller states to secure their survival by joining the larger ones. While commending this idea as in complete agreement with Christianity's universalism, Stăniloae seemed particularly concerned with the question of procedure. Just like Max Weber, who claimed that an organization could not be stable unless it benefited from the two factors such as *prophetic vision* and *institution building*,[41] Stăniloae recommended that the only way in which a United Europe could be accomplished, is for the institution building efforts to adopt the Gospel as an ideological fundament.

> "In order to achieve the United States of Europe it is necessary to first of all Christianize the souls," wrote Dumitru Stăniloae. "Within the framework of the League of Nations, Europe has a recent experience that through simple paragraphs from the statutes, or through brotherhoods established on ideas other than Christian, one can not achieve durable peace and unity amongst Europe's people. The demon of human selfishness displays its power through the behavior of groups, which is exaggerated and deviated. Subjected to a strong human selfishness and pride, the national sentiment turns into an exclusivist imperialist passion and desire to submit other smaller nations. Who can guarantee that within the United States of Europe, unless the few strong nations would clash with one another in their endeavor towards supremacy, would guarantee the inherent rights of smaller nations, would cease to bring them under their sphere of influence, and would prevent any attempt towards self affirmation?"[42]

A similar two factor proposal was later suggested by Samuel P. Huntington[43] during the late 1960s, who recommended that international development should be based both on *ideologies of social change* along with *institution building*. Dumitru Stăniloae contended that for the "United States of Europe" to ever become a stable institution it needed a *prophetic vision* anchored on Europe's basic *religious identity* which is Christian.

> "It would be both a naiveté and a grave danger to create an organization not on the basis of what the people are now, but on the basis of one's dreams and imagination. Soon, reality will take revenge and will sweep you away altogether with your organization, bringing also great disappointment."[44]

If Dumitru Stăniloae's contention was anticipatory (as he wrote this in 1939), the French vote on the EU Constitution of the early 2005 represented but the epitome of his argument.

Engaging the Church

It is often argued that in order for the EU to secure its political stability, it has to recognize Europe's Christian values. Yet, these values need to be recognized not only by the EU as a secular institution, but also by all Christian churches through an inter-confessional dialogue conducted in a manner that will avoid sectarian exclusivism. This process can receive substantial guidance from the dynamics of the existing ecumenical movement. With the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew II denunciating *ethnophyletism* as a political ideology that contradicts Orthodoxy's universalism and is often conducive of conflicts, the Orthodox Churches could prove stable allies in EU's institution building endeavors. In a long term, the Orthodox Churches not only will assist in breaking down ethnocentric selfishness, but they will unavoidably help redirecting the ethnic creations and values to the benefit of all.

Cultural Dialogue

In the mid–1990s, Professor Tomáš Špidlík of the Pontifical Institute in Rome, in a lecture entitled, "The difficulties of democracy in the Slavic countries,"[45] made a few provocative observations in reference to cultural disparities between the Slavs and the Anglo–Saxons. Sworn to paint an assertive contrast, most of the patterns identified by Špidlík, to a certain extent, seem to be common throughout Eastern Europe.

These patterns include the *government's personalism*, *government's excessive sensibility to criticism*, *inseparability of truth from the person claiming it*, *fidelity towards person*, *analytical or synthetic truth*, *truth as life*, *sacredness of the word*, and *the mentality of compromise*.

Speaking of *government's personalism*, Professor Špidlík invokes Homiakov's story of the mother who despite severe poverty is yet organized well enough to provide for her children and even build a church with her savings. This same image of dependency towards a caring authority is transposed into the Slavophil's dream of a *batiuşka czar* (daddy ruler), a mentality which, during communism, eliminated any consciousness of personal responsibility towards the common good. Concerning the *government's excessive sensibility to criticism*, Špidlík writes that,

> "They say that for an American, criticizing and scrutinizing the government is not just a privilege, but a duty of the free citizen. … On the contrary, in the Slavic Orthodox countries, criticizing the Government often creates confusion, while the bringing into the open of mistakes and inabilities of politicians is often perceived as a surgical intervention that lacks an anesthesia."[46]

Nevertheless, the social attitudes towards people and values that emerge from cultural observations should be less regarded as obstacles between East and West, and more as opportunities for mutual cultural self-knowledge. Despite the highly acclaimed western individualism, the eastern fidelity towards a public person reveals new depths of individualism, particularly on issues of leadership. As Professor Špidlík writes,

> "Democracy presupposes a continuous recycling of leaders. Those who today get into positions of maxim responsibility, tomorrow they fall and turn into simple citizen. And, they have to accept this course of events with a smile of the face. The Slavic Orthodox reaction to such changes is usually referred to through comments such as: 'Poor him, yesterday he was famous, but today … just look at him!' An Englishman hearing such sobbing from a Slav had furiously replied: 'Why poor him! He did his job, the hell with him! Who cares!'"[47]

As Špidlík's comments raise questions of dialogue between Eastern and Western Europe, one should note that criticism, even if constructive—is a dynamic of personal sensibilities. While it might be easier for an Anglo–Saxon in finding compromises within contradicting challenges, for an East European, accepting a solution that one disagrees with, is usually regarded as a personal loss often accompanied by an emotional display.[48] While personal detachment during the decision-making process is a status quo in Western Europe, for an East European, personal relations dominate any sphere of social activity.[49]

Conclusion

Therefore, in the context of the EU's institution building process, it is highly unlikely that the Eastern Churches will ever seek political power as to govern in the public life. Yet, it is very likely that the Eastern Churches will not ignore public policies that contradict the basic precepts of the Gospel and will manifest their influence through electoral venues. As the Church is here to stay, the EU leaders need to be open and engage the Eastern Churches as partners rather than rivals.

The contribution that the Orthodox Churches could make towards the EU's institution building efforts can hardly be underestimated. Despite its record of occasional endorsement of a *primordialist* nationalism, Orthodoxy offers an inherent counterbalance to nationalist conflicts by carefully selecting, sanctioning, and universalizing the most exquisite national creations. Apart from bringing a new attitude towards life and values, Eastern Christianity seems sufficiently prepared to redirect the feelings of patriotism towards the larger European family, while reconciling political partisanships, serving as a moral warrant in interpreting law and justice, and promoting world peace. While safeguarding private entrepreneurship in light of the *Parable of the Talents* (Matthew 25:14–30), the Church can also temper political and fiscal abuses which are conducive of political extremism and violence.

Eastern Christianity could make not only towards building a borderless Europe but also a borderless world cannot be ignored or treated superficially. History demonstrates that cultures and civilizations have the inherent capacity to generate complex zones of dialogue which often engender the most exquisite blending of cultural and civilizational establishments. Huntington's contentious *fault line* in Europe, alleged to separate Transylvania from the rest of Romania, not only proved an ideological fiasco, but demonstrated Huntington's lack of familiarity with the existing cultural blending of an indigenous form of *Latin Orthodoxy*. Writing from the perspective of this cultural and spiritual mix dominant in Transylvania, Dumitru Stăniloae heralds the strong potential for cultural fusions between cultures and spiritualities. Apart from the Greek, Slavic and Middle Eastern spiritual influences, Stăniloae commends the Transylvanian mix as a unique experience with an unchallenged potential. As the Romanians lived at the buffer zone of history, situated between the Ottomans, Russians and Austro-Hungarians, they became a unique nation in understanding how to bridge cultures and spiritualities between East and West, and how to offer criticism on strategies related to cultural communication.

> "If we will abandon our Orthodox tradition, not only will we cease to be a *living bridge between East and West*, but we will also lose our innate trait of being a unique synthesis of spirituality. . . . In our spirituality we combined the Latin lucidity, or the confidence in a rational apprehension of the real, specific to the West, with the sentiment of the impenetrable mystery of existence, specific to the East Europeans."[50]

In conclusion, in order for a borderless Europe to function beyond Samuel Huntington's *Clash of Civilizations* determinism, the Gospel must be allowed to speak in its proper version, and not in its reversal, as scornfully[51] put by Mircea Vulcănescu, who says

> Blessed are the *wealthy*—answers this Age to Christ—for they have the kingdom of this world, and there is no world other than this.
> Blessed are the *strong*, for they shall rule the earth.

> Blessed are the *terrible and unmerciful*, for they shall fear nobody.
> Blessed are *those who laugh and are happy*, for they need nothing else.
> Blessed are the *bold ones*, for they shall be remembered.
> Blessed are *those sowing wind*, for they shall be called the sons of the tempest.
> Blessed are the *sneaky* for they shall hear many secrets.
> Blessed will you be when they shall worship and glorify you, lying for you, for you already received your reward here on now, and tomorrow you will be forgotten.
> *Wealth*, the supreme ideal of the man obsessed to pull from life as much and intense earthly joy as possible, during the short time given to the man for this illusion.
> *Power* is the means towards achieving wealth.
> *Shrewdness, aggressiveness, false accusation, meanness, self-appraisal*, are all tools which make you gain the power and keep it. Once you have gained it this will *make up the essential values of the modern moral code*, even when your hypocrisy will present all of these as benefic.[52]

NOTES

1 Mircea Eliade, *The Fate of Romanian Culture*, Bucureşti: Athena Press, 1996.
2 This paper was initially published under the title, "Beyond Huntington's Gate: Orthodox Social Thinking for a Borderless Europe Preliminary Reflections," in a festschrift titled, *Antioch Agenda: Essays on the Restorative Church in Honor of Orlando E. Costas,* edited by Daniel Jeyaraj, Robert W. Pazmino and Rodney L. Petersen (New Delhi: ISPCK Press, 2007), 89–112. The "Huntington's Gate" expression was used symbolically in relation to Orlando E. Costas' work *Outside the Gate: Mission Beyond Christendom* (Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2005), and Samuel P. Huntington's *Clash of Civilizations* theory (published first as an article in *Foreign Affairs*, then as a book *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of the World Order* Simon & Schuster Paperbacks: New York, London, Toronto, Sydney, 1996). While Orlando Costas referred to a global mission that is open to cultural differences Samuel P. Huntington placed a deterministic spin on cultural conflict. By contending that Orthodox Christianity belongs to a culture which Western Europe can hardly accept, Huntington predicted an unavoidable clash along the borders of former empires in Europe. To Huntington's disappointment, following this ideological notoriety, the Orthodox Churches have even increased their ecumenical cooperation with the Catholic and Protestant Churches from

Western Europe, while Transylvania remained a part of Romania. Furthermore, as of January 1, 2007, both Romania and Bulgaria became full members of the European Union.

3 An exception is the Moscow *Raskolnik* community, which not only split the Russian Orthodox Church into the official Russian Orthodox Church and Old Believers during the 17th century, but also claimed that the authority of the Church should supersede the authority of the State.

4 Teodor Baconsky, "Decadenţa etatismului şi renaşterea ortodoxă," in *Gândirea Socială a Bisericii: fundamente, documente analize, perspective*, edited by Ioan I. Ică, Jr. and Germano Marani (Sibiu: Deisis Press, 2002), 354.

5 With minimal variations, the data collected between 1994 and 2006 indicate the following average: The Church 87%; National Army 67%; Media 62%; Mayor 45%; President 40%; Police 37%; Banks 28%; Government 26%; Justice 22%; NGOs 23%; Parliament 18%; and Unions 17%. For datasets recorded between 1994 and 2004, see, *Barometrul de Opinie Publica, Romania, octombrie 2004*; The Gallup Organization, Romania (Bucharest: Gallup, 2004), 53. http://www.gallup.ro/romana/poll_ro/releases_ro/pr041020_ro/pr041020_ro.htm   (Last accessed January 27, 2007.) For additional datasets see Mircea Comşa, Andrei Gheorghiţă, Ovidiu Voicu *Barometrul de Opinie Publică* published by the Soros Foundation for an Open Society, October 2006 http://www.gallup.ro/download/BOP31_oct2006.pdf (Last accessed January 27, 2007)

6 Radu Preda, "Biserica în stat. Şansele şi limitele unei dezbateri," in *Gândirea Socială a Bisericii: fundamente, documente analize, perspective*, edited by Ioan I. Ică, Jr. and Germano Marani (Sibiu: Deisis Press, 2002), 369.

7 This historical outlook is based on a chapter titled, "The Relation of the Church with the State" from *Orthodox Canon Law: Church Legislation and Administration*, written by the prominent Orthodox canon lawyer Ioan N. Floca. Professor Floca's compendium is used as the standard textbook in all Romanian Orthodox Faculties of Theology in Romania, and it is endorsed by the Holy Synod of the Romanian Orthodox Church. See Ioan N. Floca *Drept Canonic Ortodox, Legislaţie şi Administraţie Bisericească* Vol. 1 (Bucureşti: Editura Institutului Biblic şi de Misiune al Bisericii Ortodoxe Române, 1990), 279–307.

8 "The Encyclical Epistle of the Church at Smyrna Concerning The Martyrdom of The Holy Polycarp," in *Ante–Nicene Fathers* Vol.1 edited by Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson (Peabody, MA: Hedrickson Publishers, 2004), 39–44.

9 Ioan N. Floca *Drept Canonic Ortodox, Legislaţie şi Administraţie Bisericească*, Vol. 2 (Bucureşti: Editura Institutului Biblic şi de Misiune al Bisericii Ortodoxe Române, 1990), 288.

10 Floca, *Drept Canonic Ortodox*, Vol. 2., 292.

11 Cf. Philip Schaff, ed., *Nicene and Post–Nicene Fathers* Vol. 1 (Peabody, MA: Hedrickson Publishers, 2004), 416. The text of the edict is found in the work of Lactantius *De mortibus persecutorum* (cf. Philip Schaff, ed., *Nicene and Post–Nicene Fathers* Vol. 7 (Peabody, MA: Hedrickson Publishers, 2004), 320–321.

12 Floca, *Drept Canonic Ortodox*, Vol. 2, 293–294.

13 Eusebius of Caesarea *Ecclesiastic History X, 5, 1–17* and Lactantiu *De mortibus persecutorum* in Philip Schaff, ed., *Nicene and Post–Nicene Fathers* Vol. 7 (Peabody, MA: Hedrickson Publishers, 2004), 2–12.

14 "It being clearly in accordance with the tranquility of our times that each one should have the liberty of choosing and worshiping whatever deity he pleases." Eusebius of Caesarea *Ecclesiastic History X, 5, 8*, cf. Philip Schaff, ed., *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers* Vol. 1 (Peabody, MA: Hedrickson Publishers, 2004), 379.

15 Floca *Drept Canonic Ortodox,* Vol. 2, 299–300.

16 'Guaranteed inferiority' is an expression coined by the Oxford scholar Timothy (Kalistos) Ware in his work *The Orthodox Church* (Penguin Group, 1993), and it emerges from the nature of Islamic Law (Sharia), which based on the *Constitution of Medina*, regarded Christianity and Judaism as a heretical rather than false religions. In this way, jihad is not to be declared against Christians and Jews, but be offered a status of inferiority and subjected to high taxation. See Majid Khadduri, *War and Peace in the Law of Islam*, Baltimore, London: The John Hopkins Press, 1969.

17 'Captivity' is a term preferred by Steven Runcimann in his seminal work *The Great Church in Captivity: A Study of the Patriarchate of Constantinople from the Eve of the Turkish Conquest to the Greek War of Independence*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985.

18 The expression *theory* is not based on heuristic devices imposed by the rules of social sciences, but it is used in its generic and etymologic sense, whereby the Greek word *theoria*, means *looking at*. In other words, this "theory of adaptability" as related to Church-State relations in the Orthodox Christian experience, is based on an observation of historical records. Yet, as history provides sufficient reliable data, one can easily assume that a "theory of adaptability" could be built and tested under the rules of social sciences.

19 Nicolae Mladin, Orest Bucevschi, Constantin Pavel, Ioan Zăgrean, *Teologia Morală Ortodoxă* Vol.2 (Alba Iulia: Editura Reîntregirea, 2003), 301.

20 Preda, 367.

21 Roland H. Bainton *Christian Attitudes Toward War and Peace: A Historical Survey and Critical Re-evaluation*, ninth printing (Nashville: Abingdon, 1979), 53–100.

22 James C. Russell, *The Germanization of Early Medieval Christianity: A Sociohistorical Approach to Religious Transformation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 212.

23 Floca, *Drept Canonic Ortodox*, Vol.2, 279.

24 Antonio Cassese, *International Law*, second edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 22–45.

25 Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, eds, *The Invention of Tradition*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992.

26 Patrick J. Geary, *The Myth of Nations*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003.

27 Benedict Anderson *Imagined Communities: Reflexions on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism*, New York: Verso Press, 2006.

28 Koppel S. Pinson *Pietism as a Factor in the Rise of German Nationalism*, News York: Columbia University Press, 1934, as quoted by John B. Moose in his review published in *Church History*, Vol.4, No.1. March (1935): 79. Regarding the extensive research performed by Pinson, John B. Moose points out the seventeen pages of bibliography tracing German pietism from sermons, moralistic works, religious poetry, etc. John B. Moose "Pietism as a Factor in the Rise of German Nationalism," *Church History*, Vol.4, No.1. March (1935): 79–80.

29 Richard Falk, *Religion and Humane Global Governance* (London: Palgrave Macmillan Press, 2001), 1–12.

30 Ioan I Ică, Jr., "Biserică, societate, gândire în Răsărit, în Occident și în Europa de azi," in *Gândirea Socială a Bisericii: fundamente, documente analize, perspective*, edited by Ioan I. Ică, Jr. and Germano Marani (Sibiu: Deisis Press, 2002), 47. See also A. Bensancon, *La confusion des langues La crise ideologique de l'Eglise* (Calmann-Levym, 1978), see note 28.

31 Cassese, 3–21; Falk, 42.

32 Falk, 12.

33 Ibid., 61–76.

34 Ioan I Ică, Jr., "Globalizarea: Mutații și Provocări," in *Gândirea Socială a Bisericii: fundamente, documente analize, perspective*, edited by Ioan I. Ică, Jr. and Germano Marani (Sibiu: Deisis Press, 2002), 489. See also *Biserica în Misiune: Patriarhia Română la ceas aniversar* (București: Editura Institutului Biblic și de Misiune al Bisericii Ortodoxe Române, 2005), 694–695.

35 Anthony Giddens, *The Third Way: The Renewal of Social Democracy* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2003), 64.

36 Ică, Jr., "Biserică, societate, gândire în Răsărit . . . ," 47.

37 David Hollenbach, *The Common Good and Christian Ethics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 102.

38 Ică, Jr., "Biserică, societate, gândire în Răsărit . . . ," 49.

39 Dumitru Stăniloae, "Statele Unite ale Europei?" in *Telegraful Român,* LXXXVII, nr.47 (1939): 1. See also, Dumitru Stăniloae, *Națiune și Creștinism*, București: Editura Elion, 2004.

40 Dumitru Stăniloae quotes *The Church Times* October 27, 1939

41 Max Weber's work *On Charisma and Institution Building*, Selected Papers Edited and with an Introduction by S.N. Eisenstadt, Chicago, London: The University of Chicago Press, 1968.

42 Dumitru Stăniloae *Națiune și Creștinism* (București: Editura Elion, 2004), 99.

43 Responding to the developmentalist studies of the 1950s and 1960s, Samuel P. Huntington in his 1968 influential book *Political Order in Changing Societies: The Governing of Restless Nations* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press), suggested that "instead of focusing on social change, scholars and government officials should concentrate on building strong institutions capable of handling change, such as armies, bureaucracies, and political parties." Cf. Howard J.

Wiarda *Introduction to Comparative Politics: Concepts and Processes*, second edition (Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth, 2000), 57.

44 Dumitru Stăniloae *Națiune și Creștinism* (București: Editura Elion, 2004), 100.

45 Tomáš Špidlík "Le difficoltà della democrazia nei Paesi slavi," in *Politica dell'Est. Una lettura critia del ruolo dei cristiani nel sociale e nel politico*, a cura del Centro Aletti (Roma: Ed. Lipa, 1995), 17–24. See also Tomáš Špidlík „Dificultățile democrației în țările din Estul Europei," in *Gândirea Socială a Bisericii: fundamente, documente analize, perspective*, edited by Ioan I. Ică, Jr. and Germano Marani, Deisis Press: Sibiu, 2002), 385–390.

46 Tomáš Špidlík „Dificultățile democrației," 387.

47 Ibid.

48 In my personal missionary work towards establishing St. Parascheva Romanian Orthodox Church in Boston I often noted that if a person's idea gets classified as lower in priority, that person takes this as a personal insult.

49 As Professor Špidlík concludes, The Orthodox, and the Slavs are indeed capable of democracy, but they first need to know and respect one another to be able to build a harmony from opposing elements. If they will succeed in realizing this, they will certainly play a very significant role in our increasingly pluralist society. See, Špidlík, „Dificultățile democrației," 390.

50 Dumitru Stăniloae "De ce suntem ortodocși," in *Teologie și Viață*, serie nouă, anul I (LXVII) Nr. 4-8, aprilie-august (1991): 15.

51 It is often argued that sarcasm has a strong therapeutic effect ensuring a people's survival under an oppressive regime. In the Romanian case, this seems to be an inheritance of a Roman moral philosophy coined by the proverb which says, *ridendo castigat mores* 'by laughter one derides the wrong ways of life.'

52 Mircea Vulcănescu, "Creștinul în lumea modernă," in *Gândirea Socială a Bisericii: fundamente, documente analize, perspective*, edited by Ioan I. Ică, Jr. and Germano Marani (Sibiu: Deisis Press, 2002), 84.

The Holistic Development of Society
The Contributions of the Christian Church

Ioan Stinghe, PhD (cand.)

"Babeş–Bolyai" University of Cluj–Napoca, Romania
ioanstinghe@adventist.ro

ABSTRACT: This paper aims to reflect upon the role of the Christian Church as a natural factor in the holistic development of society. In this respect, the main role of the Church will be viewed in light of the twenty–first century Christianity, in the context of the global society. Factors such as access to information, the increase of knowledge, and the emergence of knowledge–based society in a globalizing world often give the impression that they are the main development drivers of the postmodern society. However, the development of society is naturally linked to the development of the individual within different contexts such as provided by family, school, church and society. From a Christian perspective the holistic transformation of humanity and the restoration of universal order is the ultimate goal of the divine in the "relocation" of His Kingdom on earth. During the twentieth century, the trend manifested by the Church was more on the edge of social responsibility as an agent of a secular society, affecting the application of the principle of *Christian responsibility*. According to the principle of Christian responsibility, the relationships within a society are an expression that flows naturally from the relationship with God. Sociologic and religious research combines theological thinking of Christianity with social conditioning, thus giving the Christian Church the responsibility of being a serious contender and agent for a holistic transformation of humanity and of restoring the universal order; thus fulfilling the divine plan.
KEY WORDS: theology, church development, Christian church, holistic society

In the course of human history, whenever humanity is situated at a crossroads it turned its attention to the great events of the past for help at that time and for the future. A careful review of the works on the emergence and history of Christianity can provide enlightenment for the present and inspiration for the future in the context of contemporary society. As Paul the Apostle points out in his letter to the Romans 15:4: „ whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope."[1]

The study of the history of Christianity is invaluable for researchers and for the layman, for personal development and therefore of human society. In this sense historian Earle E. Cairns says "by exposing the genetic development of Christianity, the New Testament Church history is what the New Testament is to the Old Testament."[2] Given this perspective, after a brief definition of the terms we will describe and we will see how early Christianity helped the holistic development of the society back then and after that we will see the contribution of Christianity in todays society.

Finally we will present findings on the observations and findings on the contribution of Christianity to the holistic development of human society.

For a brief definition of the terms, I use *Dicţionarul Explicativ al Limbii Române* also known as DEX:

HOLÍSM: Concept underlying the irreducibility of the sum of the parts, meaning that some of its features can not be explained in terms of properties and relationships of its components. - From fr. holisme.[3]

CHRISTIANITY: All forms of faith in the person and writings that contain the words and teachings of Jesus Christ. - Christian + suf. -ism (After fr. Christianisme).[4]

Early Christian Contributions to the Development of a Holistic Society

Christianity is born from Judaism not only as "an extension of Judaism,"[5] but as a prophetic fulfillment in the life, ministry, death

and resurrection of Jesus Christ, shortly after his ascension to the Father, during Pentecost (Acts 2:1–4), when the Holy Spirit came upon a group of faithful Hebrew.

This group has grown quickly through the influence of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:47), especially after the martyrdom of Stephen (Acts 8:1), shortly trasforming into a religious movement that developed quickly with an outstanding.spread in the context of the then.

Christianity appears as a reform movement of Judaism, at first the proclamation of the Gospel took place in synagogues and the rapid growth led to Christians holding their meetings in mostly private homes. However the Christian Church was a distinct group, separated from synagogue life.

Christianity originally was addressed to Jews, after the conversion of centurion Cornelius (Acts 10) at the Council of Jerusalem in the year A.D.49 it was decided that the new religion should also address the Gentiles, thus Christianity became a religion distinct from Judaism.

The essence of early Christianity was Judaism which proclaimed monotheism, the highest ethics based on the 10 commandments, a philosophy of the emerging history and the messianic hope all based on a book Torah, later called the Old Testament.

Greek contribution to Christianity's emergence and development was preparing the context by creating a vacuum through the failure of the Greek philosophy and then through the Greek language that was used throughout the Roman Empire, through which Christianity's message was forwarded.

The Romans contribution to the development of Christianity was materialized through Roman conquests that led to blurring the beliefs of the conquered nations creating a common ethos, also the Roman Empire built an infrastructure of communication roads, which helped to spread Christianity in a relatively short time.

Thus Christianity fueled from the spiritual sources of Judaism, expressed by means of Greek culture and favored by the infrastructures and context of the Roman Empire, could become the only universal religion with a global historical impact.

The Central doctrine of the Christian message is Jesus Christ called by prophets and disciples Messiah, born in Palestine in year 5 BC, and died crucified in year A.D.30.

Jesus Christ did not dispute the Jewish religion, but realized fulfillment of the prophecies concerning Him, and exceeding the limits placed by the Jews establishing a universal religion based on love of God and love of neighbor as a fulfillment of the moral law, promising all eternal life in the Kingdom of God.

Christianity based on the teachings promoted by the Apostles was centered around the life, death, resurrection, and teachings of Jesus Christ, Son of God, who gave Himself as a sacrifice for the redemption of sinners, became the Savior and Lord of those who believe in Him, had a simple way of worship.

Christians gathered in homes or in places safe from persecutors and who ran the meeting was preaching from the teaching of Jesus Christ and the apostles then they prayed together, sang Christian hymns and the Lord's Supper was celebrated at the end of the meeting.

Georges Florovsky, a professor of church history, captures the moment of Christianity's emergence by saying that "it entered the historical scene as a Society or Community, as a new social order or even as a new social dimension, as a Church."[6]

The Church is the divine-human institution that arose through divine presence manifested in the lives of believers at Pentecost. Best understood word for church is the assembly, as historian Adrien Ladrierre says "when the Apostle Paul writes to the Church or Assembly of God which is at Corinth, he goes to all the Christians of Corinth. But when he says, 'Christ loved the Assembly' it means all true believers, washed of their sins in the precious blood of Christ, but being still on earth. (1 Cor. 1:2; Acts 20:28; Calendula 2; Eph. 1:22, 5:25)[7]

Because the Church is made up of those born of God (John 3:9) and are united with each other and with the Lord Jesus all having a new life, is called the body of Jesus, he is the Head (Eph 1:22–23; Col. 1:18; Rom.12:4–5). Each believer is thus a member of this body being in close connection with each other and with the Head Jesus Christ.

Thus the Church becomes the incarnation of the divine through the Holy Spirit to those who have accepted Jesus Christ as Lord in their lives, revealing His character in their lives.

Church members are endowed and equipped for service to others in the Church and society through gifts of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12:1–13).

The divine purpose for the church is to be "a spectacle to angels and men" to be 'light of the world' and 'salt of the earth' (Mat 5:13–14) and 'to give His people knowledge of salvation, which is the forgiveness of sins; because of the great mercy of our God, after which we looked at the Sun rising from on high to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace." (Luke 1:77–79)

Church's role in society is "to ready for the Lord a people well prepared for Him" (Luke 1:17) for His second coming.

To accomplish this work the Church is involved in society in existential areas such as social, health, education and spiritual.

The social fund of early Christianity was investigated by one of the most experienced specialists in the field theologian Gerd Theissen, who published an extensive study dedicated to social history.

Gerd Theissen defines four trends available in early Christianity. First is about urbanization. Even if Christianity started with people in rural areas it was spread to the cities, where due to the different relationship between Jews and pagans led to conflicts with local and imperial powers.

Second, is the tendency of universalizing openness to all sympathizers removing the command of circumcision—which also led to conflicts.

A third trend is the dynamic of the growth of social advancement. Early Christianity was born in the lower social strata, but according to Plinius[8] in the second century there were Christians in all walks of life. And this has led Corinth to tension between rich and poor, between the powerful and the weak.[9]

Lastly Theissen talks about the trend of spiritualization because Jesus promised freedom from sin for all people. Early Christianity promised freedom to all, especially the inner worth—which also

created conflicts. Just as the local aristocracy was united and formed the upper class of society, early Christianity formed in the lower stratum of society a concurrent movement that has spread quickly and was open to all social classes.[10]

Theissen emphasizes in early Christianity both the transfer of values from the top to bottom class of society, which led to the "democratization" of aristocratic values. For example, the aid of others or generosity towards enemies were features and privileges only of those in power.

Goodness saying "is more blessed to give than to receive"—also constituted a feature, an aristocratic rule. So the poor widow who donated all her pennies becomes a example of noble generosity. Even the golden rule—valid for the privileged classes in ancient times, was proclaimed in Mat 7:12; Luke 6:31 for all people, thus repeatedly a ruler, aristocrat behaviour is transferred to all.[11]

Notice how Theissen demonstrates that the early church was able to provide models of Roman society which had been in operation for all members of society, starting from a personal relationship with Jesus, then benefiting from belonging to a universal community within which a inclusive extraterritorial culture is developing, revealing the full potential of early Christianity.

Early Christianity penetrated the ancient society with Christian ideas and changed people's concept about the world and life, thus entering into competition with other schools of thought. One of the primary aspects of early community life that highlights this change is the charitable activity "and sold their land and goods and distributed them to all, as any had needed each" (Acts 2:45).

That Joseph, also called Barnabas by the apostles meaning Son of Encouragement a Levite from Cyprus (Acts 4:36), sold his land inherited from his parents and "brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet", reveals the organization of the early Christian community, coordinated at first by the apostles and entrusted to the seven deacons when the number of Christians increased. (Acts 6:1–6)

Another important aspect described in Acts 6 is a clear distinction between the apostles involvement in the spiritual—educational sphere and the social sphere which is supported by deacons. Also it is seen in the social sphere the care for the poor

categories widows, orphans, the poor and the foreigners, social protection measures covered in Judaism. We note that since the beginning early Christianity adopted a positive attitude about material things. In the Christian belief God is the Sovereign Creator and Lord of all things. The man is the manager of all goods received from his Creator.

All material things are made available to the man as gifts because using them on his journey on earth he can live decently and managing them after the Christian principles, the character of man to be knighted and ready to enter the Kingdom of God (Matthew 6.33).

The early Christians had a strong sense of identity and belonging. They thought they were a "holy people," "a holy nation," a "chosen people," a new society that fulfills God's plan, as the Apostle Peter taught. (1 Peter 2:9.)

Thus, the early Christians had a sense of extra-territorial (Phil. 3:20) outside the existing social order, they were "travelers" or "foreigners", but they remained in the society (in the world) fulfilling all the daily duties responsibly, putting divine authority over the human one, being spiritually detached.

Writing about this, the historian Florovsky emphasizes that "this detachment from "the world" can only be temporary, since Christianity by its very nature was a missionary religion and aiming for a universal conversion. The subtle distinction "in the world but not of the world" could not solve this primary problem, since "the world" had to be redeemed and could not be tolerated in its unreformed state."[12]

In terms of culture Christians have accepted the challenge of meeting the two cultures, Greek and Roman; but they felt called to promote a culture based on new principles, a new perspective, as citizens of a "new country" which is centered on the heavenly Jerusalem.

By the coming, particularly life and resurrection, ascension and placing of Jesus Christ at the right hand of God, ancient culture has received a new dimension which caused major cultural changes in the life of humanity after 33 AD Through contact with other cultures Christianity changed their meaning, giving them the dimension of repentance; the immediate effect was noted as the re-culturalization

of antiquity. The history's ascertainment regarding the Christians - culture relationship, expressed by historian Florovsky reveals that they are not "doomed to the denial of culture", but Christians "must be critical of any cultural situation and measure everything by the measure of Christ."[13]

It is well known that in the New Testament the word "church", "ekklesia", has two different meanings. One meaning is one universal Church, a community of all believers united "in Christ." Another meaning is given by use of the word in the plural, meaning local Christian communities from all places.

Christianity although having a social doctrine and orientation, was above all a community aimed at praising God and rebuild human society on new principles, after the model offered by Him.

The early church besides its social and education preoccupations, was concerned with changing hearts and minds, thus paving the way for ethical and social changes, becoming a model for a new humanity.

The fact that in early Christianity reporting to the divine had a primordial place, made it omnipresent in all humanity's existential aspects.

XXI Century Christianity

Christian vocation to bring the light of truth to every nation, every people and every man (Matt. 28:19), determines and empowers every Christian to openness towards people of other faiths.

In the XIX and XX centuries the world continued to move towards a positivism determined by science and technology, through the process of industrialization, development of means of communication, resource exploitation and economic development.

As recorded by the Orthodox priest and university professor, Ioan Rămureanu, during the last centuries, mankind became increasingly alienated from the Church "especially after the positivism of Auguste Comte seemed to give a form to human development on the way to the "religion of the future" which no longer admits anything except what the positive science admits."[14]

The secularization process was the result of a confrontation between the Church and Western culture. The Church tried to sacralize and to expand its authority over the world and as a reaction Western culture gave birth to the process of secularization.

In the next step the process of secularization has caused a shift of the center of gravity of life and culture from God to man, meaning it passed from teocentrism to anthropocentrism. Christianity is abandoned; the man gives up the divine ruling adoring his own reason thus preparing the era of reason.

World secularization has stimulated the development of world science and technology and paved the way for mankind's spiritual regression.

One of the challenges of Christianity in the XXI century is to become ecumenical and catholic again, through openness to the values of contemporary humanity and to support efforts to achieve them.

Advocating for the right to personal freedom Mochael Novak said: "We are, I believe, at the threshold of a new social evolution. Many of the old ways no longer work. We must rethink our goals. We must rethink our methods."[15]

Renaissance developed the thinking that led to a scientific rationality, purely functional, experimentally demonstrated which proved bankrupt because it has created an imbalance between technical and moral.

In everyday life, the Christian family, spirituality, personal and social ethics, now plays a vital role for the Church's activity in society. From the sociological perspective, the Church is called to intercede in prayer for those in need, the helpless, underprivileged and powerless.

Churches by the human component of their members, through creation and ontological union of Christ are related to human society. Thus it is called in the postmodern world to promote peace, combat poverty, and work for social protection, health and religious freedom, to teach and to proclaim the Gospel.

Church's task is not only to work to protect the identity and unity but to prepare for the future as a community concerned to transmit Christian values to new generations. It is important for

Christians today to conduct a historical review and update what their ancestors and parents thought and created.

The church of the XXI century is called amidst the global problems of mankind to make visible the divine presence through ordination, intercession and its service in the world.

Citing the Torah in the book of Isaiah, Jesus Christ stated the mission statement of the Church: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He hath anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; sent Me to bind up the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the slaves of war and the blind sight; to absolve the weary and to proclaim the grace year of the Lord." (Luke 4:18).

The reign of God means the full transformation of humanity and recreating the world by releasing people from all forms of slavery and oppression, personal and social.

Christianity affirms the value of the transcendent element, the reality of this world is only a pale imitation of the model of eternity, and history records the intention of Christianity to shape society in the image of God's Kingdom.

Conclusions

The emergence of Christianity in the flow of history was like a mighty river flowing over the sides with divine blessings changing its course to refresh the entire humanity. After twenty centuries we can see how Christianity has influenced society, but society has also influenced Christianity.

The rapid spread of early Christianity is one of the most amazing phenomena in the history of mankind.

Of particular interest in researching the social functions of early Christianity have to be primarily taking into account the impact of the new religion.

Christianity brings a qualitative leap from the relational anthropology ideal to the Christological one of the Eucharistic community. Christian behavior derives from this relational reality vertically and horizontally, which constitute the ecclesial community, giving it an interior and exterior dynamic, in solidarity and mission.

Faith, love and hope were the mysteries of the Christian Church, fundamental elements on which was later built what we now call "Western culture."

History has shown that in many cases, economic considerations have played an important role both in society and in the Church's life.

Church service is very important, but we must not separate the social and philanthropic work from the spiritual one as the charitable work of the Church is sacramental and pastoral and the social one is the concrete expression, of the former.

The economic crisis, accompanied by a moral crisis, deepens the consequences of the deeply secularized life of today's society. Man lives only for himself; he lives in an absurd rhetoric that characterizes life.

Today when society is increasingly fragmented and suffers diverse mutations, what can the Church do to help the holistic development of the postmodern society?

History shows that Christianity demonstrated over time a capacity for innovation and potential of adaptation matching the needs of the current time.

Christian Church today also benefits from the potential required for the challenges and needs of contemporary society to adapt its working methods and those of approach to society and peers.

Renewing human society has been and will always be possible through Jesus Christ from the inside out and from individual to society through the cleaning of the spring.

Therefore obtaining a simple life full of love and devotion to Christ, willingness to serve unconditionally and selflessly, the joy to confess Him whatever the cost, the availability to be all things to all, marked the life of Christians in each historical epoch. There were, there are and there will be voices that continue to stand up to preach faith, truth, love, justice, hope that God has been and will be with His creatures. The whole history shows us that nothing lasts without the presence and blessing of God which is in charge of the universe.

NOTES

1 Dumitru Cornilescu, *Biblia*, București: Casa Bibliei, 2010.

2 Earle E. Cairns, *Creştinismul de-a lungul secolelor* (Bucureşti: Societatea Misionară Română, 1992), 17.

3 Dex-Online 2009. https://dexonline.ro/ (Last accessed October 19, 2016)

4 Ibid.

5 Jonathan Hill, *Istoria Gândirii Creştine* (Oradea: Casa Cărţii, 2007), 13.

6 Georges Florovski, *Creştinism şi Cultură* (Belmont, MA: Nordland, 1974), 19.

7 Adrien Ladrierre, *Biserica sau Adunarea* (Dillenburg: Gute Botschaft Verlag, 1993), 6.

8 Plin. Ep. XI, 96,9.

9 Theißen, Gerd, Von Jesus zur urchristlichen Zeichenwelt. „Neutestamentliche Grenzgänge" im Dialog. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht GmbH, 2011), 28.

10 Theißen Gerd, Von Jesus zur urchristlichen Zeichenwelt. „Neutestamentliche Grenzgänge" im Dialog. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht GmbH, 2011), 29.

11 Ibid. 44–45.

12 Florovski, Ibid.

13 Ibid, 21.

14 Ioan Rămureanu, Milan Şesan, Teodor Bodogae, *Istoria Bisericească Universală, vol. II* (Bucureşti: Editura Institutului Biblic şi de Misiune Al Bisericii Ortodoxe Române, 1993), 337.

15 Michael Novak's ideas had been published as a chapter in Ioan I. Ică, Jr and Germano Marani, eds. *Gândirea Socială a Bisericii* (Sibiu: Deisis, 2002), 418.

Applying the Milieus–Oriented Concept in a Church Context: Prospects and Challenges

Arthur Wagner, PhD
Independent Scholar, Germany
arthur.wagner@adventisten.de

ABSTRACT: During the recent decades, within the process of individualization of a society, there have been various attempts within the spectrum of social sciences to materialize the differentiated and segmented image of a society. Consequently, modern research of the milieus deals with the study of different social "worlds", characterized by a pattern of common values, communication and experience. The holistic, milieu–oriented concept found resonance within Church activity, providing a valuable approach to the emerging new perspectives. Yet, its adoption signals not only opportunities, but also challenges. Therefore, the purpose of this article is to reflect upon the possibilities and limits of applying the concept of social milieus to the Church, and to analyze it in a critical manner; highlighting, at the same time, its potential.
KEY WORDS: milieus, Church, liturgy, mission potential, challenges

Today, it is known and accepted that modern western society is highly fragmented from a social point of view. The extent to which this affects and causes changes in the church—was the topic of many research studies over the past 10 years. These research studies are trying to include the image of the society in a manner as holistic as possible. This article refers to such studies, which—due to the milieu oriented concept—threw an ample "sociologic look" on to the church.[1] However the debate will take place in the theological context

addressing the current church reform intention. Often because they try to overcome the "crisis" of the church, manifested by reduced visitor numbers for the divine services, decreased finance and public attention. To what extent the holistic sociological orientation is useful and a successful approach within the church context—this is the subject of the discussion.

Milieus–Oriented Concept in Society and Church

What are *milieus*? Social sciences have described social inequality in the past through categories of class or social blanket. The differentiated typology of social milieus appeared since 1987 on the basis of many qualitative studies representative. Ulrich Beck's theory of individualization does not define the individual through the innate belonging to a social class. On the contrary, the individual can and must discover and create himself, fact for which he assumes the responsibility alone.[2] In the 1990s the milieu theory reaches the center of attention through the publication of Gerhard Schulzes, "Consumer Society," when theory about society becomes a *theory about milieus*.

Milieu theory starts from the premise that our society is fragmented and "breaks" in milieus and sub-milieus. Milieus are models or social constructs through which social reality is tried to be described. Milieus are recognized by the fact that they own common patters of values, communication and experience as well as due to "an intense internal communication."[3] Milieus are self-contained worlds, groups of people with the same aspirations, who feel connected to each other by attitudes, mode of communication, thinking, and mode of action, education level or similar material state. Unlike milieu, mentalities (premodern, modern, and postmodern) are unreflected groups attitudes yet sustainable, feelings or patterns of action.[4]

Milieus differentiation, as life worlds is also valid for the church with its forms: as a local church, as a group initiative, or regional church.[5] Following the application of various survey instruments in the church, it resulted that local churches are determined by a few dominant milieus. Consequently church attracts only people who

belong to those milieus or have intentions of social ascent; thus church services are not an offer "for all"—as was thought before.[6]

In a group of similar people—who think, talk and live alike—the individual finds peace in a time of disorientation and identity, created by separating from the other milieus. For these and generally human communities are defined inside a society just by separating from the other. This relationship is certainly critical because the auto recruiting mechanism dominates in a group: one group only attracts people that fit it.[7] At the same time it must not be forgotten that religious forms in turn influence the individual habitus and thus the formation of a milieu. This occurs because faith is not conceivable without a social form.

Since 1999 publications have appeared about the relationship between different milieus and the church, particularly the studies of M. Vester, from the "Working group in the social interdisciplinary structure research." This was followed by the study in the evangelical Protestant church (Germany) of Frederike Benthaus-Apel "Church in the diversity of its features," which has developed a typology of lifestyles with 6 types.[8] According to the EKD study we can see "which society milieus are represented in the church, which needs, interest and aesthetic preferences they [church members] bring with them and which church offers are satisfied."[9] Frederike Benthaus-Apel points out that there is a clear causality "between social milieu, lifestyle, commitment and participation of the Christian religion."[10]

In 2005 he followed an extensive study in the Catholic Church in Germany- based on socio-scientific typology Sinus (with 10 milieus), aiming to see, to what extent differentiation of society is reflected in the church, and to which milieus church it truly arrives. The effect of those results can be felt until today: even if there are church members in all milieus, though there are only certain types of milieus, who actively participate in church life. Church reaches through its offers to people from following milieus: high cultural, tradition oriented or sociable- oriented to tradition, in part and high-cultural-modern. From these milieus the church recruits its "public", though the seniors' age is overrepresented in these milieus.[11] Generally the Church is strong in regions where a premodern mentality dominates;

and weak where postmodern orientation dominates or at the bottom of society. [12]

These surprising results led to further taking the concept-oriented milieu, which through various research tools (like SINUS) made its way into the church in order to deliver valuable information. They combine a subjective perspective of life with objective characteristics in order to achieve a more complete overview. That is because only a holistic description of the individual leads to a real description of everyday's life. Thus, the SINUS project gather a lot of information about individuals, such as: the social status, their own philosophy of life, image about society, attitude towards labor, towards marriage, family and leisure, aspirations and patterns, lifestyle, aesthetics, etc.[13]

Thus it became clear that church parishioners who come from different types of milieus are very different in their expectations and image on: the liturgical service, sermon form and content, understanding of the faith, the Bible, theology, art and motivation.[14] This fact has led simultaneously to the critical analysis of the theory of individualism, which is in danger of neglect, not perceiving the existing similarities in social groups or milieus.[15]

The process of social differentiation lingers on, like postmodernism, while the church clientele, as the traditional-conservatives group shrinks more and more. There are almost no milieus as a role model for others. Most people have their own system of values, which goes without saying and does not need the church as mediator of values.[16] In this framework, to what extent can the holistic milieus oriented concept to offer a solution for the church?

Prospects and Potential Applications of the Holistic Milieus–Oriented Concept in the Church

Thesis 1: The holistic milieus oriented concept helps develop the perception vis-a vis the current fragmentation of society and consequently the church. Even if the church parishioners are found in all groups of milieu, yet only a minor part answers the church's offers. Same in the activity of a normal community not all milieus

are represented. I have already mentioned that the church is limited to 2-3 milieus: traditional group, conservative group and middle civil group.[17] In this sense the milieu concept is a "perceptual aid" essential,[18] as it helps the church to gain back a sense of reality necessary in contextualizing the Gospel in a postmodern society and in view of an effective action.[19]

Meanwhile milieus oriented perspective offers release from the pressure created against the church, to achieve people from all walks of life. It's possible some other milieus to discover and highlight other aspects of the Gospel. The fact of discovering different aspects of faith reflected by different milieus in a diversity sense - constitutes another advantage related to this concept.[20] Through a Christian opening towards people from other milieus it can be achieved both a widening of the spiritual horizon and an intensification of community fellowship.

Thesis 2: The holistic milieus oriented concept offers a clear and open perspective on the church's efficiency in society—mission. In this regard G. Werner said: "The question of the church's milieu dependence is from a theological point of view nothing less than the question regarding the mission. . . . The incarnation takes place in the milieu."[21] In this context it becomes obvious that the church, before the advertising industry appeared, has already adapted to different categories of people: elderly, youth, women, men. Today society is much more differentiated, so that the *age* criterion is no longer convincing. People who have a similar age may still belong from a cultural point of view to entirely different worlds. Today's youth is no longer only addressed through a single "youth activity"; just as little the senior category through the "50+" project. For the milieu research just proves very clearly that these age groups are very heterogeneous. Thus the milieu oriented concept further provides an optimization proposal.[22]

For the mission does not mean giving away "a container with theory, called the Gospel". (H. Hempelmann) Following the model of Jesus of Nazareth, who could not and did not want other to show His love for man by other than becoming a man among men - and so the mission has to descend deeper and seek fellowship with people

from other milieus, to discover with them the Gospel message and how the fragmented human community can recover and take the form of the church. The concept of milieu here provides support in identifying both the connecting bridges as well as the obstacles. Though the Gospel's message is attractive, it is possible that due to an inappropriate form or language, unknown, due to a manner insensible towards milieu to lead to refusal. It is precisely the mission's space where the people need to be approached closer to their understanding.[23]

Thesis 3: The holistic milieus oriented concept offers valuable impulse in local and inter-regional church organization. In principle each representative denomination's local community can be considered a "milieu church", meaning it holds a certain style and way of being, thus attracting only a certain category of people. This should not be necessarily seen as negative because these churches operate according to the motto: "we have success with this style!"[24] The local community cannot and must not exceed every milieu limit.

They is mentioned a 3-way choice in treating the milieu reality. *First* there is the possibility that each community to "specialize" in a milieu profile which to promote further. But as a consequence, the outlook communities will be removed so much from one another, that prejudices and alienation will appear and threaten the unity of the church. *A second* possibility would be for the church to offer a new language of "faith" to a milieu. Parishioners should then give up their original milieu and to take in the new one. So then the Church will create its special and specific milieu. This possibility is often seen in the Neo-protestant churches which develop at the same time.[25]

Since the 2nd path is not compatible with the major denominations, it advocates for one last option: a church that unites Milieus between them. We have seen that it is not possible for communities - due to their cultural specificity - to go beyond the limits of other Milieus or produce offers for all Milieus. Therefore a regional cooperation makes sense as well as a pluralization of forms in community life. This involves close collaboration at the middle administrative level, in order to achieve a complex missionary plan. Through specialization and / or communities' cooperation between

them it becomes possible to address many Milieus in the region, as well as making specific offers and religious spaces.[26] In this context we see 5 project directions: to build on what it is, church growth, church image, ecumenical interconnection or deacon orientation.[27]

Thesis 4: The holistic milieus oriented concept provides important prognostic information regarding the future of the Church. Various research studies related to the milieus oriented concept track targets that are indispensable for the future development and management of the church. For example it is important to understand how social transition unfolds and in what manner the church can adapt to it. On the other hand the medial reception mode of church offers in different milieus can reveal important details for an efficient medial transmission of the Gospel. In addition the church may obtain due to the milieu oriented concept valuable information on important religious issues for parishioners or about the church connection or separation factors.[28]

Even the question—*whom does the Church address, and whom does it not?*—requires a regular update process. Milieu regional studies may also indicate the milieu changes, milieu concentrations or reductions in a particular geographic region, which is an aid in long-term planning of missionary activity.[29]

Thesis 5: The holistic milieus oriented concept also offers practical-analytical instruments in pastoral activity. First the milieus oriented concept provides practical tools for *analysis*, which can be used in awareness of differences in mentality (clarification of milieu), regarding the spread of milieus across the church district (the location of the milieu), in terms of preparing offers tailored to target groups (focus of milieu), and in terms of openness to unknown milieus (expanding of milieu). In addition these practical tools make it possible to analyze the profile of the local community, which may lead to a fair distribution of the opportunities for participation in the liturgical service.[30]

The milieus oriented concept's instruments find their use in the service of *pastoral* related tasks as: planning of the staff, causalities, behavior towards parishioners estranged from the Church as well

in decision-making at the middle management administrative level regarding counseling and community development, conflict mediation, diaconate work, youth work or in regional cooperation.[31]

Challenges in Applying the Holistic Milieus–Oriented Concept in the Church Context

Thesis 1: The holistic milieus oriented concept requires a review of the role of the church in society, because the Gospel belongs to all people. A church linked to certain social groups has a repelling effect on the others. Many people are kept at a distance from all religious forms and offers not because of lack of openness or interest in the faith, but because of milieu cultural barriers. The more the religious activity identifies with pre-modern or traditional forms of milieu, the more the church will be associated with this lifestyle. The effect of rejection of some completely unknown mentalities is not neutral. The more a form of milieu is farthest from their own the stronger is the effect of alienation and rejection. [32] Social shutdown leads to rejection, social exclusion, which massively prevents the missionary efforts. Without overcoming cultural boundaries it is not possible to open the Gospel to people. Cultural contextualization involves opening but also risks at the same time.

Yet it is necessary for the church to ask the question: to what to turn its intentions or must attract people? They all have different religious attitudes and perceptions. How they react is a matter of theological position.[33] Does the pre-modern mentality correspond to the traditional-conservative Christian one? Does it make sense only servicing this social category? Or is it possible to also adapt the Gospel in the modern or postmodern context?[34] This is a challenge which the Church cannot turn away from.

Thesis 2: The holistic milieus oriented concept is argued in the market economy system, orienting itself by supply and demand. But contextualization of the Gospel does not imply a pure adaptation or only satisfaction of the needs. The Church must speak not by the will of the people, because the Gospel is not a commodity product, as

the Apostle Paul says, "For we do not corrupt the Word of God as do some." (2 Cor. 2:17) Michael Ebertz talks about adaptation (from the 2nd Council of Vatican) and distinguishes between conformism, external coordination, opportunism, flattery, etc.[35] And G. Wegner warns against a simple orientation towards the milieus, which he defines as treason to the Gospel. It takes a spiritual penetration of the milieu perspective; otherwise only the consumer market will extend.[36]

It must not be forgotten that a sociological model does not present a whole or the reality, but just a look of it from a certain perspective. The milieus oriented concept owns such a perspective, its goal bring a closer understanding of society.[37] Sociological structure models are really just tools to aid in the analysis, reflection and in preventing or detecting deficits.[38] It is our duty to judge, moderate, to deduce consequences. The role of the milieus oriented concept is not to define what the church must or must not be. This is a theological task not a sociological one, that requires theological viewpoints in formulating consequences.[39]

Thesis 3: The holistic milieus oriented concept as "aid perception" is not a panacea. Social-scientific instruments, such as the Sinus or MICROM-GEO-Milieus are not a panacea, especially in solving the problems of the church, but only a instrument.[40] They do not replace human needs necessary for detachment from a milieu and involvement in an entirely different one. But who does not widens his horizons that will not discover anything new.[41] In this context it is about the milieus oriented concept's limits:

* The idea - that with more diligence any milieu limit can be overcome and the communities will be welcoming for anyone - is an illusion.

* The individual is not just the representative of a milieu. Perspective on milieus catches only the social differences. But life contains fundamental human issues that are common to all, even if the way of expression is milieu specific.[42]

* Sinus milieus table - designed for marketing purposes - does not include all the population; from a church point of view it may even be seen a major deficit: e.g. immigrants are only partially considered.

In this context it is recommended in the church evaluation from a social structure point of view, to track both the processes of exclusion and inclusion as well as typical phenomena and the individual ones.[43]

Thesis 4: Milieus segmentation and differentiation constitutes a challenge for church unity that must be defined beyond Milieus. It requires a clear definition of the church, in order to understand it's the role. If a community goes down a road together then it needs to agree on a common target. But precisely here lies the challenge on the unity because there are a lot of conceptions about it. We are different, and yet we are all Christians; but what binds us? Where and how is this done? Some see unity in the homogeneous character of a group: similar aesthetic tastes, similar fellowship style, same meaning in life, same aspirations and same detestable things. Others see unity in the common sinful condition and in the universal offer of the redemption plan, aspect which exceeds the allegiance to a milieu.[44] Determining the unity domain in the church remains a challenge not only on the theological level but also practically.

Thesis 5: The holistic milieus oriented concept may overburden local community. The feeling and pressure to provide programs for 10 milieus can overwhelm and create stress to the local community. In addition we add the question of resources: in the church we are dealing with volunteers, which cannot be had forever. The additive system - meaning more and more, better quality, more differentiated, more intense, more personal and individual - no longer works.[45] This situation imposes the need to formulate appropriate questions that generate answers which cause no extra burdens, but instead produce a decongesting of the situation.[46]

Such appropriate questions might be such as: in which areas are my talents and where are the talents of others? Is there a disposition to delegate tasks according to individual gifts and talents? How can they be promoted? Is there encouragement for regional cooperation, which can make available new resources and generate relaxation and synergy effects?[47]

Concluding Reflections

Until mid 20th century life in Western society has been marked by clarity, continuity and the static, thus a parish image of the church was welcome. But today, due to social fragmentation, religious communities have become rather groups of similar people. Now the church needs integrative offers, to approach people in their specific life environments. Perhaps reflecting on the holistic future prospects of the church—as a combination of milieu communities—would be a beneficial option.[48]

In the set of countless theological discussions on options for reform, it must be necessary to bring to light some objective distinctions between theology and sociology. The sociological eye on the results related to social milieus proves that the situation is more complex than it seems at first glance. For on the one hand there is evidence of weakening the relationship with the church, and on the other hand, the studies confirm the interest in religious beliefs and the possibilities of approach. The fact is that the Church must balance two goals: on the one hand—developing and maintaining their own identity, and on the other hand: reaction to the differentiating and the changing of society, distinction as well as integration.[49]

Even if contextualizing the Gospel is important in holistic reaching the people staying away from the church, though one should not lose sight of the fact as a compelling and enthusiastic testimony of faith, usually has a positive effect despite milieu barriers.[50] Finally, above the professionalism and cultural orientation is the love for people: "And if I have not love, I am nothing" (1 Cor. 13.2). Without developing a spiritual perspective the application of the milieus oriented concept in religious context will never reach its possible target.

There will always be differences of milieu and yet the church parishioners—even if they don't have too much in common—"practice the same things together and with each other."[51] Before God all the differences of milieu are cancelled. In liturgical acts, e.g. the Last Supper, it becomes clear that the church transcends the order imposed by milieus. So the church can harness the diversity

and at same time can provide direction and hope.[52] A Church which continuously allows itself to be recreated and shaped by God—*ecclesia semper reformanda*—can only profit from the challenges of the holistic milieus oriented concept,[53] and also at the same time to achieve a balanced balancing between individuality and community.

NOTES

1 See Bremer Vögele, Helmut Wolfgang, Michael Vester, *Soziale Milieus und Kirche*, Würzburg: Ergon Verlag, 2002.

2 Ulrich Beck, *Risikogesellschaft*. Frankfurt an Main, 1986.

3 Michael N. Ebertz, „Anschlüsse gesucht. Ergebnisse einer neuen Milieu-Studie zu den Katholiken in Deutschland, in *Herder-Korrespondenz* 80 (2006): 174.

4 Heinzpeter Hempelmann, *Gott im Mileu. Wie Sinusstudien der Kirche helfen können, Menschen zu erreichen*. 2. erweiterte (Auflage, Brunnen Verlag, Gießen, 2013), 35–36.

5 Wolfgang Huber, Kirche. 1. (Stuttgart; Berlin: Aufl., Kreuz-Verlag, 1979), 47ff.

6 Heinzpeter Hempelmann, *Kirche im Mileu. Die Sinus-Kirchenstudie* "*Evangelisch in Baden und Württenberg. Ergebnisse und Impulse für den Gottesdienst.*" BrunnenVerlag, Gießen, 2013), 42–43.

7 Ibid., 74–75.

8 Claudia Schulz, Eberhard Hauschild, and Eike Kohler, *Milieus Praktisch II. Konkretionen für Helfendes Handeln in Kirche und Diakonie* (Göttingen, 2010), 43–44.

9 Ibid.

10 Ibid., 205.; See also, Friederike Benthaus–Apel, „Lebensstile und Kirchenmitgliedschaft. Zur Differenzierung der ‚treuen Kirchenfernen,‘" in Kirchenamt der EKD (Eds.): *Kirche –Horizont und Lebensrahmen. Weltsichten, Kirchenbindung. Vierte EKD–Erhebung über Kirchenmitgliedschaft.* Hannover, 2003. Friederike Benthaus–Apel, „Lebensstilspezifische Zugänge zur Kirchenmitgliedschaft" in Huber Wolfgang (Ed.), *Kirche in der Vielfalt der Lebenszüge. Die vierte EKD-Erhebung über Kirchenmitgleidschaft*, Gütersloh, 2006; Michael Vester, Peter von Oertzen et. al. *Soziale Milieus im gesellschaftlichen Strukturwandel*, Frankfurt a. Main, 2001.

11 See Schulz cit. in Uta Pohl-Patalong, „Kommentar ‚Lebensstile' und Kirche," in: Huber Wolfgang et.al. (Ed.): *Kirche in der Vielfalt der Lebensbezüge. Die vierte EKD–Erhebung über Kirchenmitgliedschaft.* (Gütersloh, 2006), 274ff.

12 Hempelmann, *Kirche im Mileu*, 15.

13 Cf. www.Praxisinstitut.de (Last visited on, August 11, 2016)

14 Claudia Schulz, Eberhard Hauschild, and Eike Kohler, *Milieus praktisch II. Konkretionen für helfendes Handeln in Kirche und Diakonie* (Göttingen, 2010), 282ff.

15 Hempelmann, *Gott im Mileu*, 35.

16 Ibid., 67ff.

17 Schulz, Hauschild, Kohler, Ibid., 47; Comp. Ingrid Eilers, Kurse zum Glauben für verschiedene Sinus–Milieus, in: Arbeitsgemeinschaft Missionarische Dienste (Ed.), *Erwachsen glauben. Missionarische Bildungsangebote. Grundlagen-Kontexte-Praxis* (Gütersloh, 2011), 81ff.

18 Schulz, Hauschild, Kohler, Ibid., 13ff.; 69.

19 Hempelmann, *Gott im Mileu*, 91ff.; comp. Schulz, Hauschild, Kohler, Ibid., 247.

20 Hempelmann, *Kirche im Mileu*, 43. Comp. Ibid., 97–98.

21 Wegner 2000, 53-70.

22 Hempelmann, *Kirche im Mileu*, 95.

23 Ibid., 49ff.

24 Schulz, Hauschild, Kohler, Ibid., 250; Hempelmann, *Kirche im Mileu*, 62–63.

25 Jörg Stolz et.al., *Phänomen Freikirchen. Analysen eines wettbewerbsstarken Milieus.* Bd.5 (Zürich: Pano Verlag, 2014), 25ff.; comp. Schulz, Hauschild, Kohler, 246.

26 Hempelmann, *Gott im Mileu*, 98–99.

27 Schulz, Hauschild, Kohler, Ibid., 250ff.

28 Hempelmann, *Kirche im Mileu*, 20–21.

29 Schulz, Hauschild, Kohler, 232ff; Hempelmann, *Gott im Mileu*, 103.

30 Hempelmann, *Gott im Mileu*, 103–105.

31 Schulz, Hauschild, Kohler, 237ff.; comp. Hempelmann, *Gott im Mileu*, 105ff.

32 Hempelmann, *Gott im Mileu*, 42.

33 Hempelmann, *Gott im Mileu*, 130; Schulz, Hauschild, Kohler, Ibid., 261.

34 Martin Lätzel, „Jedem das Seine?" in *Pastorallblatt für die Diozösen.* Aachen, Berlin Essen, Hildesheim, Köln, Osnabrück (2007): 181–185, here 183.

35 Michael N. Ebertz, „Anschlüsse gesucht. Ergebnisse einer neuen Milieu-Studie zu den Katholiken in Deutschland," in: *Herder-Korrespondenz* 80 (2006): 173-177, here 176ff.

36 Gerhard Wegner, „Potentiale provozieren.Über die Selbstwirksamkeit des Glaubens und seine Verkleisterung," in Pilipp Ehlhaus, Christian Hennecke (Eds.) *Gottes Sehnsucht in der Stadt. Auf der Suche nach Gemeinden für Morgen* (Würzburg: 2011), 121-144.

37 Wolfgang Vögele, Helmut Bremer, Michael Vester, *Soziale Milieus und Kirche.* (Würzburg: Ergon Verlag, 2002), 121–131.

38 Comp. Vögele et.al. 2002, 22ff.

39 Hempelmann, *Gott im Mileu*, 109.

40 Schulz, Hauschild, Kohler, Ibid., 13ff.; Hempelmann, *Gott im Mileu*, 101.

41 Hempelmann, *Gott im Mileu*, 135.

42 Comp. Joachim Wanke, „Was uns die Sinus-Milieu-Studie über die Kirche und ihre Pastoral sagen kann – und was nicht. Anfragen und Anregungen an Mileu-Studie und Kirche," in *Lebendige Seelsorge* 57 (2006): 242–246.

43 Rudolf Tippelt, et.al., „Weiterbildung und soziale Mileus in Deutschland," in Bd.3: *Mileumarketing implementieren.* (Bielefeld. 2008), 88–95.

44 Wolfgang Huber, *Soziale Mileus und Wandel der Sozialstruktur. Die gesellschaftlichen Herausforderungen und die Strategien der sozialen Gruppen* (Springer, 1998), 102.

45 Schulz, Hauschild, Kohler, Ibid., 219ff.

46 Hempelmann, *Gott im Mileu*, 123.

47 Franz Grubauer, „Zweierlei Logik. Mileus und Kirchenreform: Richtige Analyse, falsche Strategie?" in *Zeitzeichen* (2/2012): 48–50.

48 Schulz, Hauschild, Kohler, Ibid., 247.

49 Volkhard Krech, Soziologische Aspekte. *Reformspielräume in der Kirche : Ortsgemeinde und Regionalstrukturen am Beispiel der Evangelisch-lutherischen Landeskirche in Braunschweig*. Vol. 43. (Heidelberg: FEST, 1997), 33.

50 Schulz, Hauschild, Kohler, Ibid., 264-265.

51 Ibid., 279.

52 Ibid., 280.

53 Hempelmann, *Kirche im Mileu*, 63.

The Dimensions of Holistic Personality Development in Contemporary Society

Consuela Wagner, PhD
Institut für Bildung und Persönlichkeitsförderung, Pfinztal, Germany
ConsuelaWagner@gmx.net

ABSTRACT: The holistic development of a society implies the holistic development of the individual. Both the dialectical term "development" and its transfer over the entire duration of life prove to be favorable of researching holistic personality development. The direction of development or the description of its content is dependent on the cultural–ideological context; the image regarding the human being and the moral values that underscore the concept. Yet despite cultural boundaries, various sizes and areas of personality development can be established and differentiated. On the other hand, a general meta–criterion can be formulated in setting the goal of personal development—often expressed by concepts like "mature personality" or "personality stable." Thus, the active holistic support for the development of human personality proves to be an urgent need in the complex context of contemporary society.

KEY WORDS: development, personality, holistic dimensions, target development, contemporary society

Because a society is composed of individuals, a holistic development of society automatically implies a holistic development of its individuals. This can be seen from several perspectives. This article proposes a debate on the characteristics of individual personality development from a psychological perspective, namely to what extent the idea of holism is applicable in this context and if it is possible to formulate a uniform concept. In the current postmodern society, when consciously planned personal development is seen as an individual task, it requires a reflection of differential criteria that underlie it.

The Context of the "Personality Development" Concept

Already this concept composed by double term contains a lot of different directions and meanings, which are found in part in different but related scientific disciplines. What does human development actually mean? The current development psychology starts from the premise of a *dialectical* development model, where the outside world influences the individual which in turn has an active impact on the environment. This model also postulates— unlike the traditional mechanistic model—the existence of an individual who actively participates and acts in its own development process.[1] The *mechanistic* model is contrary unidirectional and starts from the premise that the development of the interior capacities unfolds irreversibly, according to an interior pattern.[2]

Besides the extension of the term of *development* from a passive role to an active one of the individual, there are modern approaches that extend the term of *development* from childhood and youth to the entire range of life, from the overall development domain of special areas of development or from a standard development of the development of special groups (gifted, disabled, delinquents, etc.). Meanwhile stands the discussion transfer of the development towards maturity in favor of sustainable development—meaning both gains and losses.[3] Thus the *personality development* involves, according to Staudinger "irreversible transformations age-dependent in solving ability but also complicity in contexts of development."[4] This has to do with "intra-individual transformations relatively sustainable over time related to living and behavior."[5]

The term *development* is often used in a positive sense as "growth", when referring to the interaction between biological conditions and environmental influences.[6] In every phase of life it is possible a gain of new knowledge. Meanwhile development involves a selective optimization or "specialization", meaning not only gains but also losses due to a conscious or unconscious surrender to

certain options.[7] On the one hand the trend toward perfection, to maximum achievements indeed produced high performance in art, technical, science and other fields of culture, but not any higher level can be defined as progress. Some optimization or maximization targets can quickly collide with the criteria of justice, fair play or with one of a "good life."[8]

According to Ulich D. *personality development* means a steady transformation, adapted to the age in one "positive" direction, which includes the center of self. So in this context developing involves a holistic understanding of the individual and the values found in the legal context of personal and society's expectations.[9] Both the image of man and moral evaluation as well as the cultural and ideological framework, namely the image about what is best, highest or most desirable in development, influences the direction of the development.[10] Because not everything that can be realized is also desirable, beneficial or allowed, the issue of the rules and values in question intervenes. Added to them are also different expectations or concepts of a good life. It is noticed that not only wishes adapt to the possibilities but also the other way around: certain desires have a motivating effect in widening the space of possibilities.[11]

The term *"personality"* is the sum of human forms of living and behavior, their internal interdependence as well as to external factors. This is not about the specific behavior in a particular situation or mood changes, but more about the center of each individual.[12] To it belong behavioral habits, dispositional qualities, environmental influences, own bio-psychological and emotional concepts as well as cognitive - psychological characteristics.[13]

Regarding the *description* of human personality there are different paths in psychology. On the one hand, it is regarded as a core as a stable part of the individual which leads to the formation and framing in some types - such as the theory of temperaments or "basic forms of fear."[14] On the other hand there is the possibility of looking at an individual not in the categories but "like a mosaic of lots of features" based on several *dimensions*. In this tradition was Eysenck, then the concept of the "Big Five"[15] or the concept of Gray (1990). Terms like e.g.: subjectivity, interaction, personality as structure or process, such as temporal causality represent concepts that allow

an emphasis of the individual specific of the human personality.[16] In addition Cloninger's concept deserves to be remembered, which is based on both primary-genetic structures (four dimensions of temperament) as well as structures formed through socialization (three dimensions of character).[17]

It becomes obvious that genetics and culture - both aspects contribute to the development of the human personality and influence each other. Personal, biological and institutional factors interfere throughout life, "development tasks" are dependent on age and personal maturity, and together create a "biography script of life,"[18] which in turn further influences the individual development and the practice of individual socialization.[19] On the other hand biographical patterns are precisely the result of such formative factors, which in turn influence the perception of a good life and its implementation, involving the experience of failure. Both external factors e.g.: social structures and premises, institutional or causal, and the interior—such as our own wishes and beliefs—are partly unpredictable.[20]

The Dimensions of the Development of Human Personality

The notion of "*personality*" not only defines but limits the dimensions of development. Thus changes are differentiated in cognitive issues (perceptual, structure of thought, ability to concentrate, attitudes, etc.), motivational, emotional (feelings, value and personal effectiveness, emotion regulation, etc.) as well as social. At the same time changes are defined of the abilities belonging to them both over the age as well as in the context of social changes and personal resources.[21]

In addition there's a difference between *qualitative changes*—when *something else* is added and something is replaced or disappears—and *quantitative changes*, when there is an increase or decrease of "the same way."[22] In developmental psychology today is considered that both types of changes occur. Since the *mechanistic concept* sees the individual as a complex machine, it emphasizes quantitative development, while the *organismic concept*, due to

underlining elements of self-organization, emphasizes more the qualitative changes.[23]

The concepts "personal maturity" and "wisdom"—marking the direction of personality development—have been rediscovered and partly engaged in empirical studies lately.[24] The question, if these concepts are valid targets or directions of development, and if so, in what defining context. The image of man and ethical philosophical concepts that underlie them plays an important role in this regard.

The term used here of *mature stable personality* differs both from the image of man of the organismic concept and to the adaptivity term. Thus the difference between maturity and adaptivity lies in their motivation.[25] By adaptivity is meant the optimal mental functioning, which manifests itself in a state of gratitude.[26] A *mature personality* exceeds however the level of adaptivity and contains an additional aspect of value. It thus includes certain attitudes, values and patterns of behavior that do not have only a functional character. Personality maturity is measured by balancing the interests of self and others. Consideration for others does not have an adaptive character, but is understood as the principle that consideration for others is manifested in Kantian[27] imperative sense and not in the interest of its own advantages.[28]

The psychological difference between the concept of maturity as adaptivity and the concept of maturity as value aspect was born based on two philosophical conceptions about happiness in antiquity: *Hedonia and Eudaimonia*.[29] Philosophy was the first to show interest in factors that lead to a successful life and that in consequence formulated normative rules in ancient times, sayings, concepts of wisdom or happiness. The philosophical concept of happiness *Hedonia* comes from Aristippos of Kyrene and builds on adaptivity and wellbeing, which is expressed by positive feelings, personal satisfaction, internal control and extraversion.[30] The concept of *Eudaimonia* implies in philosophical context a positive development in life and self-fulfillment. It comes from the famous Aristotle and realized by developing the maximum development of own potential and qualities. Ryff (1989) defines *Eudaimonia* as a combination of self-acceptance, personal development, interpersonal relationships, autonomy, life targets in daily activity. Here it is important to act not

to receive appreciation, but out of principle. Well-being is thus not the product but the process of personal fulfillment.[31]

In principle both concepts (adaptivity / *Hedonia* and maturity / *Eudaimonia*) are regarded as "gains" in development. Yet there are overlaps, because a mature behavior may at least in part have an adaptive character too. On the other hand not all hedonistic joy is based on an eudaimonist cause. One can thus understand why certain changes in life that cause non-adaptive reactions may eventually lead to maturity yet.[32]

Because a *mature personality* represents a variable cultural concept,[33] is not based on the premise of the existence of some absolute criteria, but on only the realization of a meta-criterion: *consideration towards others*, or otherwise expressed—balance *between own and others well being*. The decision on the values and forms of expression linked to this is given to the individual itself.[34] So the question on what constitutes a positive development or the road to it is still the subject of ethical-philosophical debate nowadays.[35]

According to Alensbacher studies a *strong personality* is characterized practically by: human orientation and capacity of contact, activity and attitude of joy, concern for connections, orientation towards information and conversation, desire for learning and socialization, serviceability and hospitality, tenacity and respect, capacity for reflection and change.[36]

G. Roth concretely understands by the term of *personality forming* the continuous development of stress processing skills and tolerance of frustration. Thus emerges the image of a mature personality, which along its entire life perfects it systems of complacency or self-control, self-motivation and perception of reality as well as the qualities of empathy and attachment.[37]

What however involves the successful development of personality, what model of development is promoted? I saw that in terms of content development there isn't common consensus in Western society. It's possible only achieving a general consensus on the ultimate goal of development, which can only be achieved if you take into account the responses in a generalized form, such as: wish fulfillment, the possibility of an activity meaningful life, safety, optimism, health, etc.[38]

Psychology as empirical science was currently occupied more with the pathological aspects of human behavior than developing a promotable profile to reach a "good life", a positive development. For a successful life does not merely mean the absence of disease or failure - which led in recent years to the development of a new perspective embodied in the "positive psychology" program.[39] However the psychological parameters (personality and temperament factors, sociodemographic factors, marital status and age factors, situation factors) present in empirical studies until now only a moderate causality towards the state of subjective contentment.[40]

Personal values and attitudes each affect human behavior, they are however only partially convertible. Happiness, wellbeing and contentment do not constitute permanently sustainable elements in life, so that a successful development does not automatically mean a good feeling.[41] Starting from the elements of a general consensus Brandstdtädter talks about a *successful personality development,* for which he formulates general criteria, which raise the chance of success, contentment and happiness, regardless of the path, the direction or development context. He believes that the biggest Eudaimonic profits come from customs and activities where Hedonistic pleasure blends with everyday usefulness and moral goodness.[42]

First, it is the ability and willingness of personal reflection that is needed vis-à-vis the proposed targets, the self needs and interests and to their compatibility with the needs, interests and goals of others and in analyzing the fail situations. In achieving long-term targets auto regulative skills and emotional control are needed, that implies the ability to expect and to give up an immediate gain in favor of long-term gain.[43] In this context Korsgaard (1997) recalls the "principle of intelligence" which directs more on the unity of will and minimizing the intra- and interpersonal conflicts, than on the question of efficiency.[44]

Secondly it comes to qualities that are at the basis of a framework of resources which makes it possible to overcome the critical situations in life and keeping a positive outlook about themselves and life. This includes both social skills to achieve social contacts (a friendly spirit, help, interest of knowledge and own development), as well as personal skills in behavior towards crisis (see a positive meaning, inner peace, an attitude of calm) and concrete social support systems.[45]

Third Brandtstädter brings into view the ability to provide a positive sense to less pleasant activities, identifying with personal targets, commitment to meaningful projects, the capacity to adapt between the development potential and limitations, and overcoming "optimization" problems through positive activities. All these are important premises for a successful development.[46]

Finally Brandtstädter sees in the adaptive potential, the resilience in the face of problems and a sustainable good condition both the causes and the result of a successful life management. The adaptive potential enables the individual to plan an active life, but at the same time the possibility of compensation and overcoming the losses and balancing the needs and personal interests in the social community.[47]

Holistic Development of Personality in Contemporary Society
Final Considerations

The complexity of today's society requires the urgent need of a holistic development of the human personality. Reaching a personal maturity and freedom of decision regarding achieving self realization also constituted the base goal of the Cultural Revolution of the 20th century. The 21st Century is however marked by contradictions: on the one hand holds many opportunities and possibilities, on the other hand however - many risks, limitations and dangers.[48]

In the ongoing process of change of current society the individual is compelled to continually adapt to what is "new" and to redefine its identity. The individual lives and suffer today under the dictates of so-called freedom, the feeling of being alone responsible for his own life.[49]

Qualification for a strong personality implies today the ability to cope in an ever changing world and to find and clarify a purpose and self life objectives. The individual has to create in the midst of a pluralist world abundant of meanings and values a self ideology,

which consists of a personal self concept, a concept of the world, a concept of personal values and a reflected image of society. This task is a great challenge, especially for young adults and requires a lot of personal skills along with social and material resources and a value-political framework for action.[50] But a strong personality, which has a strong self-awareness and professionalism can and must face the challenges and contradictions of the 21st / century.[51]

It becomes obvious that contemporary society through its structural complexity and challenges automatically imposes a holistic development of the human personality. A holistic image of the individual involves an ample vision on him, in which the size and areas of personality development are in a relationship of interdependence and are perceived as a whole.[52]

We saw that modern psychological concepts already contain a holistic view of human personality, even if—due to pluralism— there is no promoted concrete model of its content. The *dialectical* understanding of human development—based on reciprocity between interior genetic elements and environmental action—also proves to be right for a holistic vision of human development, as well as expanding the concept of personality development over the entire lifespan.

Development of human personality takes place in a space of possibilities, in which the individual—due to external and internal factors—makes only one side. This horizon of possibilities—limited by the constitutional and cultural factors—raises the question regarding a good choice, maybe even the best in the despondent setting. So a *successful development* depends not only on the fulfillment of desires and reaching the proposed targets, but also on the attitude towards boundaries and obstacles.[53]

The direction of development targets areas of thinking, feeling and action where there are losses, progresses or stagnations. Even if the direction of development turns out to be dependent on the cultural context there are basic criteria which condition a successful development. In this respect it is imposed still the necessity of research and psychological-empirical deepening of a "good life" criteria.

Finally, in the present society development it is about *balance* between society and the individual, between social solidarity and

self-fulfillment.[54] So the optimization process of the individual involves a continuous dispute with new options and possibilities of choice. But precisely a stable personality is ultimately defined by *swinging the balance* between personal needs and society's expectations. It can support its own perspective against the majority, but also at the same time is able to succumb its own interests and needs in favor of the group.[55]

If the desire of personal development represents an individual's personal need—this surely depends on his own conception of man and self.[56] Unfortunately many people cannot translate this need in life positively.[57] According to Rattner the engine of human development is the aspiration after personal value, which needs to be anchored in the community. In this regard it proves important the fact to help reduce blockades both interior and exterior, in order to activate the continuous development impulse.[58]

NOTES

[1] Toni Faltermaier, et. al. (2014). *Entwicklungspsychologie des Erwachsenenalters.* 3. Vollständ. überarb. Auflage., Kohlhammer (Stuttgart: Verlag, 2002), 35.

[2] Charlotte Mickler, *Selbstbezogene Weisheit: ein Instrument zur Messung von Persönlichkeitsreife. Entwicklung, Validierung und Alterseffekte* (Bremen: Dissertation, 2004), 21.

[3] Rolf Oerter, Leo Montada, eds., *Entwicklungspsychologie*. 6., vollst. überarb. Aufl. Beltz PVU (Basel: Weinheim, 2008), 5–6.

[4] Ursula M. Staudinger, „Möglichkeiten und Grenzen menschlicher Erfahrungen über die Lebensspanne," in J. Hacker and M. Hecker, eds., *Was ist Leben?* Vorträge anläslich der Jahresversammlung vom 23. bis 25. September 2011 zu Halle (Saale). Schriftenreihe Nova Acta Leopoldina., Stuttgart: Wissenschaftlichen Verlagsgesellschaft, 2012), 257.

[5] Arnold Lohaus, Marc Vierhaus, *Entwicklungspsychologie des Kindes- und Jugendalters für Bachelor : Lesen, Hören, Lernen im Web.* 2., überarbeitete Auflage (Berlin, Heidelberg: Springer, 2013), 2.

[6] Ursula M. Staudinger, „Demographischer Wandel und Wachstum– ein Widerspruch?" in Anna M. Wobbus, *Wachstum und Reifung in Natur und Gesellschaft. Gaterslebener Begegnung 2011* (Deutsche Akademie der Naturforscher Leopoldina: Halle, 2012), 175.

[7] P. B. Baltes and M. M. Baltes, „Optimierung durch Selektion und Kompensation: Ein psychologisches Modell erfolgreichen Alterns," in *Zeitschrift für Pädagogik*, 35 (1979): 85ff.

8 Jochen Brandtstädter, *Positive Entwicklung: zur Psychologie gelingender Lebens* (Heidelberg: Spektrum Akademischer Verlag, 2011), 9.

9 D. Ulich, „Krise und Entwicklung. Zur Psychologie der Seelischen Gesundheit" in *Psychologie Verlags Union* (München: 1987), 85ff.

10 Comp. Patricia H. Miller, *Theorien der Entwicklungspsychologie*. Aus d. Amerikan. übers. von Angelika Hildebrandt-Essig. Mit e. Vorw. zur dt. Ausg. von Brigitte Rollett. (Heidelberg, Berlin: Spektrum, Akad. Verl, 1993), 39; Oerter, Montada 2008; Faltermaier et.al. 2002.33.

11 Brandtstädter, 2011, 9.

12 Manfred Amelang, *Differentielle Psychologie und Persönlichkeitsforschung*. 6. volls. überarbeitete Auflage (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer GmbH, 206), 47.

13 Comp. Faltermaier, 2014.

14 Fritz Riemann, *Grundformen der Angst: Eine tiefenpsychologische Studie*, Basel, München: Taschenbuch Ausgabe Reinhard, , 2009.

15 P. Borkenau, and F. Ostendorf *NEO Fünf Faktoren Inventar nach Costa und Mc Crae (NEO-FFI)*. Manual., 2. Aufl., Hogrefe, Göttingen: Verlag, 2008.

16 Hermann-Josef Fisseni, *Persönlichkeitspsychologie: auf der Suche nach einer Wissenschaft; ein Theorienüberblick.* 2.Aufl., (Göttingen: Hogrefe Verl. für Psychologie, 1991), 267.

17 Gerhard Roth, *Bildung braucht Persönlichkeit. Wie Lernen gelingt* (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 2011), 36ff.

18 Comp. G. O. Hagestad, "Trends and dilemmas in life course research: An international perspective," in W.R. Heinz, ed., *Theoretical advances in life course research*, Weinheim Deutscher Studien Verlag, 1991.

19 Brandtstädter, 2011, 10–11.

20 Iibd., 11.

21 Oerter, Montada 2008, 17; comp. Lohaus, Vierhaus, 2013, 6.

22 Flammer, August (2009). *Entwicklungstheorien. Psychologischen Theorien der menschlichen Entwicklung.* 4., vollst. überarb. Auflage (Bern: Huber Verlag Hogrefe AG, 2009), 20–21.

23 See Miller 1993, 39–40.

24 J. B. Asendorf, *Psychologie der Persönlichkeit.* 2., überarb. und aktualisierte Auflage (Berlin: Springer–Verlag, 1999), 14ff.; comp. Oerter, Montada, 2008, 10ff.

25 Mickler, 2004, 21.

26 Comp. U. M. Staudinger, M. Marsiske, and P. B. Baltes, „Resilience and reserve capacity in later adulthood: Potentials and limits of development across the life span," in D. Cicchetti and D. J. Cohen, eds., *Developmental psychopathology. Vol. 2: Risk, disorder, and adaptation*, New York: Wiley, 1995.

27 Immanuel Kant, *Immanuel Kant in Rede und Gespräch.* hrsg. und eingel. von Rudolf Malter, Hamburg: Meiner Verlag, 1990.

28 Mickler 2004, 23–24.

29 Comp. Richard M. Ryan, Edward L. Deci, "On happiness and human potentials: A review of research on hedonic and eudaimonic well-being," *Annual Review of Psychology* (52/2001); A. S. Watermann, "Two conceptions of happiness:

Contrasts of personal expressiveness (eudaimonia) and hedonic enjoyment," *Journal of Personality & Social Psychology* (64/1993).

30 Comp. Michael Argyle, *The psychology of happiness*, Methuen/London: 1987; Stefanie Theves, *Hedonistisches und Eudämonistisches Wohlbefinden* (2011) www.sinnforschung.org/gesellschaftsrelevant/hedonistisches-undeudamonis-tisches-wohlbefinden (Last accessed November 6, 2014).

31 Mickler 2004, 24ff.; Theves, 2011; C. D. Ryff, Happiness is Everything, or is It? Exploration of the Psychological Wellbeing," *Journal of Personality & Social Psychology* 6/1989.

32 Mickler 2004, 25–26; comp. William C. Compton, "Factor structure of mental health measures," *Journal of Personality & Social Psychology* (71/1996).

33 Comp. Gunnar Skirbekk, ed., *Wahrheitstheorien : eine Auswahl aus den Diskussionen über Wahrheit im 20. Jahrhundert*. hrsg. und eingel. von Gunnar Skirbekk. - 1. Aufl., Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1977.

34 Mickler, 2004, 26.

35 Brandtstädter 2011, 27; comp. R. Spaemann, *Glück und Wohlwollen. Versuch über Ethik*, Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1989; Wilhelm Schmidt, *Philosophie der Lebenskunst. Eine Grundlegung*, Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1998.

36 Noelle-Neumann, Elisabeth (1995). Erinnerung an die Entdeckung des Wertewandels" in J. Volker Kreyher, and Carl Böhret, Hrsg., *Gesellschaft im Übergang. Problem-aufrisse und Antizipationen* (Baden-Baden: Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft, 1995), 28–29.

37 Roth, 2011, 308.

38 Comp. L. C. Becker, "Good lives: Prolegomena," *Social Philosophy and Policy* (9/1992): 15–37.

39 See M. E. P. Seligman and M. Csikszentmihalyi, „Positive Psychology: An Introduction," *American Psychologist*, 55/2000.

40 Brandtstädter, 2011, 28–29.

41 Ibid., 17.

42 Ibid., 66–67.

43 Ibid., 23.

44 C. M. Korsgaard, The Normativity of Instrumental Reason," in G. Cullity & B. Gaut, eds., *Ethics and Practical Reason*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997.

45 Ibid., 24; 67ff.

46 Ibid.

47 Ibid, 25; 66.

48 Rolf Frankenberger, Gerd Meyer, *Postmoderne und Persönlichkeit : Theorie - Empirie – Perspektiven.* 1. Aufl. (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2008), 12.

49 Comp. Berhard Heinzlmaier, *Performer, Styler, Egoisten. Über eine Jugend, der die Alten die Ideale abgewöhnt haben*. 1. Aufl. (Berlin: Archiv der Jugendkulturen Verlag KG, 2013), 22.

50 Helmut Klages, *Wertedynamik. Über die Wandelbarkeit des Selbstverständlichen* (Zürich: Edition Interfrom, 1988), 147.

[51] Frido Pflüger, „Katholische Schule als missionarischer Ort – die besondere Situation in den neuen Bundesländern," in Wolfgang Müller, Bruno Santini-Amgarten eds., *Minimalia christlicher Bildungspraxis. Das christliche Verständnis von Bildung in einem konfessionsneutralen Staat* (Zürich: Theologischer Verlag, 2006), 188.

[52] Regina Obermayr-Breitfuss, *Intuition – Theorie und praktische Anwendung.* 2. Aufl., (Books on Demand: 2009), 83–84.

[53] Brandtstädter, 2011, 13.

[54] W. Zapf, *Individualisierung und Sicherheit untersuchungen zur Lebensqualität in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland* (München: Beck Verlag, 1987), 138.

[55] Comp. Pflüger, 2006.

[56] J. Rattner, „Über der Begriff der seelisch-geistigen Entwicklung," *Psychologica. Miteinander leben lernen. Zeitschrift für Tiefenpsychologie, Persönlichkeitsbildung und Kulturforschung* (3/2006): 12.

[57] Katharina Kaminski, *Selbstwertstreben und Selbstwertgefühl. Traditionen und Perspektiven* (Göttingen V/R Unipress, 2014), 317.

[58] Rattner, 2006, 13–14.

Church Dynamics and Rural Development: The Case of the Baptist Churches in Romania

Daniel Fodorean, PhD
Baptist Theological Institute of Bucharest, Romania
Liberty University Divinity School, United States
Titu Maiorescu University Law School, Romania
danielfodorean@gmail.com

ABSTRACT: Holistic development of a society can also be defined as the study of the relationships between urban and rural sociologic contexts. This paper asserts that one of the contemporary imbalances that exist in the Romanian society is related to the difference between fairly large urban setting and the rural one. This imbalance manifests itself both in social, economic, emotional and religious aspects. In general, Romanian village has been affected by all these changes that took place in Romania during the most recent years. Therefore, a holistic development of the national society would mean the narrowing of this gap through a combination between foreign investment in the villages and the existing resources provided by the inhabitants of the villages. As an intervening variable, this paper analyzes what the Church is able to do to support rural development. What should be done to change the dynamics of rural Churches? In answering these questions, this article focuses exclusively on the presence of Baptist Churches in rural areas, based on my own research and personal involvement. The article will also outline some of the most influential factors that affect the rural development; particularly the strategy for revitalization of the Baptist churches in order to bring a positive contribution to social rural development.
KEY WORDS: Rural Development, Church Dynamics, Baptist Church

General Factors That Influence Rural Development in Romania

What prompted the Romanian village to get in this situation not so good? We will reflect just a few of the main factors affecting rural society.

1) The Economic Factor

Limitation of jobs available and the lack of investors have made the rural economy to become very weak. This, he forced people to leave the countryside and move to the cities. The main source of income in rural areas was agriculture but lack of investors has been that it does not provide financial support to the population, so they were pointing toward cities.

The changing professional status of the rural areas observed after the 1990s forecasts that in the coming years there will be a shortage of employees, due to the reduction of industrial involvement to provide alternative sources of income. It is estimated only between 1996 and 2008 the number of employees decreased by almost 25%.[1] Out of 4 million people employed in rural areas registered in early 2008, only accounted for 1.56 million compared to 4.6 million urban employees. This substantial decrease of about 255 000 employed population segments (those who have the source of income) was caused, mainly, due to the increasing number of retired persons.

As after 1990, agriculture became the main source of income for rural inhabitants, this "job" was not fully borrowed and their descendants. Moreover, rural areas have been drained of manpower with the young and the most in the vast unable to continue engaging in agriculture. Socio-economic context is determined by economic power available to Romania.

2) Demographic Factor

Demography is the science that studies, using quantitative methods, the phenomena and processes on the numbers, geographical distribution, structure, density, movement of human population and its composition by age, gender. With the fall of the communist regime, it was possible to leave the country by Romanian

citizens finally in legal terms, which is why in recent years there has been a considerable decrease in population. Romania's population began to decline soon after 1990, when the gates were opened West.

On July 1, 2010, The National Statistical Institute estimated the existence of 20,294,683 Romanian population and density of 89.9 inhabitants per km2. Central Commission for population and housing census, issued in a press release dated August 24, 2012, preliminary results on census population estimates that the number of resident population is 19,043,767, of which 9,764,011 women[2]. Because there are margins of error for such statistics, the results are approximate but show that Romania is continuously decreasing population.The main factor in population decline is emigration to other countries. Because the migration flow is in constant development, it is very difficult to estimate the number of Romanian leaving the country, but their number is estimated somewhere around two or three million.

In terms of distribution in the territory, the Romanians have a more pronounced level of rurality. Rural settlements are less populated and smaller scale as an alternative to urban settlements. Last Statistical Yearbook 2010 shows that approximately 55% of the population lived in urban areas, and census results show that the urban population dropped to 52.8%[3]. The statistics show that people are moving towards cities or at least around them.

3) The Internal Migration Factor

Regarding internal migration between the 70s and 90s, it was the predominant direction from rural areas to urban areas. Since 1992 the number of those who have moved from rural areas (villages) in urban centers (cities) began to decline and mobility in the opposite direction (from urban areas to rural areas) increased, which was mainly due to as economic transition and declining work opportunities in cities.

After 1997 migration from rural to urban areas has exceeded the number of those who have moved from rural to urban centers, which partially is due to the phenomenon of urbanization.[4]

Sociologist Mircea Kivu in a brief interview to a magazine newspaper said that "the most surprising news of the preliminary results of census 2011 trend reversal evolution ratio population

urban—rural population."[5] (Internal migration, people moving from urban areas in rural areas.) Due to urban-rural migration, to be treated with seriousness church work in rural areas receive special attention. The number of those who move to areas adjacent to cities has greatly increased in recent years, and if it is a time to be addressed more serious activity of the Church in Romania in rural areas, now is the time.

Church Revitalization and Rural Development

1) Select Visionary, Competent and Dedicated Leadership!
Church ministers must be *actively involved in church life* even if serving in churches in rural areas. For this reason, "it takes a big man to lead a small church."[6] The leader plays an important role throughout this strategy, because he is the person to whom all will head to look in the process towards him they will be forwarded problems and he will have to have answers. John Brown, in the nineteenth century by one of his students wrote a letter that had just been ordained leading a small congregation:

> I know the vanity of your heart and that you will feel frustrated that your congregation is probably very small compared to other congregations around you; but believe an old words that tell you when Jesus Christ will come in before His judgment throne, it will appear to have been too much.[7]

This active involvement of the church leader can be achieved if He *compassionate and ready to be sacrificed for the Church* that he leads. It requires selflessness from him to put community interests outweigh the interests of his own. In the process of revitalization, the leader must understand very clearly the place it occupies in this process. Leaving aside the fact that some leaders have lowered standards should always and always to be staring at the great men who have led the people of God, culminating in Jesus Christ. It is true that leaders must do everything as unto the Lord, but this does make it very professionally. There can be no perfect, but God's work

no place for people who do not know Him. Too often the work was understand as a job and things took a strange turn.

The leader must have a *clear vision*, the latter meaning not only to have some ideas for church, and he must share God' given vision toward the Church. Leadership is responsibility of what God has provided and not the least responsibility for what leader received. Studies show that church models that have experienced revitalization and growth worldwide are those that the leader and the church got passion and vision, as the two most important elements that people have been attracted to Christ[8]. However in the process, there is a danger that the vision offered by God to be confused with their own desires and their own prospects. Because of this risk, the vision of God has some specific elements:

> * God offers the vision; He is the initiator.
> * No vision should not goes beyond the God's intended purpose for church.
> * Fulfilling the vision God through His people.
> * Vision is God's will for that particular church and not a personal opinion of the church leadership.

2) Recognize the Need for Change and Get Involved in This Change!
It is not recommended to start the revitalization process unless there is clear and strong conviction that there is need for a change. The change also must start for further servant heart can partake with others change it. If someone wants rededication, there must be special in his life when rededication to God and to the church. The difficulty will arise when someone tries to be something it is not. Rededication to God is shown in the fact that our trust in Him grows. Faith in God is the engine by which we believe that everything is made of Him and through Him. This aspect of confidence in offering God can also be used in the right confidence that leaders must have in God's plan and vision he has for them.

Besides the dedication to God, people must recommit to the work of God, and this means to use their spiritual gifts received from Him. God decides what is best for believers and He decide the

spiritual gifts shared for each believer. The right man in the right place seems to be an appropriate way to illustrate how important it is for everyone to serve where God has placed him. Generally, when Christians serve in their spiritual endowment, they act less by their own strength and more by the power of Holy[9]. Christian Schwarz says that "the reason this is particularly important because it is the only way reform applies phrase 'priesthood of all believers'", and he presents a survey among 1,600 active Christians, German-speaking Europe, „shows that 80% they do not know their spiritual gifts"[10].The survey is creepy, but perhaps this is true for many of the faithful Baptists in rural Romania. The church should create different ministries in which they engage, in order that believers to use their spiritual gifts.

In the process, members of the church are called to be devoted to the cause, not active participants and critical observers. Mark Dever said that "temple has many bricks, a flock has many sheep, a vine has many branches, one body has many members."[11] Each member of the Body of Christ must fulfill his job.

3) Use Resources That Already Exist in Rural Churches!

Even if there are few resources in rural churches they need them to be exploited to the full. Churches rural tragedy is that often lack the "youthful energy" to call it. Most young people and young families go to big cities to aim for a better future. First, it must use the resources that are handy. To be asked for help, everything can be used for dynamic Church. Even if we speak of older brothers or older sisters, they may be useful in God's house. Secondly, resources are closer than they appear to be. Human eyes see things stately mostly the smaller ones do not notice them. Napoleon Hill was a famous American author of motivational books and literature among other things, he says, "if you can not do great things, do small things in a great way"[12]. Also Apostle Paul says "for consider your calling, brethren, that there were not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble; but God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong" (1 Corinthians 1:26–27). There are several small churches potential resources that

may have or have them but not use them to produce spiritual revival and social impact. These are:

* Sharing experiences with God.
* Studying the Word for encouragement.
* Personal and Community Prayer
* Close relations with each other
* Used to work hard

There are certainly elements that hinder development of the church, but focus on the positive aspects can bring church where it is.

4) Cooperate and Receive Support From Other Churches!

There are situations where churches are lacking servants. While it is a fact hard to accept for some, however, they are not lost hopes. One of the best ways a rural church can be revived is the support of other churches, usually larger. Winnings can be for both sides. In order to achieve this partnership every church must understand the need you have the other. A concrete example of this right connections and collaborations is the attitude that the Church of Corinth has for Christians Macedonia (1 Corinthians 8). Then it indicates the strategy missionary apostles, who were trying to send people consecrated for service every newly planted church.

Another dimension of this collaboration is partnering with other churches in rural areas. In this sense, refers not only to support large churches that have an important role in this process, but also to the cooperation between them small churches in rural areas. There are several reasons for collaboration with churches in rural areas is important:

* support in prayer and spiritual and emotional support.
* support material according to the needs encountered.
* support for service personnel and active involvement.
* maintaining the Church's witness.
  * engage in service to young people and others who want the opportunity to serve.

Conclusion

The Church can contribute to social development in rural areas only to the extent that it would change its state, if it changes its dynamics. However it is quite difficult for some Christians to understand the importance of social involvement and understanding that all Christians are called to do this. Through the involvement of Christians in society, the world can acquire another situation, people change their evil impulses. Darrow L. Miller, try to capture this idea of active involvement in global discipling people urging the sense of conscience. He says, "the earth is the representation of what is in our hearts and minds. If the mind is dull, the world will be barren. If our hearts are hardened, our world will be a tough one"[13]. Social involvement with the proclamation of Christian values orientation can change places, cities, countries, nations and probably worldwide.

The church relevant in rural areas is the responsible social context relevant area of evangelism strategies. The model effectively Church is represented by affirming vision of each member. Thus, challenges need to be identified and they should be given clear answers to that then can be defined a strategy for church growth. Socially, it is important for the church to be involved to receive people's attention and thereby building relationships.

NOTES

[1] Flavius Mihalache & Alin Croitoru, *Mediul rural românesc: evoluţii şi involuţii* (Bucureşti: Editura Expert, 2011), 55.

[2] Cf http://www.insse.ro/cms/files/statistici/comunicate/alte/2012/RPL_rezultate%20preliminare.pdf, (Last accessed November 13, 2016).

[3] Cf. http://www.recensamantromania.ro/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/REZULTATE-DEFINITIVE-RPL_2011.pdf, (Last accessed November 13, 2016.)

[4] http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=8835&langId=ro, (Last accessed November 13, 2016).

[5] http://www.hotnews.ro/stiri-11403176-.htm?nomobile, (Last accessed November 13, 2016).

[6] Paul W. Powell, *Sheepherding the Sheep in Smaller Churces* (Dallas: Annuity Board Press, 1995), 23.

[7] Mark Dever, *Ce este o Biserică sănătoasă?* (Oradea: Editura Făclia, 2009), 38.

[8] Ibid., 26.

[9] Christian A. Schawarz, *Dezvoltarea naturală a Bisericii* (Timişoara: Editura Impact Media, 2003), 23.

[10] Ibid., 24.

[11] Dever, 109.

[12] Cf. http://www.citatepedia.ro/index.php?id=64518 (Last accessed November 13, 2016).

[13] Darrow L. Miller, *Ucenicia naţiunilor* (Cluj: Editura Logos, 2001), 236.

Specific Aspects of the Church's Contribution to A Society's Development in the Past and Present

Daniel Gligore, PhD
Pr. Parohia Capu Dealului, Argeş, Romania
danielgligore@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT: 'Love for God' and 'love for all men,' which include 'the whole law and the prophets,' are constantly preached by the Christian Church. From its beginnings, the Church has contributed permanently to society by promoting a relationship based on love between people and nations, taught the people to live a disciplined life, guided them to the knowledge of God and His edification, to science, to culture, diligence, and other biblical values essential to human life. Therefore, this paper is meant as a reassessment of these values in the contemporary context.
KEY WORDS: Church, teaching, knowledge of God, Gospel, society development

Man: the Connecting Link Between Spirit and Matter

God, One in Being and three in Persons, is the Supreme Creator of the universe in all the glory of its harmonious diversity. The infinite goodness and Divine richness manifests in the creation of the universe, in its continuing support and governance through the uncreated divine energies, to participate in the richness of the Intratrinity Divine love, in complete solidarity.[1]

God is not just a cosmic clockmaker, who starts the mechanism and then lets it go on its own.[2] On the contrary, according to Saint John the Evangelist, creation is continuous, "My Father worketh hitherto; and I work."[3] If God would not exercise His creative will at every moment, the universe would crumble, as the inspired Psalmist confesses, "All to You expect to give them their food at the right time. You giving them their will gather You opening Your hand, all will be filled with good things; But if You turned Your face away, they will be disturbed; take their spirit and they will end and will return to dust. Send Your spirit and they will be build and renew the face of the earth. The glory of the Lord forever! Rejoice the Lord in His works."[4]

Based on these realities, of God's permanent care for creation, we get to man and his relation to his Creator and the creation in which he lives. Man, as Olivier Clement says, goes through the life of this world looking at its unspoken depths; encounters mysteries everywhere and sees the reflection of other worlds. Nothing is closed in itself, nothing finished, nothing definitive fixed in this world. The world is transparent, its borders are always moving, it penetrates into other worlds and other worlds penetrate into it. There is no impenetrable opacity in the world.[5] The created world is not isolated from man as well as it is not isolated from its Creator. It was created for man and through man it fulfills its purpose, namely "to share in the freedom of God's sons."[6] Man, created to be born, grow, multiply and become perfect in nature, has the noble duty "*to interpret the book of nature*", to understand the universe in his marvelous structure in its harmony and to give it a rational articulation. Man is creation's archon and together they must reach the Creator of all. Nicodemus the Hagiorite testifies that man, in the contemplative prayer, brings forth to God the whole sensitive and intelligible world which he summarizes and contains within him as a micro cosmos.[7]

Man, the link between spirit and matter, is molded in the "image of God."[8] The human being (body and soul), in collaboration with the divine grace which was in elementary state a fundamental dimension of his, aims to deify himself and with himself all creation, the entire kingdom that was created for him with this goal.[9]

The gracious state is man's state of harmony and communion with God, with himself and with the entire material and spiritual

creation. In this state all creation is characterized by that interior union of each with everything,[10] and of the whole with God; the whole universe becomes a transparent medium of expression and manifestation of God.

The primordial harmony, existent through creation, tended normally, naturally, because of the uncreated divine energies in it and due to the cooperation of man with Divine Grace to reach perfection, in sustaining the good, the beautiful, in communion with God to glorify Him continually and thereby to forever share the Intra-Trinity Divine Love.

> Alone man of all visible and thoughtful was built mortal and immortal, visible and invisible, sensible and understandable, seer of the visible creation, knowing of the thought.[11]

Jesus Christ or the Man's Restoration

Man's natural, native state is the gracious state, constitutive to him since creation. God took dust from the ground and "formed man and breathed into his face the breath of life and made him a living being."[12] The Holy Fathers state that *once with the breath of life, God has also given man divine grace.*

After the Fall, *the image of God* in man was altered, the original gracious state was altered but not completely destroyed. Immediately after the expulsion from paradise after the punishment, man receives the promise of a Redeemer who restores the possibility of regaining the gracious state and will objectively rise to the maximum approach to God.[13]

The Incarnate Son of God, after His Resurrection, blows again on the Apostles, gives them the grace to work with God to the "creatio nova" which is just beginning, new creation in which man is restored, objectively saved by God.

St. Cyril says: "The Holy Spirit was given to first man together with life". His action was inside the man. As a result of the Fall, the Spirit's work becomes exterior to nature. Afterwards man is in a fallen state, and therefore only the love of God can restore man through His Son.

"In the fullness of time,"[14] when the world was ready for the coming of the Savior, the divine grace was given to man by God–Man in full. Incarnation, Passion, Resurrection,[15] Ascension and sending the Holy Spirit into the world to make the presence of Christ in His Church real until the end of time bring all people the divine grace, the objective salvation that each one and all in the spirit of love and communion with Christ must appropriate it.[16]

In the baptismal consecration of Jordan, the Holy Spirit is placed on the human nature of Christ and from Pentecost becomes a worker from within human nature. The effect is the vitality and effectiveness of the force with which the Apostles preached unto death compared with the fear before this moment.[17]

Church–Pentecost Continued to Earth

The church is the body of Christ, is the continued Pentecost on earth, is the image of the Trinity, the absolute Church of the three divine Persons. The church can be understood only by experience, by grace, through participation in its liturgical life, "Come and see!"[18]

Holy Apostles John[19] and Peter[20] talk about "the Lamb sacrificed since the world began," which shows that the act of creating the world, carries in itself, beforehand, the Saints Community in Church, as the alpha and omega of any of God's creative *iconomy*. The confession of faith places the beginning of the Church in Heaven. God "came in the cool of the evening,"[21] to talk to the man: thus the essence of the Church is pictured in the bond between God and man; foreshadowed in the Edenic state, prophetically anticipated in the Old Covenant ordinance, it is fulfilled in the incarnation and puts forth the Celestial City,[22] the living Church of the Lamb's wedding. The Holy Fathers bring forth the greatest fact of divine philanthropy: God is made man, and thus It unites through marriage, which is created with what is uncreated. Jesus Christ, the God-Man, by extension due to the principle of consubstantiality, becomes Christ - the Church: God - humanity, divine-human fullness.[23]

Beyond the image of the world that is transient, faith reveals the permanent act that does not change: the world's destinies and

each other's are intertwined at the level of the Church, from this predetermined center of the universe. Man is saved in the Church, which means according to St. Peter that "he participates in God's nature."[24] Deified humanity thus depicts the living "imitation" of the Trinity: the unity of human nature in the multiplicity of its hypostases. The theology of the Church, in its scale, especially highlights the universal participation in the divine life conditions: the integrity of nature and its immortality.[25]

Specifics of the Church's Past Contribution to Social Development

God has permanent care of His creation, renewing it in His spirit: "Send You Your spirit and will be build and You will renew the face of the earth."[26] The incarnate Son of God, entrusted the Holy Apostles and their successors, the threefold ministry (teaching, sanctifying and ruling): "Wherefore, going and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and lo, I am with you in all days, until the end of the world. Amen."[27]

Moreover, under the universal priesthood basis, every Christian is responsible and obliged to his peers to preach through word, prayer and good deeds which he received in turn from God through the sacramental priesthood or universal: "And you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people earned by God, that *you may proclaim to the world the greatness of Him* who called you out of darkness into His glorious light, you who once were not a people, and now you are God's people; you who once had no mercy, and now you have mercy."[28]

Church teaching is applicable in daily life and touches all aspects of life. To gain an insight into the Church's contribution to society's development in the past, I will list some key aspects for human life.

In full slavery period, in which people were regarded as mere possessions and could be sold, bought by the wealthy, and the general

population was content if it had bread and circuses (the most popular being the gladiatorial fights—they fought until one of them died in the arena), behold the Savior teaching to love all people, including the enemy takes shape and is taught, often by blood of the martyrs. This huge leap was made from the human dignity of Christianity, every human being in "God's image,"[29] with the purpose of reaching deification. Moreover, Christ identifies with each of us "I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you took care of Me; I was in prison and you came to Me."[30]

The woman received a new dignity in Christianity. They are the ones who Christ revealed Himself to after His resurrection from the dead and they proclaimed the apostles. More women are mentioned as Lidia[31] who was baptized together with her household, "a woman named Damaris,"[32] who believed the words of St. Paul etc. Continuing this path, girls began to go to school and be active in society.

The first schools were set up in the Church's porch. Here studied future ministers of the Holy Shrines, deacons, readers, copyists of manuscripts etc. I exemplify the stated with the school inside the Princely Church in Curtea de Arges. There appear many graphite inscriptions: "here I am, I signed on my own accord, Gabratin", dated before 1369, probably names of craftsmen who worked on building the church. Mircea the Great certainly had in Curtea de Argeș, a "grammar school" where the teacher and scribe Michael studied, who recorded at 10 June 1415 a document issued by the prince at Argeș: "I Michael grammarist, <I wrote> in Arghiş, July 10th in the year 6923 141 and indiction 8, during the time when Mustafa Celapi came."[33]

Moreover, the first industrial schools were also set up by servants of the Church, renowned craftsmen making decorations, monumental projects—mostly churches and monasteries, sacred objects (Crosses, carved book covers, embroidery etc.)

The first books transcribed by copyists and after the invention of printing, printed with the methods of the time, were also in the Church setting. The 1508 printed books are well known in present day Romania: *Missal* (1508), *Octoihul* (1510) and the *Four Gospels* (1512).

The first hospitals were built also around Churches. The famous Vasiliade, founded by St. Basil the Great (IV century) were spread throughout the Christian world in present day Romania being near the strongest centers and being called "Bolnițe"—designation exists even today in some Churches, such as the Church near Curtea de Argeș monastery.

Civil legislation was Christianized, certain pagan provisions being eliminated over time, like the death penalty.

Over time hierarchs were close advisers of kings but also helped with diplomatic missions, mediation of certain conflicts and misunderstandings etc., they were part of the Royal Council, took the place of the King when he was gone, etc, all of these because they were highly educated men and well trained. Romanian Country rulers, along with the hierarchs who consecrated their rule and guided them and the people in good faith to Christ, were followers of the best Roman and Byzantine traditions. After the fall of Constantinople to the Turks (1453), Romanian Country rulers and hierarchs were those who preserved and supported the Orthodox Church both in the country and throughout the whole Orthodox world of the time. Examples are Radu the Great and Neagoe Basarab. About last, Gabriel the Priest wrote: *"in all sides from the East to the West and from Noon to Night, all holy churches he fed and showed much mercy everywhere. And wasn't only good to Christians, but also to the pagans, and was a merciful father to all, resembling the heavenly Lord, who shines His sun and rains on the righteous and on the wicked, as shown by the Gospel."*[34] Therefore it is justified the claim of historian Nicolae Iorga that the Romanian Country was successor of the Byzantine heritage, being a true *"Byzantium after Byzantium."* Moreover, in Romanian Country the cultural heritage of the Byzantine Empire bloomed and brought forth a culture, an art and an Orthodox Christian life specific to Romanians.

The Christian Church has always urged to knowledge: *"And this is eternal life: that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent*;"[35] to knowledge and skill in all aspects of life, from the words of Sacred Scripture: *"Leave the unwiseness to stay alive and walk on the right path of understanding!"*[36]

Through the religious education but cultural and social that the Holy Church ministers give parishioners of all kinds, through preaching, catechesis, public and private discussions, participate in a harmonious development of society.

Education, in the fullness of the word, is the most precious heritage that we can acquire or give as legacy to our children, grandchildren and our fellow men, its fruits returning to those who give it and bearing hundredfold fruit, today and forever. I base these affirmations on the Word of Life in the Holy Scripture ("what you sow, so shall you reap"[37]), on the experience of humanity synthesized in history (nations who had a sound education both in theory and applied in real life day endured most - and I mention here our ancestors, the Dacians, for which culture, education and religious life were essential, educated people, as a percentage, it is reached only in modern times by us,[38] the applicability in everyday life is visible in the family care - as shown by scenes from Trajan's Column in which captive Dacians protect their little ones and their wives) but also on own experience.[39] Through education, we take the fruits of the Holy Spirit, the sap wisdom gained by predecessors, preparing us at the same time to go through the future: *"Hear the instruction, to get wise!"*[40]

> "What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"[41]

With this question begins the Catechism, or the Foundations of Faith. It's a question that at first glance, is related to religion, very few even among believers taking it seriously. Let's briefly take a look at this question's connotations that our Savior Jesus Christ asks, starting from the root of human life, ie at the stage of infancy and childhood.

Most of us, bodily or spiritual parents, we do our best for our bodily children or our spiritual children. Often we endure many to provide them whatever they need, to not want of anything, to be happy, to have, as the saying goes, everything we lacked. This is the general mentality. But what is the biggest dowry that we can give to children and our fellow men?

The answer has to do with the human being in its complexity, body and soul. The most precious dowry is faith (here we understand

our love for God and others and the whole building of God), education, acquiring wisdom, understanding, harmony and all deep values.

Let me illustrate with a reality described in the Holy Scripture and continued in the Holy Tradition. It is about the rich man who came to Jesus and asked him what to do to gain eternal life. After he testified that from childhood he fulfilled all the words in the Law, the Savior told him to sell all he has to divide it to the poor, and follow Him and thus be complete. The young man saddened, says the Scripture because he was rich. From the Holy Tradition we learn what happened next! He continued living as before, and when the Romans destroyed Jerusalem leaving not one stone upon another, he realized the words of the Savior and their absolute validity.

This experience of the young man in the Gospel, rich in material things, is had by any rich man in material things, who gives material wealth to children, relatives, but doesn't also offer spiritual riches, which are part of the human soul, the result being well known. How many wealthy individuals do not keep their children in luxury, pampering them with everything, how many people do not give fabulous fortunes to their followers but without preparing them not crush by them, how many people who gained fabulous sums overnight have reached how they got. What is the explanation? We find in it the people: *Where the mind is not, woe is the foot.*

Analyzing these we understand better about the profound values that we can give to those we love and care about. Material dowry has its role, is pleasing to God, but spiritual heritage is fundamental to the life of our peers.

What has all this got to do with preaching the Gospel to the younger generation? I will summarize a few key dimensions:

a. Prayers and religious knowledge essential to the Christian life. Their role is essential. Great scholars, academicians, laureates of various international awards have reached the certainty of the existence of a Creator and testified in their works, as reason has guided them to God. Arriving here they grew in knowledge but also in the joy of life. The reverse? What happened with many celebrities who have gained the whole world (known everywhere, with colossal fortunes, with everything we can imagine) but they came to drug addiction, psychological treatments, reaching to suicidal gestures.

The explanation is simple. Man is composed of body and soul, and if he is fed only materially then he becomes unfortunate, he is unbalanced. The believer at any time of life, even in moments when he feels overwhelmed by certain situations, persecuted or even tortured, he retains his balance and even joy for having communion with Christ, the Son of God Incarnate, he is certain that this life is fleeting and full happiness waits for him. So I was happy to see believers who survived the tortures and persecutions with dignity, with prayer and could have a tremendous emotional balance. When we trust in ourselves and in our wallet, as a fragile mentality does, we would crash at any imbalance together with our wallet. Who has God the Father, as we say in the Lord's Prayer—Our Father, whatever the situation is under the protection of the Heavenly Father that does not allow temptation greater than the power and the help that He offers His sons and daughters.

Hold On to What You Promised Yourself Into!

Steadfastness in the vocation we have. It was during my most beautiful days in college when I read from the Wisdom of Jesus son of Sirach: *"Hold what you promised yourself and occupy yourself into that fully up and rejoice, and fully enhance your work. . . . Trust in the Lord and stay fully in thy labor. . . . The blessing of the Lord is the reward of the believer and in an hour rather raises His blessing."*[42] I confess that in many moments of life this wisdom, and many others, which we hear in sermons in Church, at spiritual evenings, round meals, symposiums etc., helped me to be mentally balanced and live my life more than anything else. We learn a lot and forget a lot. Counts, as wisdom says, that remains after we forget. What it means to be operated on by career doctor, who does it from the passion and has made it all his life? What it means a career priest who serves fondly even if he cannot live from it and is forced to work something else to support his family or to support his priestly mission? What it means a career teacher who educates children without thinking how much is valued or paid by the society, with the awareness that his pupil may be tomorrow's neurosurgeon who will operate on his brain. This is

the difference between having and not having a religious education. Another significant aspect! In difficult moments in life when you realize your own limitations and the inability of those around you, communion with God is the only way that gives you hopes of healing, raising, salvation from the hardships of life.

What You Sow; So Shall You Reap!

a) If we baptized the children and feed them physically, we also need to feed them spiritually and to care for their training in the complexity of the human being. Education is human being's food, and the religious dimension is basis, the journey but also the finality of man's forming. I objectify this with the model of Professor Alexandru Ionescu, God rest him with the righteous. He tutored us all for admission to college. His Lordship House was a true cultural-educational center (is my model and I wish to be a teacher), all rooms were occupied by his or his wife's disciples. His children were not given a great material dowry but gave them spiritual food and cultural heritage and God helped them all to become great men, with families and everything they need, and Ms. Ionescu, the children's mother, got to see the world with the help of who was the mother of both bodily and spiritual. How much difference between the Christian family and those receiving all for granted and not knowing to appreciate anything! At the end of college, His Eminence Father Calinic, Hierarch of Arges and Muscel, asked us something different: "What is everyone's favorite verse?" Finally, the verse that we put to heart was: *"Be not deceived: God will not be mocked; for what you sow, so shall you reap."*[43] Here then, after more than 15 years have passed since, what does religious education received from individuals dedicated to serving God mean. We forgot a lot, but some were printed and bear fruit, with the help of God, in our hearts.

b) Respect for parents, grandparents and all fellow men: "God said, 'Honor your father and your mother."[44] Parents who encourage children to take both religion class in school and to also go to Church services, actually support and honor themselves, ensuring that they will be respected by their children and other children who will be

tomorrow's young and a little later will be the next generation of doctors, teachers, mayors, priests, etc. What is more rewarding for a parent in old age than to see his children worshiping him? Where is this taught? At Church, at the Religion class, at spiritual evenings and reading books useful to the body and soul.

c) Learn to do good deeds to fellow men, with the assurance that God identifies with them. *"As you did it to one of these too small brothers of Mine, You have done it to Me."*[45] What could be more important for a parent, grandparent, and a normal person than to contribute after means and prowess to the pursuit of this goal? This is the pinnacle of education and good growth. Be polite, do good deeds, to be forgiving, to rejoice even when someone does or says something bad to you.

d) Providing spiritual and physical health for the children. Through religious education they are taught to discern right from wrong, thus acknowledging the disaster of sins materialized in various deeds or vices: drinking, smoking, drugs, prostitution, depression etc. How expensive is this?

By Giving, You Shall Acquire!

e) They have the consciousness link between helping others and salvation. *"He who turned the sinner from the error of his way will save his soul from death, and shall cover the multitude of sins."*[46] So an essential work of every Christian in life is to be an apostle of religious education both at school and in the Church and society. Let's think about the value of this aspect. The wise man sowing grain having the best seeds to have a blessed harvest, also gives seeds to his neighbors. Along with the religious aspect - God multiplies and rewards—is a material aspect—if the neighbors all have good seeds they avoid the danger of interbreeding and cultural degradation due neighborhood with inferior kinds. Thus we have the awareness that spiritual advantage also implies material advantage, since the Lord is the Possessor of the spiritual world and the material one, the two are interdependent.

All of us have experienced the joy of faith in different factual circumstances of our lives or our relatives, this feeling reminding me of the words of Nicholas Stainhard "giving you acquire" and the wisdom of historian Nicolae Iorga: "Wisdom is yours only when you share it with another, otherwise it is just in you."

God bless us with joy, faith, hope, wisdom, steadfastness in the best and, above all, to help us bring forth in us the love, which according to the counsel of St. John the Evangelist, is immortal, it is eternal because *"God is love and he who remains in love remains in God and God in him."*[47]

NOTES

[1] Dumitru Stăniloae, *Teologia Dogmatică Ortodoxă*, Vol. I, (București: Editura Institutului Biblic și de Misiune al Bisericii Ortodoxe Române, 1996), 287.

[2] Daniel Gligore, *Sacerdoțiul omului. Omul–preot al creației* (Curtea de Argeș: Editura Dacpress, 2004), 7.

[3] John 5:17

[4] Ps 103:28–32

[5] Dumitru Stăniloae, *Ascetica și Mistica Ortodoxă*, Vol. II (Alba Iulia: Editura Deisis, 1993), 18.

[6] Rom 8:21

[7] Nichifor Crainic, *Sfințenia împlinirea umanului*, Colecția „Teologie și Spiritualitate" Nr. 2, (Iași: Editura Mitropoliei Moldovei și Bucovinei, Trinitas, 1993), 164.

[8] Genesis 1:26–27

[9] Gligore, 2004, 13.

[10] Vladimir Soloviov, *Fundamentele spirituale ale vieții*, Traducere de Diac. Ioan I. Ică (Alba Iulia: Editura Deisis, 1994), 88.

[11] Ion Bria, *Tratat de Teologie Dogmatică și Ecumenică*, Colecția Didaskalos (București: Editura România Creștină, 1999), 107.

[12] Gen 2:7

[13] Gen 3:15

[14] Gal 4:4

[15] Ioan–Gheorghe Rotaru, "Fie ca învierea lui Iisus să ne schimbe inima și să ne mărească credința!," în *Argeșul ortodox*, Săptămânal teologic, bisericesc și de atitudine al Arhiepiscopiei Argeșului și Muscelului, Curtea de Argeș, anul XI, nr. 546, 25 aprilie–2 mai (2012): 5.

[16] Gligore, 2004, 37

[17] Paul Evdochimov, *Ortodoxia*, Traducere de Irineu Ioan Popa (București: Editura Institutului Biblic și de Misiune al Bisericii Ortodoxe Române, 1996), 159.

[18] Ibid., 135.

[19] Rev. 13:1–8

[20] 1 Peter 1:19

[21] Gen 3:8

[22] Rev 21:22

[23] Evdochimov, 1996, 137.

[24] 2 Peter 1:4

[25] Evdochimov, 1996, 137.

[26] Ps 103:31

[27] Mt 28:19–20

[28] I Peter 2:9–10

[29] Gen 1:27

[30] Mat 25:35–36

[31] Acts 16:14

[32] Acts 17:34

[33] *DRH, B,* Țara Românească, vol. I, doc. 38, p. 80-82.

[34] This information comes from a brief note recorded during the seventeenth century by a monk Gavriil the Elder of the Holy Mount Athos in reference to Neagoe Basarab. Cf. *Sfântul Neagoe Basarab, voievodul Țării Românești – Argumente pentru canonizare, Tropar, Condac, Sinaxar, Slujba și Acatistul* (Curtea de Argeș: Editura Episcopiei Argeșului și Muscelului, 2009), 8.

[35] John 17:3

[36] Solomon 9:6.

[37] Gal 6:7

[38] Mihai Bărbulescu, „Învățământul (literatura, filosofia, mitologia, dreptul roman, medicina, matematica)," in Dumitru Protase, Alexandru Suceveanu, eds., *Istoria românilor, Daco-romani, Romanici, Alogeni*, vol. II, (București: Editura Enciclopedică, 2001), 228.

[39] Eliza Milcă, „Din cuvântările Preotului Daniel Gligore, ‚Educația și roadele ei. Astăzi și în veci,'" in *Bucuria Credinței*, nr. 2/ (2015-2016): 42.

[40] Solomon 8:33

[41] Mat 16:26

[42] Wisdom 11:21–24

[43] Gal 6:7

[44] Mat 15:4

[45] Mat 25:40

[46] James 5:20

[47] 1 John 4:16

An Analysis of the Moral–Religious Values in the U.S.A. and Europe from a Sociological Perspective

Ion–Lucian Răcilă, PhD
Independent Scholar, Romania
lucian3ro@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT: This paper serves as a sketchy comparative analysis of religious values from the perspectives of European and American cultures. Using the sociological method, the author presents a trend analysis of the role that religious and moral values play in the private and public life. Because values are rooted in their substrate and social change, the sociological positivist theory of classic transition is analyzed in its relationship with the trend of relativism. They highlight the living conditions and interests, as they meet in the nodal point of legal positivism.
KEY WORDS: society, religion, values, moral

Introduction

James Vander Zanden once wrote that "conceptions values ensure that we assess people, objects and events, and we appreciate their importance based on merit, beauty or morality. We appeal to values in some instances the ultimate rational for the choices we make in life."[1] With these words in mind and through the lenses of sociology, this paper will analyze the moral–religious values as defined and understood in the United States of America and in Europe.

The role of religion in the contemporary society has become increasingly significant particularly in USA, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Indonesia and Pakistan. A quick reading of Fig. 1, will be convincing enough to notice that Christianity, Islam and Hinduism,[2] are large enough to manifest a strong influence in the public life. These are the main religions that reshape the values in contemporary society and the best example in this case is the revitalization of religion in India. While Hindu nationalism led to some distancing between Hindus and non-Hindus (e.g., Christians, Muslims, and others), in Pakistan Islamization of the civil society has made inroads during the last four or five decades; as governments and regular citizens try to reassert Islamic identity. The impact of such religious activity led to the marginalization of religions that had smaller number of members.
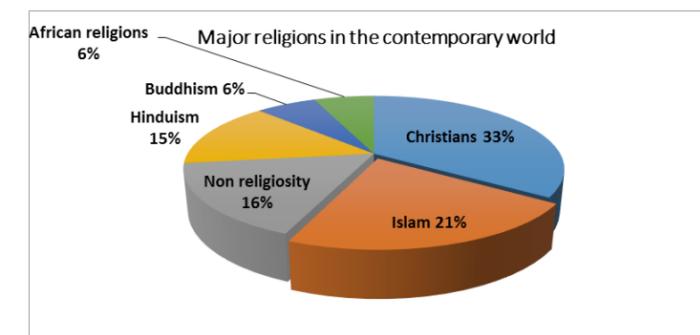
Fig. 1. The graph great religions in the contemporary world

In Sri Lanka, the politicization of Buddhism had already taken place for some time—the Buddhist monks playing an active role in the government and holding political positions—and this led to a sense of political confusion and antagonism.

In Israel, one can see a similar pattern, where one can argue that Judaism had been somewhat distorted as it had been highjacked by violent organizations. The militarization of the Zionist movement led to the marginalization of various religious (Muslim and Christian), and ethic minorities (Palestinians).

In a different way, religious fervor is noticeable also in the United States of America, where the Christian right is defused into a struggle against international terrorism, immigration and Islam.[3]

1) Contemporary Religious Moral Values in the United States

The US culture is a Western culture that originally emerged from the European culture, and had developed on its own trajectory since long before the US became an independent country with its own unique social and cultural characteristics such as dialect, music, arts, social customs, cuisine and folklore. Today, the U.S. is an ethnically and racially diverse country with a mosaic of multiculturalism generated by a widespread immigration from many different countries throughout its history.
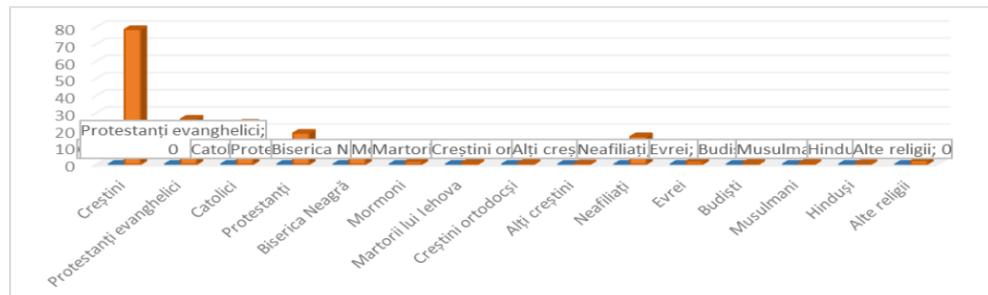
Fig. 2. Religious affiliation and religious guidelines contemporary U. S. A.[4]

Religion in the United States is characterized by great diversity in both religious beliefs and practices (Figure 2) and a high level of religious participations. Numerous Americans consider the role of religion in their lives as being "very important." A modern poll indicates that 83% of Americans say they belong to a religious denomination, 40% say they attend religious services every week, and 58% pray every week.[5] Whether we are talking about the north or the south, over 50% affirm that religion is an important factor in addressing contemporary values. However, despite this level of apparent religiosity, according to a 2008 survey, only 9% of Americans stated that religion was the most important aspect of their lives, compared with 45% who stated that religion was very important in the life of their family, and 17% who made very important section: *money and career*.[6]

Faith in God | Various surveys were conducted to determine the beliefs Americans about the God of the 899 adults surveyed, 76% expressed their belief in God, 9% believe in a spirit or a universal power, 8% do not believe in anything, and 1% did not know. A 2008 study on 1,000 people concluded that, based on their beliefs, rather than on identifying their religion, 70% of Americans believe in a personal God, about 12% of Americans are atheists or agnostics, and other 12% are deist.[7]
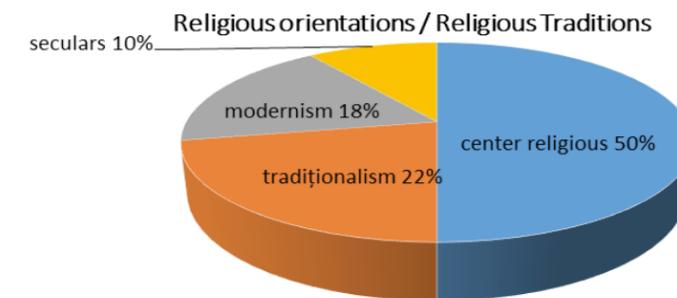
Fig. 3. Religious Orientations/Religious Traditions in the United States[8]

The survey was conducted nationwide on a representative sample of 2502 US citizens (over 18), in 2006. The survey included two over-samples: 250 Hispanic and 250 African Americans. It was the deepest survey on religion, values, policies, etc., among North Americans. The approach was based on the methodology developed by political scientist John Green, who made a composite called "religious factor". It managed to identify certain issues relating to religious values: religious orientation, matters of faith, Bible study, prayer, religious behaviors, importance of religion, etc.

A major finding in the study showed that most Americans believe that the *moral-religious values in America are weaker* than they were 20 years ago. Most Americans attribute moral decline to Mass Media. National Cultural Values Study found that 68% of Americans say that the media - entertainment and news - have a negative effect on moral values in America. In addition, 74% believe that moral values are weaker due to the direct influence of media,

which is the second largest factor influencing moral and religious value after parents and families.[9]

Lower standards of sexuality are another factor to decrease in value, 16% believe that sex between unmarried adult is not indicated, 49% say it depends on the situation, 65% excuses sex outside of marriage, and 45% believe that divorce can be offered anytime and for any reason. Only 67% believe that premarital sex among high school students is something bad, 49% believe that homosexuality is wrong.

Another major finding is that *America lost the fear of God*, only 52% believe that the Bible is the Word of God and has authority, 36% believe we should live by God's principles; 15% live according to their personal principles and 45% prefer to combine the teachings of God with their own values.

Also, *lost their perception of good and evil*, in other words, 53% are willing to tolerate assisted suicide, 28% are willing to exclude religious principles from government. No young people do not have the correct perception of good and evil, even among students observing major decline among religious moral values and standards.

The study shows very clearly that America's cultural decline is due to the remoteness of God's principles. Despite the decline in moral Americans still believe in the virtues of classic 51% believe that lying is not good in any situation, 46% say that you have to your promises in any case, 31% are willing to break the law, while 65% say it is wrong always, 57% would not deceive partner and 25% would accept illegal drugs. Institute for Culture and Media is a division of the Centre for Research and Media founded in October 2006 to expose media campaigns against traditional values and help restore America's cultural.[10]

2) Religious Moral Values in Contemporary Europe

When it comes to contemporary culture, it is very difficult to define a dominant trend that might come off during this period. If in the past, they could find notions Ages or romance or socialism, the

contemporary period bears no mark of a stream which can be defined in one word, although many researchers have tried names like hedonism, individualism, ego-society. At this stage the values are very different, they have evolved and morphed over time, it is sometimes difficult to assign a name abstract concrete, as was done in the past.

Prevailing value systems are treated with indifference and grows increasingly struggle between the keepers of values and their innovators. In a crisis of education, comes a new form of communication between generations, the younger generation refuses authority of the older generation, are widening gaps in communication and the communication between generations actual values becomes an impossibility. In this respect, the values of the older, fade and do not go to the young, because the younger generation aspires to other values, in another life.

1. Scientific thinking	2. Love	3. Reasoning (thought)	4. Individual autonomy	5. Emancipation from religion
Promethean spirit Beauty Body and sport Sense State The idea of law	Person Dignity Justice Happiness Honesty Respect Hospitality Fidelity Brotherhood Goodwill The spirit of self-help	Democracy Intelligence Training Knowledge Time (measured) Work	Relativism Pluralism Tolerance	Critical Spirit Progress Entrepreneurship Efficacy Saving and investment Money
6. Reason (instrumentality)	7. Utilities	8. The Right of peoples to self-determination	9. Leisure Activities	10. Family
Human rights Freedom of conscience Separation of church and state Happiness	Welfare Consumption Private property Market Competition Technology Social justice Solidarity Equality Social security	Peace Debt intervention	Women's Empowerment Nature Protection	

Table.1. European contemporary values[11]

Also, the general media provides a powerful channel of circulation values, where the spread of the contraceptive pill is one of the major conditions for abolishing the taboos on sex.

Reborn in the void of history manufacturers values of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, socialist liberal sociologists, anthropologists, some emphasizing traditional values and giving them new forms of expression, most however, giving them an advantage over those "new" specific weather contemporary.

Also, the transmitters of values (journalists, artists, writers, actors, professors, priests) spreading the values and ideas of producers. But innovative role is confirmed well that I had in the field of clerics. *Perhaps it is best equipped in terms of cultural criticism to a given situation and determine to change that.*[12]

Scientize noteworthy social progress and becoming more obvious the twentieth century, we must admit that the modern era has its problems and failures. Ascension brings science cynicism and moral relativism; secularization of pathological creates tensions that lead to chaos and nihilism; selfishness and individualism encourages social alienation; democratization leads to the "revolt of the masses", resulting in a culture of mediocrity and conformism. Contra-illuminist social ideology argues that the modern era requires a perpetual social crisis. It springs from impotence secular reason to create symbolic structures that give high values and thorough guidelines, which give our lives meaning and coherence.

Max Weber, in a deliberately turns expectations Millennium Enlightenment with the apocalyptic: "No one knows who will live in the future in this cage or if the end of this long process will not appear prophets entirely new, if not a spectacular rebirth of old ideas and ideals, or if we do not reach a petrified mechanization, perk up with a sort of spasmodic conceit. For about the last stage of this cultural developments we might as well say, rightly: specialists without spirit, sensualists heartless; this nullity imagines that they have reached a level of civilization never before never been touched."[13]

Secularization is that which induces a cultural crisis, and it starts a modernization insufficient and misdirected. It also rejects the Enlightenment except that reason can help build a good society and rational. They tend, however, that religious revival to initiate

socio-cultural renewal. This comes in contrast badly with regard to religious practices in society.
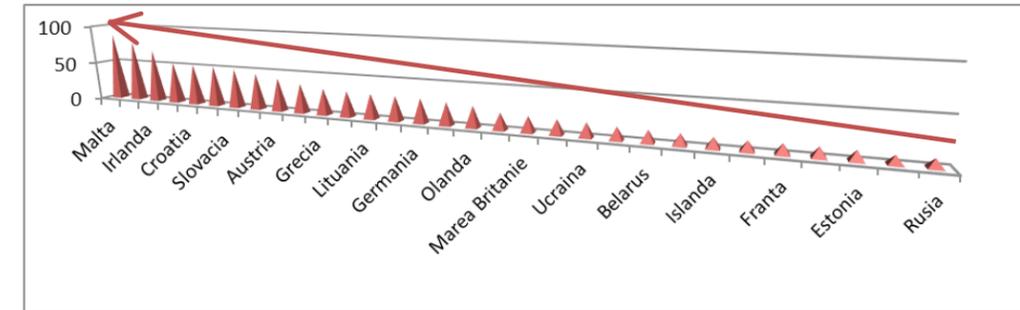
Fig. 4. Variation religious practices in Europe (2010)

According to the indicators (Figure 4), Russia, Estonia, France, Iceland, Belarus or Ukraine, lies along the northern countries of Europe, the secular public in terms of religious practice. In these companies, less than 15% of the population attend church once a month, and religious behavior in public, was sharply reduced. In contrast, Bulgaria, Slovakia and Latvia recorded significant increases in public religious practice during this period. Regarding our country, its place is headed in Chapter religious practice. It is interesting that in Russia and the former Soviet states, which are predominantly Orthodox though, lies not with the Bulgaria or Romania, but they are the opposite.

Individualism is the characteristic of our epoch, the ego or selfishness prevailing at the expense of the community. This value new contemporary flavor, can be found in neo-liberalism or socialism, where abandoned collectivism. In general, individualism behaves like a manager and ask what personal rights: the right to be happy, the right to be respected, the right to be paid, the right to have a child or not, the right not to decide anything in my right without me to have a say.

Also, personal values outweighs the Institutional personal faith, marriage, etc..; personal happiness is more important than collective happiness. Psychological balance is very important, which is consulted psychiatrist or psychoanalyst, exposing that pathologies

dominant in our era no longer hysteria, but narcissism caused by a continuous search for self and favored techniques of analyzes of spirit as yoga, dynamics group, Zen, and other kinds of therapy.

Freedom, as a new form of search of self, ready for a new sensitivity that purpose in itself, a release of any constraint, distrust of attachments sustainable independence to the requirements of society, a free life, expressed in the saying: "It's my life, I'm free to do what I want when I want and how I want" (popular phrase).

Personal fulfillment is a manifestation of individualism, which is to feel good about yourself. Personal appearance is emphasized. Whether to be happy, have to contribute to the happiness of others, personal development means developing their own individual potential. You must not follow the predetermined rules, but must be yourself, aspirations and dreams. This accomplishment can take different forms: from professional fulfillment, social issues, a certain mental state, etc.

Everything can be sacrificed to become a man of success, though, Albert Einstein, in addition to the lessons that gives us the history and life, says: "It's not important to be a man of success but a man of value."[14]

Experimentation is the next logical aspect, in which the individual finds his own happiness, experiencing the solutions is offered, although they may be values or relevant solutions for himself and not for the community, so relative values. The multitude of value systems and conduct, created this relativism so that no one can claim to have found the solution or the truth, at most can claim the right to be different. Even in science, the notion of truth is very relative, because there are no facts, only interpretations. This relativism must also be tolerant, especially in the presence of others so personal experience becomes key to any election, including ethics or religion. Even the imposition of good and prohibiting evil become unacceptable, because you have to try, to experience it yourself alternatives and then draw their own conclusions (even promote religion in the United States shall: Try Jesus!/Tried for Jesus!).[15] In this way, it makes the transition from a moral theory in a practical living.

Spontaneity, permissiveness, sexuality, intensity, hedonism and present time are linked because they interact, but it also presents a logical entity.

Spontaneity can be regarded as a value of a human guide postmodern and contemporary, it is free to seek their destiny, without an itinerary before stability. Cultivated still in school, spontaneity feeds imagination and creativity and enjoy tolerance, going so toward permissiveness.

International comparative surveys on European values (1981, 1990, 1999), which, in a particular matter have compiled a list of 22 acts (recourse to abortion, the practice of homosexuality, adultery, buying stolen goods, tax evasion, etc.) It shows that *permissiveness* is increasing in various fields, especially in matters of sexuality, and that France is among the most permissive countries.[16] The desire to make the most of every moment in hand and search intensity is on the agenda and hence explosion to get involved in as many things, to travel more often and further, a cult of the body.

All these aspects form the other and hedonism, because pleasure is the one that dictates all the longings of the human body, immediate gratification, free of taboos, defendant, carpe diem (Romans)/Live for the moment! From 1980 to 2000, the prospect of this increase from 53.3% to 63.6%, and the prospect of future declines from 40.8% to 34.5% of respondents.

Conviviality, pairing spontaneity 60s was one of axial values, becoming a pipedream currently present in some circles, subgroups or societies showing values as: return to nature, simplicity, celebration, etc.

Ecology, or respect for nature, is an enduring value of this movement, increasing in proportion to the increase every age nuisances and industrial pollution.

Contemporary environmental issues, representing a danger for the survival and existence of life on this planet increasingly requires the intervention of ethics in their resolution. In the face of challenges of the contemporary era intelligence can stay accountable and humanism applied, not exhortation to pure virtue. Concerns and ideals of contemporary consciousness had to turn their attention to nature

protection thus developing an environmental ethic that includes new values centered nature.[17]

Equality is manifested on several levels: before the law, equal treatment of all citizens who are in the same situation, refusing privileges integrated morals. But in this case the value has evolved towards equality in opportunities. So, no matter what environment you what race you are, you have the same opportunities. All the activities that have been initiated to demand equality before the opportunities are part of the postmodern heritage. The value that looms behind these requirements is called "non-discrimination" and actions are called "positive discrimination".

Duty | At the end of the twentieth century, there were naturally a number of protracted conflict situations, which manifests itself between moral duties and obligations. Equally naturally, as far as achieving parameters required for organizing a democratic modern type conflicts generally those between debt will subside and they, at least for the time required Assembly powers to pass or consumption and digestion of the victims, wealth fraudulently accrued etc.

Honesty | In the twentieth century, more and more philosophers, logicians and mathematicians have shown that the idea of truth epistemic is not so clear and understandable because, besides the fact that there are several conceptions of truth (the realistic truth-mail, outlook utilitarian-pragmatic, consensual theory etc.), each of which usually evolve to a more thorough explanation and richer in meaning.

Caution | Prudence implies uncertainty, risk, random, unknown. For this reason, and wisdom needs it because not a crazy wisdom. If science is a formal politeness, prudence is a real science to live and be happy, both now and in the future. It assures us that we must choose and what to avoid.

Courage | To understand courage must be started from an important distinction, that between its appearance psychological, sociological and moral. Psychosociologists declare that: the courage is a trait that is the lack of sensitivity to fear that, whether it is hardly felt, is well tolerated, sometimes with pleasure. For example, fans of dangerous missions, expeditions to the poles or on top of the world, lovers of scandal free with another band in the neighborhood,

are certainly courageous in psychological and sociological sense, but not moral. Courage becomes a value and a moral virtue only when it comes, at least in part, in the service of others; it shows that it was issued in a somewhat selfish interest immediately. To some extent, because I enunciation total is unlikely. Therefore, the recommendation Bible to love our neighbor as thyself refers, in fact, that selfishness educates issued by ego, which we also call generosity or even altruism. Seen thus, courage is present in any moral action as present and prudence, by the way.

Traditional values	Central values	Latent values	Postmodern values
Religion	Love	Justice	Individualism
Authority	Family	Solidarity	Fulfillment
Moral rigor	Friendship	Benevolence	Liberty
Obedience	Honesty	Kindness	Experimentation
Duty	Dignity		Relativity
Work	Successful professional		Sincerity
Responsibility	Property		Tolerance
Fidelity	Consumerism		Spontaneity
	Safety		Permeability safety
	Leisure activities		Sexuality
	Science/ Technology		Intensity
	Progress		Hedonism
	Democracy		Present tense
	Peace		Conviviality

Table 2. Values at the beginning of XXI century[18]

Traditional Values | Traditions have not forgotten how to be, although they are always changing. Gradually, they conserve in some form, but not disappear from society. On the other hand, traditions change with society, even if changes are not ever as sudden or radical, as happens often with society.[19]

If we compare the new postmodern values, many of the old values prevalent for centuries, they have witnessed decline faster or slower. Whatever indicator is chosen, all over the world, it signaled

the decline of religion, faith understood as practical, action and behavior.

During the separation of religious institutions and faith generalize a list of ideas: the man has the right to create their own laws; It is not created, but is the result of an evolution, so it is perfectible; taking care of his journey on earth can eliminate all suffering and loneliness. God and man are starting to distance themselves, the latter having increasingly less need someone to explain the universe, to live or to find happiness. Society becomes secular: religion regulates them increasingly less rhythms, habits, celebrations, public space.

The next step would have been *authority* because it is representing the value of new values in whose name expansion is blocked. Even if it is the state authority in the family, at school, at work, she is known as oppressive, alienating. It is found everywhere not only by laws, the regulations in everyday relations between superiors and inferiors, etc.

Another step, is the *moral rigor* as representing the force which resists gains of freedom and permissiveness. There is nothing "old-fashioned" than to refer to ethical or "moral order."

Obedience and duty are complementary values derive directly from the authority and moral rigor. As societies to function well, morality must be respected, and the man to fulfill his duty to obey authority.

Work represents an important value, but it is not synonymous with duty to the state and no longer represents a final value. It is linked to personal fulfillment, which determines the satisfactions of attorney. The work is not valued in any circumstance. Contemporary man wants as far as possible, be master of his own labor. Does not give the best of it unless its tasks are quite interesting, that if allow to be involved in the decisions and initiatives they take.

Responsibility is closely linked to freedom, and in the first phase, the current postmodern are not responsible. There can be no act that could be qualified as sin or mistake; there is only psychological processes that lead to certain behaviors determined that, in turn, causes disturbance, feelings of guilt, anxiety. These can be addressed

through a form of therapy or another and healed. Place of the priest in the confessional is taken by psychologists.

Fidelity knew a devaluation and later, a certain motion curing. Hat formerly held in high esteem because vital guarantee duration and soundness attachments. Must be entirely faithful to the homeland, family, political or ideological institutions superiors partner.
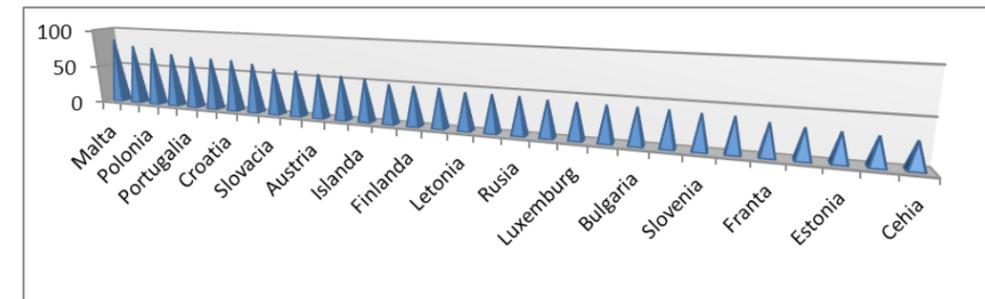
Fig. 5. Shared Religiosity in Europe (2010)

In the context of traditional values, according to data (Figure 5), we see that the average values of religiosity reach the maximum Malta, Poland, Ireland, showing a predominance of religious values and a low degree of secularization. In contrast, the data show very concrete idea of a profound secularization of societies Protestant majority and the preservation of religious values in societies predominantly Catholic (Denmark, Sweden). France (mostly Catholic) are among the champions of secularism and Bulgaria and Romania (predominantly Orthodox) is at the opposite pole.

If we look at Figure 5, grasp easily appearance of a phenomenon revitalization and effervescence of religion, especially in Eastern Europe, such as Bulgaria, Latvia, Slovakia, while secularism has advanced dramatically in countries like Ireland, Great Britain, Hungary spaces where religious values already lost more ground. It is also interesting to see that countries with such profound secularization, Denmark, Sweden or Finland, manifest religious effervescence during this period. Core values are present in the center of our culture and are subject to general agreement. Also,

crossing eras disorders and metamorphosis. May change in some ways, but not in their essential features.

Friendship is a value that prevails in our society fall within interpersonal, taking first place in the younger generation options, and for those who have little satisfaction in family life.

Love | As in Christianity, recognized the supreme value of any civilization, but specifically treated each of them is nuanced in our culture as the foundation of torque and marriage.

The category of moral values, *honor and dignity* are consistently considered the most important, although it can be manipulated through behavior inspired equivalent value, like racism or xenophobia.

In the economic sphere, the key value is the professional success because it is the foundation of social position and income that provides access to property and consumption. Most people put great weight on the concept of private property: my house, my car, my stuff.

Also, all the polls and surveys show that, regardless of space or time, the *family*, is the amount forefront, which is based on exclusive love of two people who founded a home.

Another central value in the life of contemporary society is the *consumerism*—offer endless objects and services offered with the choice, the pleasure of buying—is a value so striking that used to call "consumer society" corporate body promotes.[20]

Although contemporary society tolerated substantially different forms of "deviance" and maintained *permissiveness*, especially in moral matters, reaffirms the need for security; a multidimensional value: safety in the face of crime and delinquency, the streets and public transport, work safety in the face of illness and various recurs of life.

Leisure activities are part of the consumer society, while procuring income and leisure, entertainment, travel, activities, multiple services. Even this value represents annual holidays in the most spectacular.

Desire for knowledge that characterizes civilization from its inception, continues to act and be manifested in particular by the value it synonymously ascribed to science and technology, whose

advances have spawned centuries idea of progress, is an increase of linear and uninterrupted humanity.

Together with *democracy* (supreme value among political values that citizens share and consider them as the foundation for human governance), peace has in turn become a central value (company's establishment of international peacekeeping in the world).[21]

Values: latent/hidden

The meaning of the good | In contemporary Western thought, good is conceived as something useful or something that answers a need or desire trends generating the resulting satisfaction. Although ethics is an obstacle to conquering human impulses, it proves to be very necessary to strengthen tendencies towards good and deliberate use of new media and particularly strong energy that mankind has for over half a century.

In the twentieth century, moral thinking, good and evil were considered permanent researchers, based on different assumptions. If utilitarianism believes that good or useful identify with what ensures maximum welfare, other thinkers argue that good as a simple property. Emerges as metaphysical values associated the knowledge like an interesting talking about intuition moral values: good as a property unnatural, which depends largely of individuals; good as an intrinsic value of human consciousness, which ensures dignity.

Justice, solidarity (fraternity), *benevolence* and mercy are shown in public speeches or edifying stories. However, they are poorly rated in surveys and rather placed last in the list than others. They are classified as "dormant" since he is present in a conscience dormant. They wake up when an unexpected event occurs when a situation is prolonged considered scandalous, or when a situation ends up causing a feeling of saturation. In these moments, may get a surprising and unexpected driving force.

Sense of justice against an oppressive system can induce a revolution. Solidarity can trigger when a disaster occurs. Indifference or hostility against a foreign group can turn into goodwill if from

this group exudes a commendable initiative. People can give up their own interests and if it finds kindness prove people poorer than them or that are suffering. New moves can be triggered from those motivations as "humanitarianism" or any other initiative to alleviate human suffering.

Justice | The new principle of justice does not invite tolerate injustice, but requests that she be tried and punished in such a way as to lead both to repair the spiritual and material, and the improvement of people's consciousness to advance on the path of spiritual life more full.

Equity is a correlative value of justice, so, it is a more concrete form of moral justice, manifested in the human characters and not in actions to strengthen legal legality.

Logic and legal philosophy impressive contemporary informal insists that understanding and interpretation of legal laws to be made both in letter and in spirit (which is also moral). But the urge to judge fair is one of the main forms to be within the law. Because of this correlation justice with fairness, required two concepts of responsibility: legal and moral. It seems that just equity creates the most difficulties in explaining justice in two main forms of her social or distributive justice and corrective justice. Because it can turn into reality should be clear, however, that not only rights but also obligations must be specified. Also, it has developed a more complete theory of human needs, including the problem of hunger and poverty in the world today.

Duty | In Anglo-Saxon philosophy after World War II widened the debate over debt and obligations. If utilitarian argue that we need to follow as many consequences for good deontologists argue that we must pursue debts basic (gratitude, repair morality, loyalty, self-improvement, beneficence, not harming, justice), leaving room for supererogation (heroics and holiness).

Conflicts debt are factors of moral progress, some ethicists say. Others deny the existence of such conflicts, ranking it here and sociologist E. Durkheim. Debt moral conflicts manifest themselves very diverse. They can be: between socio-moral meanings of debts by profession, religion, political opinion, etc.; between old debts and new debts on the same type of legal or moral system; between

debt same moral agent, which forms part of various human groups: family, relatives, friends, group work, entertainment, research etc.

Can be conflicts between debt, on the one hand, and other values and moral virtues such as honor, dignity, kindness, honesty, modesty, courage, on the other hand.

Spirit of justice | Philosophers and writers such as Dostoevsky argued that if justice would disappear from the earth, that people continue to live would not have any value. Hence, it follows that justice had and will have an essential place in lists of values and moral virtues. Not coincidentally, it is considered that the best writings of moral philosophy of the twentieth century remain dedicated to justice.

The most ingenious and most common type of government the peoples of modern and contemporary society is democracy. Main lack of democracy was and remains that the less skilled get to decide in democratic bodies respectively in parliaments.

3) Developments and Religious Contrasts in Contemporary Europe

When we do an analysis of the former communist countries, we meet a fairly high degree of variability in terms of traditional religious cultures. In this space, we find countries where Orthodoxy predominates, as in Russia, Ukraine, Bulgaria, Belarus and Romania; countries with a strong Catholic tradition, such as Poland, Lithuania, Slovakia; traditionally Protestant countries, such as Estonia and East Germany; or multi-confessionals companies, such as Hungary, which also has a significant Protestant community, but also a strong Catholic tradition.

Everywhere in these countries, communism has attempted a forced removal of religion from the public and the private sectors and at the same time led a strong policy of atheism. But all policies against religion were different from state to state, as was different and the social impact of these policies.

Extremely important is the aspect that all European countries under the influence of Soviet power, religion was considered "the

opium of the peoples" and was one of the enemy's main communist power, and throughout the twentieth century, communism, fought a fierce battle to weaken religious institutions and destruction of religious feelings among the population: were demolished and closed churches were imprisoned priests, the church was fenced involvement in public life has been drastically reduced religious education, religion was pushed to an area of increasingly anonymous "private nature of religion is in many cases daily experience of hundreds of millions in communist states."[22]

In these countries, secularization has emerged as a natural consequence of modernization, industrialization and promoting a pluralistic vision of the world, but it was forced product. However, secularization effects are felt much less in former communist countries than in Western Europe. Some researchers identify factors that influenced the degree of secularization in ex-communist countries, but each of them manifested differently from one area to another:[23]

> The level of political repression against religion and against churches
> The modernization
> Dominant denomination
> Closer ties between religion and national ideas

Although there have been subordinated to political power and were transformed into departments of the communist state, the Orthodox Churches have kept a close link between Orthodoxy and national identity. So, for Romanian, Bulgarian, Serbian Orthodoxy has remained closely linked to national identity, its guarantor.[24]

Czech Republic | In the countries of Central and Eastern Europe (East Germany, Czech Republic, Estonia), the secularization occurred amid a departure faithful to the Catholic Church, seen as an aggressor national identity and Protestantism was subjected to persecution by political power.

> 62% of Czechs do not belong to a church
> 8% frequently go to religious services
> 30% believe in God
> 17% believe in life after death

Estonia:

> 88% not apart to church

Latvia | In the Baltic countries (Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania), forced secularization effects were different in the three companies in Lithuania (Catholicism) the level of religiosity remained high, despite atheism policy. In Latvia and Estonia (Lutheranism), the degree of secularization has skyrocketed due to industrialization and modernization, and religion began to play an increasingly reduced.[25]

> 64% do not belong to a church (in these countries the most religious population group is Russian.)

Hungary | In Hungary, the Catholic Church remained strong, but Protestantism was strongly affected so that the Catholic Church is still very large, while the Protestant lost many members.

> 42% of Hungarians say they do not belong to a particular church
> 30% have never belonged
> 14% go to Mass weekly
> 42% are Catholics

Bulgaria | Bulgaria (Orthodox majority) suffered after the fall of Communism. In the 90 Bulgarian Church was on the verge of a schism, because of clerical disputes.

> Only 32% since membership into a religious (Orthodox Church)
> 5% attend religious services frequently
> Only 7% say that God is important in their lives
> The country's most permissive in terms of homosexuality, divorce, suicide, euthanasia, etc.

Poland is the most religious country in Central Europe. Poland (mostly Catholic) ranks first in Europe in terms of population religiosity, but also the influence of the Church in public life and politics. But religious extremism, antidemocratic, supported by some clergy and a number of legislative initiatives, the Church tried to impose by force (abortion), decreased popularity church.

66% of Polish people go to church every Sunday
4% never go
90% consider themselves religious
Paradoxically, only 45% have faith in the church

	homosexuality	adultery	abortion	euthanasia	disarm	racism
Czech	28%	32%	25%	35%	67%	53%
Slovenia	19%	32%	26%	30%	48%	37%
Hungary	38%	37%	45%	50%	58%	60%
Poland	40%	50%	59%	50%	49%	57%
Bulgaria	25%	40%	31%	40%	48%	44%

Table. 3. Beliefs that the Church must engage in moral issues by country

	homosexuality	abortion	euthanasia	suicide
Czech	24%	34%	26%	12%
Slovenia	17%	34%	18%	12%
Hungary	16%	37%	27%	16%
Poland	6%	26%	8%	8%
Bulgaria	88%	60%	69%	82%
Lithuania	2%	20%	21%	7%
Latvia	7%	42%	41%	15%
Estonia	9%	42%	29%	13%

Table. 4. Approval rate of what is commonly considered a sin

If we analyze the attitudes of Europeans towards moral issues set out in Table 3-4, with relative ease grasp the role the church should be an active combat, adjustment or reductions but the degree of involvement (according to the percentage assigned) differs depending on cultural and religious baggage, the individual countries.

Conclusions

Whenever a company reviews its history, he discovers that it has undergone an evolution, with ups and downs, with real progress or a setback. It is interesting to note what can happen when two big companies meet (Europe and South America, China or Africa), achieving relative nature of customs, institutions, values.

Sociology classic transition positivist theory developed in this relativism: *values are rooted in their substrate and social change with it*. They highlight the living conditions and interests; meet the same position in legal positivism, for which justice is closely related to morals.

Positivism that eliminates moral problem because it is not scientific.[26] If there is no absolute, no transcendent standard to discern good and evil, it is not possible to evaluate a social system than from our own value system and his own justification. We did not have no basis to consider the unacceptable actions of Hitler, of Stalin, Pol Pot or the apartheid regime.

This *relativism* was widespread and became a record; There is no truth, there is no objectivity, no absolute, neither universal nor fixed values. All notions are outdated, obsolete.

The plurality of concepts, ideologies, tastes, behavior and interpretations, induce the great majority of people the idea that all ideas and modes of action are available.

Also, moral and religious values have undergone many transformations and permutations of value over time, the fundamental categories by categories dormant or power or vice versa. The world's religions have been and still are important topics, ways of interpreting the world, and have influence in politics, economy, society as a whole. Communication between East and West was and still is difficult due to the great differences between cultures and people.

The debate around God "marked the decisive fate of the West"[27], a mystical devotion expressed from moment to moment, to rebellion against God. European culture is undoubtedly a culture marked by its depth reporting people to God. In the modern world, questioning autonomous reason legitimizing revelation, which does not want to obey blindly.

In the history, there have been two major religious currents, which has affected the entire civilization: Western religions and Eastern religions. The two fundamental systems were noted as forming values while sometimes acting in the same direction, sometimes in totally different directions.

If activity is leading Western spirit, creative individuality, modernity, oriental spirit which is in contrast, is characterized by passive resignation, fatalism, obedience, tradition. Thus, the dialogue becomes more difficult is heavily religious dialogue, since the differences between religions is essential.

Contemporary oriental religions, such as Buddhism, Hinduism, Brahmanism, Confucianism and the other Eastern religions, knowing the same values for moral and religious, all religions moralistic, focused on the concept of good practice, generosity, compassion, renunciation, patience, wisdom, etc.

The sixteenth century in Western Europe were recorded, on the one hand, intensification of trade and economic activity, and on the other hand, intensification of religious activities by the Reformation. This is apparently paradoxical, since the intensification of religious activity and increased economic activity are normally incompatible. The experiences of many companies prove that increased religious activity is accompanied by a decrease of concerns for secular matters, and intensify economic activities is accompanied by a decrease in pietism or religious indifference. Companies that have embraced Protestantism did however exception to these historical regularities. It is interesting that in post-modernity and implicit in contemporary secularization is much more present in Protestant churches and less traditional, historic Catholic and Orthodox.

Immediately after 1989 in Central and Southeastern Europe, then in the former Soviet empire, contradictions morality worsened again, with aggravated immoral and amoral, both in the human behaviors individual and collective in the complex process of settlement moral values as human rights, honesty, generosity, respect other's property and life, compassion. They have also known and practiced. But education, family, social assistance was disturbed by privatization often associated with corruption, a lot of lying, slander, and then transformed into organized crime or deliberate violence exercised by gunmen on other people, deprived of weapons (terrorism). In this way, morality has become increasingly immoral and amoral because idealism its characteristic is not balanced by ethics appropriate by codes and rules, practice ethical, legal, political

and administrative to reduce the gap between what should be and what is man.[28]

In the postwar period, Western European peoples affected by Nazism and fascism were able to remove both their non-values and those they germinated Eastern socialism. There was such a tendency for longer-term trend: the increasing influence of Western-style moral values worldwide. If activity is leading Western spirit, creative individuality, modernity, oriental spirit which is in contrast, is characterized by passive resignation, fatalism, obedience, tradition. Thus, the dialogue becomes unwieldy because religious values are very large differences.

NOTES

[1] James Vander Zanden, *The Social Experience: An Introduction to Sociology* second edition (San Francisco: McGraw-Hill Publishing Company, Inc., 1990), 71.

[2] Major Religions of the World Ranked by Number of Adherents, 2012, http://www.adherents.com.

[3] *Religious diversity and social unity* (19 December 2012), http://www.muis.gov.sg (Last accessed October 2, 2016)

[4] The pew forum on religion & public life, *U.S. religious landscape survey* (2010), http://religions.pewforum.org/affiliations (Last accessed October 21, 2016)

[5] Robert D. Putnam and David E Campbell, *American Grace: How Religion Divides and Unites Us* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2010), chapter 1 at note 5.

[6] GALLUP, *Belief in God Far Lower in Western U.S.* (28 July 2008), http://www.gallup.com (Last accessed October 2, 2016)

[7] Humphrey Taylor, *What people do and do not believe in* (15 December 2009), http://www.harrisinteractive.com (Last accessed October 18, 2016)

[8] Robert P. Jones, *The Center for American Values in Public Life* (25 October 2006), http://media.pfaw.org (Last accessed October 6, 2016)

[9] Putnam, Campbell, chapter 1, note 5.

[10] Audrey Barrick, *Survey: Departure from God is Cause of America's Moral Decline* (08 March 2007), http://www.christianpost.com (Last accessed October 20, 2016).

[11] Rudolf Rezsohazy, *Sociologia valorilor* (Iaşi: Institutul European, 2008), 150.

[12] Dumitru Otovescu, *Sociologia culturii* (Craiova: Editura Beladi, 2010), 252.

[13] Max Weber, *Etica protestantă şi spiritul capitalismulu* (Bucureşti: Editura Humanitas, 2003), 78.

[14] Coman Andra Diana, *Societatea contemporană- între valoare şi non-valoare* (27 Noiembrie 2010), http://www.sighet-online.ro (Last accessed October 1, 2016).

15 Otovescu, 257.

16 Ibid., 258.

17 Florea Viorica Torii, *Etică și educație ecologică –o abordare interdisciplinară* (București, 2011), http://www.unibuc.ro (Last accessed October 26, 2016).

18 Rezsohazy, 122.

19 Virgil Ştefan Nițulescu, *Valorile tradiționale trebuie cunoscute, consemnate, conservate și protejate*, (02 Noiembrie 2011), http://www.traditionalromanesc.ro (Last accessed September 6, 2016).

20 *Managerul în lumea contemporană*, http://www.preferatele.com (Last accessed October 6, 2016).

21 Rezshazy, 139–142.

22 Miklos Tomka, *Social compass* (2002), în http://scp.sagepub.com, 489; (Last accessed September 30, 2016).

23 Detlef Pollack, *Modification in the Religious Field of Central and Eastern Europe. European Societes*, Vol 3, No 2 (London: Routledge/Taylor & Francis Group, 2001), 136.

24 P. L. Franklin, "Religion and Politics in Eastern Europe," in *Eastern Europe: Politics, Culture and Society since 1989* edited by Sabrina Remet (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2001), 304–329.

25 Olaf Muller, "Religiosity in Central and Eastern Europe: Results from the PCE Survey" in *Religion and Pattern of Social Transformation* edited by Dinka Jerolimov, Sinisa Zrinscak, Irena Borowik (Zagreb: Institute for Social Research, 2004), 61–78.

26 Ioan–Gheorghe Rotaru, "Pozitivismul logic," *Afirmații. Revistă de știință, educație și cercetare didactică*, No IV, Sept–Oct (2010): 7–9.

27 Urlich Neuenschwander, *Gott im neuzeitlichen Denken* (Gutersloh: Band I, Gerd Mahn, 1977), 13.

28 Tănase Sârbu, *Etică: valori și virtuți morale* (Iași: Editura   Societății Academice „Matei Teiu Botez", 2005), 91.

The Religious Leadership

Cosmin Tudor Ciocan, PhD
Ovidius University of Constanta, Romania
cosmin.ciocan@univ-ovidius.ro

ABSTRACT: Religion is by far one of the oldest and most complex systems of leadership. Due to this background, many sociologists asserted that religion is, in fact, the strongest and most useful way of imposing obedience over people without giving something substantial (material) in return[1]. Being so controversial and disputed, religious leadership has also several types of getting control over masses, as regarding to the mundane leadership. Mostly these types of control are faith-based grounded and even more, divinely 'giving', as almost all religious leaders claim. Then why these types of religious leadership are so different and fundamentally opposed in most cases, I mean if they are *all* revealed by a divine power? On the other hand, what if these claims are merely a smokescreen behind which leaders to fulfill their own selfish interests? While approaching issues related to different types of religious leadership, its attributes and artificial means of reaching such a position in any religion, I will try to find also answers for the questions above.
KEY WORDS: Prophetism, religiousness, leadership, trust, artificial means, revelation

Introduction

Leadership is most probably one of the religious phenomenon crucial elements, and due to that, I was oscillating between leaving this issue at the end of my work or starting with it. Either way, the exposition can be considered as splitting between two

components, each determining the other's definition by the fact that it stands in front of the other one. That is why I was confident that, leaving RL[2] at the end, it will bear many features from previous elements, and also these items will not be fully understood unless RL is previously defined and explained. So, here we are, starting with the most common question, *what is a religious leader?*

1. Is it the one who rules a (religious) community;
2. a person who manifests devotion to a deity and proves himself worthy of being a model of that;
3. one who is regarded as an authority on religious law and its interpretation and who has political power as well[3]
4. those who often give *political*[4] speeches and criticize "the wrong person," due to their "ignorance or sins,"
5. Alternatively, is it someone who guides or inspires others?

Of course, all these one-sided characterizations can continue forever, but it is not the proper space to do that. After all these definitions, pointing a feature or another of any leadership in general, we can say that the most important aspect of a RL is to *engage* his flock and *lead* it to its purpose/end, whatever it might be—we will see shortly more about that 'given purpose.' On the other hand, how would we like to 'gain' a RL? By self-imposing as one who gives people enough arguments and proofs that they leave the old RL for a new, better-seen and more appropriate one; by larger acceptation as one who is recognized by a religious body as having some authority within that body, or through the means of deception/as one who takes advantage on people's belief/superstitions and makes these tools of governing them? Moreover, what type of RL 'best' matches religion, that who *models the religious views in accordance with his community needs and wishes*, or that who *imposes his religious views to people regardless of their capability of following those rules*?

However, all these aspects are not different from any other type of worldly leadership, meaning that, until now, RL is not different at all from the already known form of human, civil leadership: *management, superintendence, supervision, organization, control, demeanor paradigm et. all.* Still, is there any aspect that makes RL

different from all other mundane leadership or not? This is a great deal to answer to, especially when stating that religion is partially divine while being mostly human.

"A leader is an individual (or, rarely, a set of individuals) who significantly affects the thoughts, feelings, or behaviors of a significant number of individuals,"[5] . . . whether direct or indirect, leaders fashion stories—principally stories of identity—wherewith he shapes characters, builds personalities, and frames culture. It is important that a leader be a good storyteller but equally crucial that the leader embody that story in his or her life.

Religious leaders who changed the world had an enormous impact on human consciousness and produced substantial changes in the lives of both their followers and to the human society in general. These promoters are known as *religious founders* of some powerful and influential religious current. I.e. Jesus Christ of Nazareth, Mohammed from Mecca, Siddhartha Gautama (Buddha), Krishna, Confucius/Kong Zi, Zarathustra, Moses. Of course, to their number will be added many religious promoters which, although they have given rise to religions other than those already known, *have promoted that belief* by giving it large scale (e.g. Apostle Paul of Tarsus), *have created new trends* (e.g. Martin Luther, Ellen G. White or Carol Parham), *have organized that belief on new principles* and *reinterpreted* the original recipe of their religion through their own experimentation, and therefore giving it a new direction (e.g. Joseph Smith).

Who can provide "religious truths"? Only the religious promoters and religious leaders, or all those involved in the act of faith experiencing fundamental truths in their own lives? The historian of science Donna Haraway's assertion that "situated knowledges" are more accurate than the "god-trick" of universal or objective claims that rest on the assumption that it is possible to "see everything from nowhere." Contrary to popular opinion, the recognition that all knowledge claims are "situated" is *not* a manifestation of relativism whereby all interpretations are considered equally valid. Rather, "situated knowledges" offer the firmest ground upon which to make objective claims that are defined not by their detachment but rather by their specificity, transparency and capacity for accountability. The method of "situatedness" assumes that all knowledge claims are

"situated" in that they arise out of particular social/historical contexts and therefore represent particular rather than universally applicable claims. For example, Paul Tillich says what was true for the apostles do not apply for me; the Gospels are very real, a true, historical act, but they are merely the illustration of a personal divine encounter of John's, Paul's, or Peter's and they do not apply to me or you. They are accurate, unambiguous, but there are no less than the personal experience of each of us, and in the historical–social context in which each of us lives, cannot be applicable the experience of the apostles, but the personal one. "But the image is so real and so powerful that it transforms us. Its transforming power points to its historical reality."[6]

The Limits and Attributions of a Religious Leader

What should a religious leader do and what he should not do? Are there any boundaries when he tries to reconnect his flock with G-d or he just have to do whatever he might consider proper to be done? If he is entrusted with his followers' life and religious well-being it not right for him to take whatever action he might think it is best for them to do in order to achieve the supreme Good? Alternatively, in other order, it is not just for his followers to take no other action but those their religious leader appointed to, and obey whatever rules he might consider putting over them for the same reason? At the first look, it seems right, at least from the religious leadership point of view. It is said in every religion that the voice of G-d must be obeyed without questioning and contradiction. But at the same time there was always in place a threat in leaders' minds "What if they won't believe me and will not obey me but say, 'The Lord did not appear to you'?" (Exod. 4:1). For that reason any RL came with same result, putting in God's account his thoughts and suppositions; that way no one would dare to contradict and disobey their will.

Until now we can set these actions as normal attributes of a leader, to settle a pattern of thinking and to try to impose it over his followers. Regarding a RL he is expected to give more than a personal opinion; his followers are always eager to listen to God's voice through and they never 'forgive' a RL that says 'I do not

know' to a religious question or debate. He is seen as outside the divine call, for he does not have a direct personal connection with deity and thus he cannot speak on G-d's behalf. For that matter we are facing now a boundary conduct born from a demand of the people—"They told me, "*Make a god for us* who will go before us because, as for this fellow Moses who brought us out of the land of Egypt, we don't know what has become of him." (Exod 32:23). This demand was always, in time and place, the engine that has started religious movements and has entrusted those who dare taking the role of God's messenger with two characteristics: on the one hand he would have to bestow his life for serving God, so that he must be close to Him at all times. On the contrary he must provide God's will for every lifestyle choice people might ask about, so that he should be available also permanent.

Due to these two needed roles of 'servant of God' and 'religious leadership,' he ends by forcing himself to mastering any situation and to coming up with solutions for every case; he is challenged to express 'what G-d would like' answers every time. With this kind of expectancies no one would end other than expressing their own point of view first, and then, in time, proceeding to overlap it with 'the divine will'. So, for understandable reasons, every RL ends up believing that his opinion/will is, in fact, G-d's and therefore they must be obeyed as G-d would be, absolutely, indisputably.

With this kind of climate around them, RL is definitely constrained to *become* the voice of G-d, and that burden set his mind to operate on a different pattern than all others. He is self-creating a conception of 'elected' and behave in kind, uttering sentences of truth for the people who follow him.

A) What are the Attributions of a Religious Leader?

Well, starting from the evolution of religiosity manifestation it is evident that the primary function of any "leader" is that of the *religious model*, of a pattern, one who leads the way or the promoter of a particular way of meeting the divinity. He is the living "icon" of what the religious conception means; he is the proof that the described/

preached method is real and functional. However, more than a single example, unique and isolated, the religious promoter also has *the declarative function*, of the announcement the religiogen pattern.

To understand the relationship between these two functions of the religious promoter we should see what is the perception their followers have on effect religious precepts have upon their lives and moreover how they do the networking/distinction between the life and the content of preaching. Since in almost all cases the promoter—and not also the subsequent religious leaders—is judged through the predicative content and the beneficial effects that he has had on entire generations of followers, if their lives are higher than average, even of the spiritual peaks. They seem to halt here from the other world, since they know the way and every step towards the pinnacle of spiritual life as if they have went it through, not as they would only have been appointed towards it by a spiritual being. "No one can come to the Father except through the Son . . . that came from the Father" (Ioan 14:6; 16:28). Even where isolated facts appear in some disagreement with the context of his superior spiritual life, they tend to be overlooked or attributed to other functions that we'll talk later, that of *protection of religious formula*. It could not be otherwise, because any act "not in conformity" with the professed context would harm the doctrinal content. For that matter both the followers and the direct opponents of any religion aim less the religious doctrine and more the promoter's life. This reality reinforces this first function of the model-leader. The private life of the promoter assimilated with deity spokesman, *prophet par excellence* (another function), is always attacked before the doctrine. This is obvious to everyone by default, that once proved to be suspicious in *n* actions or clearly "immoral"—as nonconforming with the doctrinal message professed—this would discredit the whole serial pattern religious. That is why there was always a struggle outspoken of any religion's opponents to discredit the promoter's authority by "discovering" certain obscure acts, hidden from direct followers who feared precisely this "disclosure". Without saying much or some really remarkable "truths", lot of underground conspiracy, readings emerged with a clear religious commando tendency. Booklets such as "hidden life of the Prophet,"[7] "The

Unknown Life of Jesus Christ,"[8] "The Secret Life of"[9] are manifestly imposed in a given market to send a clear message to the masses: *just with this unannounced occasion you have the great opportunity to discover what it was hided from you, in fact from the whole religious world until now, and only through these new messengers of "truth" you can find out how and through what tricks you have been deprived of the acknowledgment of the fraudulent deception that you have built an image of a counterfeit religious life*. That is why there was always an outspoken struggle on behalf of the opponents of any religion to discredit its promoter's authority through these "discovery" of obscure acts, hidden from the followers.

The struggle of religious phenomena for survival was rarely done by convincing the correctness of doctrine or by a test on the prophesied content, but mostly by demonstrating the authenticity of the model offered by the religious promoter. His life reveals that the religious recipe worked starting with him, or, at least on him. Any slippage in the promoter's life would bring the failure upon the whole system of the professed religious manifestation, even if it would work even better on others. This is the reason why the followers of all great "prophets" and religious promoters have even tried to hide the sides which seemed obscure or even inconsistent with what they wanted to convey through that image; the precursors will always make an iconic "purification" of the image of the archetype for the successors so that they will benefit only from the positive, constructive aspects of the guiding image. Nobody wants to risk "trying" a recipe that has failed the complete transformation to even that one who promoted it; the risk is too great and the stakes too important, this life wasted and the future one lost. Therefore, before joining a new religious system which anyway will never know in all its depths, anyone seeks information on living examples, of people over which the recipe has worked. There are even some confessions, aware of this fact, that maximize their doctrinal preaching impact by encouraging their members to publicly confess "all the good that did their God to them" for having hugged the recipe of that confession. Thus, cults such as the Charismatics and Pentecostal movements[10] have in their proselytism core exactly the method of displaying "the Wonders felt" and experienced by supporters as the

authentication of their spiritual-religious path or even to "produce" (fabric) possible miraculous acts to increase the credibility in their "collaboration" with the spiritual world for those who embrace this path. E.g. Speaking in tongues or "glossolalia" (1 Cor 12:30), Snake handling, Latter rain Movement beginning in the years following World War II,[11] and other teachings are not content to merely sit back and be a part of only a spiritual revival, without the power displays of "signs, wonders, and miracles."[12] But we will come again on miracles when the topic occurs.

In this pattern is framed also the attitude their followers have on subsequent leaders whose life is no longer entirely consistent with the authentic teachings of their religious belief. They tend to sympathize them without accusing of disability the religious recipe they had to transmit. It simply did not work for them and this frames within the error edges that any recipe of this kind has, one that meets a functional pattern with a unique, unrepeatable person, who's responsible for his choices and acts. In these situations a later leader's life noncompliance with the previous examples invalidates him as a leader and not the plan itself as inoperable.

Through the declarative nature of the model it provides the guiding principles for achieving the religious desideratum, the encounter with the divine. This general objective is preceded by a lot of other specific targets generally present in the same form in almost all religions (e.g. mistakes absolution, avoiding disasters, protection against "evil", improving the quality of life, immortality etc.).

Each of these specific objectives, together with the collateral others, have a different approach and recipe from a leader to another, but they are certainly present in the theological and cultic system of every religious phenomenon. The impulse of declaring its own religious "recipe" are inherently find in each of us, individually, each person being willing to externalize his "discoveries", findings to others. This function comes to be manifested in two ways: one positive and another negative. First, the proselytism, displays those interested, ignorant, or those previously religiously inactive his "recipe" as the one % sure and as entirely functional pattern. Usually the promotion is done at this stage as compared to other recipes in order to demonstrate the superiority of their own way. Here prevails

the benchmarks, "you have heard that it was said to those of old times . . . *but* I say unto you (*something else, differently*)" (Matthew 5), which tend to exacerbate valuing this "singular" path. On what this event is based on? Definitely on the safety acquired in repeated experience of the divine presence. This proximity of the spiritual world gives the belief that what he does is perfectly compatible with the divine will and as such, he starts thinking exclusively, meaning that he (the RL) no longer supports an alternative similar in effect, but different in prerequisites (theological, moral, and cultic) so it will always tend towards a unique self-definition.

The conviction of all other patterns come not from an experiment, but from the feeling that if he succeed in 'touching' the spiritual world by doing all those things, in this case the recipe is accurate and successful and therefore is must be followed as it is, without any mistakes or deviations. Any deviation from the original pattern is wrong and harmful for anyone who falls from the path. Since there are only few people instructed with recipes of a religious path, it is prohibited to intervene into it by anyone who would rather alter the *truth* and make then a convenient rearrangement of the 'ingredients'.

And here comes the second manifestation, the negative one, to preserve the original recipe and to guard it against any obstruction by removing any threat, internal or external. This religious leader is willing to make any sacrifice and call any method—even aggressive, violent in most cases—of removal of these threats of corruption of its recipe.

There is of course theological explanation behind this practical, psychological aspect of the prohibition to accept any changes of the original plan. In every religion there is a strong theological foundation emphasizing the need of following a religious path exactly the way it was thought by its promoter. No matter how it is named, they all say same thing that there is one single path since there is a single possible God reveled to the promoter and we all should follow precisely that route. For example, Tawhid (Arabic: توحيد -tawḥīd, meaning the oneness [of God]"; also transliterated as Tawheed and Towheed) underlines the declaration of belief in the oneness of God, "an uncompromising monotheism at the heart of the Islamic beliefs (Aqidah)."[13] This kind of doctrine, found in all major

religious movements, has two-headed aiming: on the one hand, to tell that no other religious way is possible and true, and on the other hand, that the surrender to this path should be total. Confessing that "there is no god but God" allows Muslims to discover that there is nothing real or true in the world but God in his oneness.[14] That utter capitulation requires great effort to maintain everybody—followers or strangers—contained on this path, since it is considered the duty of any RL. In the eyes of any RL, from any religious movement, since the path is God given and must be employed to judge other sources of knowledge, "the greatest sin is *shirk*, "associating" something else (other gods, individual persons, power, money, and so on) with God."[15] Therefore the aim of this first attribution is "the integration of the whole of life in a unified community,"[16] which grants the followers the intimacy of a personal connection with God the One.

Merging those two functions that features the perpetuation and protection of the religious recipe, its preaching and defense, leads to the *proselytism method*. This is the fundamental technique to any religious phenomenon, one that ensures the achievement of both goals of the leader, it transmits to others the pattern of the possibility of meeting God, and removes all his inappropriate competition that, from his point of view, mislead those who want to reach this climax of spiritual life. Because of the second component the proselytism often dresses negative forms, violent and even terrorist. But this approach is in conflict with the initial religious project and thus it is so frowned upon by some followers or by the local leaders, and disavowed as the official, legal method of the confession, even if, unofficially, it is often supported and encouraged by many followers as another effective technique (through the report impact/time) along with political intervention.

Of course, there are other lots of functions for RL—e.g. the function of transposing and passing his mental image of God's encounter as a trans-generational transmission;[17] ensuring righteousness by imposing ways of divine intervention and punishment of disobedience; helping people evolve with their spirituality, in the will of becoming a religious advanced person, or in the personal relationship with God, etc.), but this is not enough space and time to develop all those idea.

B) Artificial Means to Become a Religious Leader

Many RL were forced to resort to artificial means to reach this target. Between odd examples I can think of is the use of sex, drugs,[18] alcohol,[19] sleep.[20] While in general human society these substances create a state of antisocial behavior, inside religious phenomenon they are used with a specific purpose, that of *Behavioral Disinhibition* (BD), an overarching behavioral trait which is expressed as an inability to resist expressing inappropriate or restricted behavior.[21] BD is a complex of brain centers inhibition, which are composed of both central nervous system structures and endogenous neurotransmitters communicating between these structures, and it has been termed the "reward pathway", mixed for their proximity: The core structures of the brain reward pathway is located in the limbic system, including the *hypothalamus*, amygdala, hippocampus, septal nuclei, and anterior cingulate gyrus. Activities that activate this pathway become associated with 'feeling good.'[22] W. Matchett[23] noted repeated hallucinatory experiences as a part of the mourning process in Hopi[24] women.[25]

C. What Makes a Religious Leader be an Authentic Religious Leader?

"Are religious and sacerdotal vocation something internal, i.e., a special grace infused into the soul of the candidate by God; or is the reality involved something external to the candidate, an invitation of legitimate authority to embrace the religious state or sacerdotal office?"[26] In most cases of RL—that we will consider talking about few pages later the sacerdotal and individual RL.

After considering all these features of RL we should get back to our question, if *there is any element to distinguish RL from the mundane leaderships?* From our foray in leadership it stands out the fact that RL *ensures* his flock of things impossible to obtain or even prove, but nevertheless believed in. Using this prerogative of 'being elected' by god to enact a people of divine interest and pass

on this attribute of election, the RL has the power to overcome any difficulty a person can encounter in life and due to that he give psychological/spiritual comfort, he encourage his flock to move on in great times, to stand still when everybody is staggering (a clatina), to keep on doing things that no one else ('sane') would probably do instead. All these outcomes and many other only a RL can influence his flock to undergo are the result of what a real RL gives to his people; this is not the correct pattern he appoints [since we will see that there is no such thing as 'wrong religious pattern' as opposed to a 'correct' one], the exhaustive explanations about the life he can give, or the unstained conduct he might display. In fact all these features are preceded by the only thing that really matters, *giving hope*. Any religion aims for people salvation; what is this salvation and how it comes to be seen in different religious movements we will see shortly after.

Nothing else counts as much as hope for people; mankind can bargain anything, from food to dignity for the real price, but when it comes to religious belief, he cannot accept any compromise. There are situations in which man fight for wealth, for treasures, for food, water or less, for social/moral/political values or more, but for a proper price he can *be made* to fight or leave fight for any of these motifs. The psychological trigger that can change a fighter into an obedient or vice versa, from a peaceful one into a rampant militant, is giving him hope. How it is possible to achieve 'hope' in such a manner that it transforms definitely and unchangeable a person/group/ entire community? The answer lies not in *the hope* of achieving a higher material state or some goods 'in this life', as other mundane leaders promise for their electorate; in the case of religious promises, the only valuable one that can literally 'move mountains' is that of divine election. Without building a study case of this concept, all religious promoters used it, and with high success I might add.

Knowing the truth is mostly unpleasant and it gets even worse if someone else tells it "in your face". Most often we don't want to know the truth because it will bring down our ego, our will, and eventually our need to live. That is why, paradoxical, people have always come to priests [shamans or whatever they have been called] to find out

the future events of their life and their reason of happening but with a huge doubt that the 'unpleasant' feelings will not happen exactly. For this reason also RL have come with a psychological strategy not to tell the exact and unpleasant truth about the future/present, however instead to bring hope for strengthen the will to overcome these indubitable or revealed events. It is damaging for a couple to be told from the beginning of their marriage, in front of the altar, that most couples [up to 70%] get divorced in the first year, but it would bring hope that whatever misunderstandings they might have—as anyone else—they will overcome with love, care and trust in God's plan that, through the RL, can be made to work out in their favor. That is why RL are not always searched for telling a foretold that is about to happen, but for bringing hope and strengthen the will of defeating that. Therefore, it is not a liar or an impostor that RL who does not 'tell' the future, say a lie or try to avoid a direct and true answer to what future lies ahead. Instead is un-experimented that who does not see the threat in telling people 'the truth', and invent some possible future.

D) Types of Clergy/Religious Leadership

Embedding several attributes and qualifications a RL has to have, we now search for different types of leadership in regard of religiosity (and not of religion alone). In the Western culture, we have four recognized modes of spiritual guidance: *rabbi, priest, therapist, or teacher*. There are also religious leadership that relates mostly to public service and acts of worship, *sacramental clergy* or *universal priesthood*. Each type can be recognizable by a certain qualification or role in which it gives its best yield. Of course, there are lines of engagement that pervade all types of RL in a way or another, but some are higher in a particular type, while other line is higher into another. This is the specialization I will appoint here for each RL type, not as it would make him the unique carrier of that specific quality, but as his distinctive touch.

Regardless of the name each type of RL is called one common requirement is always a rule in place: a suitable candidate to become

a RL must be called by God to have this vocation. "A divine vocation is necessary for the priesthood and religious life."[27] However, how God calls or whom He calls to, what criteria He has to make a divine vocation . . . this is out of our understanding reach. But since a RL is [seen as] more than any laic leader (or a chief, one in charge of something), he is more like a mentor and a coach in spiritual enterprise, that is why increasingly notorious is been used the term "guru" in this regard, even when the concept is not exactly related to the religion in question. Expected to guide and inspire others, the *guru* type is, broadly speaking, needed for more than to rule a religious community. Using his personal engagement and relation with divinity and the world of spirits the guru is what we have called 'iconic image'.

Guru (Sanskrit: गुरु) is a Sanskrit term that connotes someone who is a "teacher, guide, expert, or master" of certain knowledge or field.[28] In the traditions of Hinduism the essence of the guru is especially vivid with regard of the spiritual development, but it also concerns many other sectors of public and private life. With a variety of implications, both social and religious, the guru image lacks of an unified hierarchical organization and strives to play these roles as individual. For the energy and potential spiritual benefits a guru may offer he usually became both means and locus of worship. Traditionally a reverential figure, the guru serves as a "counselor, who helps mold values, shares experiential knowledge as much as literal knowledge, an exemplar in life, an inspirational source and who helps in the spiritual evolution of a student."[29] The concept found in Hinduism, Jainism, Sikhism or Buddhism, has a tradition of inviolability and total entrustment, that is why this figure is even closer to divinity than any other type of RL, and it gets its own place in worshiping. Entrust with more than religious sector of life, the guru is that who reveals the true and whole meaning of life and gives directions to live each and all sectors of life according to the master-plan that fulfills the supreme duty of man. The guru is thus an inspirational source for all human needs and deeds and, "therefore, is of paramount importance in any consideration."[30] In this exhaustive implication of guru in one's life it must be said that *guru is not a role*, he transcends the role given by his followers or fans and get closer to the heart-function of the guru. It is also stated

that, since the word 'guru' means many things because the guru is a cluster of things, teaches, father-image, counselor, hero, hero, even divinity integrated into one personality.[31] What is real important for this RL type in spite of others is that, pursuing a path usually strange and hard to digest by everyone else, he impose canons of behavior unto his followers without giving them the 'big picture' but still he never force anyone to do something against their will, because they respect the freedom of the human being. The guru is indispensable for spiritual development, but also remarkable important to any decisions taken in other sectors of life, as one who sees the path and can correct any mistakes during the road. "The guru is indispensable since he is the repository of the people's ultimate knowledge and right action as recorded in the *Vedas*."[32]

From these personal involvement and helpful counseling the iconic image of 'guru' passes from the spiritual guidance to almost all type of mentoring (e.g. the "guru" of golf, of marketing, of being a mother, etc.), making an ideal example of a guide out of this term.

SRC—*sacramental religious confessions* or clergy. Unlike the 'guru' figure, where the veneration and entrustment is mostly due to guru's personal charisma and proofs of ascending into nirvana state, SRC personal is mainly needed for religious services and rituals. These aids of acquiring divine attention and support weigh more than the personal engagement, age or experience, since a consecrated person can make at any age a sacramental ceremony and intercede for one's wellness. The role of SRC is closer to rituals and ritualism than to spiritual development, for the outside help more than internal progress.

In this type, there are very few individuals who can rightfully call themselves "Constitutional religious leader." Sure, there are people who know a decent amount of the religious Law, but being an "expert" on a subject is a completely different thing. "The roles and functions of clergy vary in different religious traditions but these usually involve presiding over specific rituals and teaching their religion's doctrines and practices."[33] The foremost aspect of this type is ordaining just few people to do the worship ceremonies and to be the spokesman for either direction: God to men, and men to God. The distinctiveness of the ordained clergy is to perform "rituals

within the sphere of the sacred or numinous communicating with the gods on behalf of the community."[34] The main point of engaging only one or at the most few people in a public and direct worship of divinity is to have more than a religious leader or to dominate a whole community, is to have a powerful function of authority. In fact, the tendency is, in this form of religious organization, to have a *sacerdotal priesthood over all* (believers), to encompass [potentially] whole humanity. This idea usually comes with a price: the exclusion of everybody else who does not fall into the believers set. Sometimes forbidding others to enter this rigid set, and occasionally welcoming everybody [else] to join the circle, SRC aims to be[come] the rulers of all [people], so that everybody would fall unto their guidance. The basic conception and feature of SRC in this regard is that 'my path is the *only true path'*, so this means that no one else's should be considered a real competition. Judaism,[35] Christianity,[36] or Islam,[37] all assume same role, of getting everybody to the promise land through the one and only path discovered through their SRC alone.

Free access, universal and un-ordained priesthood (FAP) is mostly born out of the rebellion against the distinctiveness of SRC, the pair of exclusions: *on behalf of – not allowed to*. Sometimes acting against the suppression of the abbeys, sometimes in an attempt of proving wrong the need of getting someone else mediate and speak on my behalf, FAP places the emphasize on everybody's right and capacity of speaking directly with divinity. Therefore, obviating the surrogacy it also precludes the forbiddance that follows, leading to a wider range of acts and allowances.

RL types	Personal engage ment	Dida ctic	Self-worship	Divine service and ceremo nies	Spiri tual role	Mun dane role	Asked about other sectors of life	Chari sma	Experi ence and age	Forbidd ance / allowance
Guru	***	***	***	*	***	***	***	***	**	-/*
Pastor	*	***	-	-	*	**	*	***	-	-/**
Rabbi	**	***	-	**	***	***	**	*	*	***/-
Sacra mental Priest	*	**	*	***	***	*	*	*	**	***/*
Universal priesthood	***	*	-	-	-	***	-	-	-	-/***
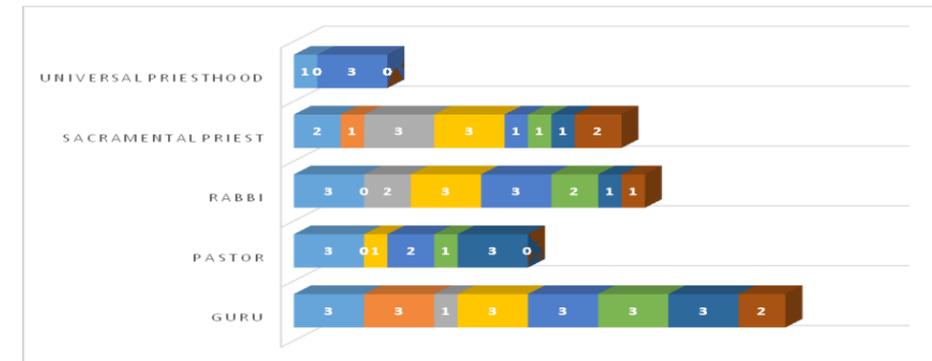
NOTES

[1] One of them, Andrew Werner, says that, while using 'God', religion "manipulate and disempower us through fear, imposed ignorance and constant empty promises" through the main construct of religion, 'sin', "designed to impose a large amount of guilt onto the whole of humanity". Andrew Werner, *The horrible truth about Religion*, 2003. See: http://www.bibliotecapleyades. net/biblianazar/esp_biblianazar_18.htm (Last accessed: November 12, 2016).

[2] This will be a shortage for 'religious leader'.

[3] Cf. http://www.thefreedictionary.com/religious+leader (Last accessed: November 12, 2016).

[4] It doesn't have to be understood in a narrow terms, as mundane, State leadership or government, but in a larger, wider terms, of engaging both economical, communitarian, law-giving, and others, the ruling dimensions over any type and size of a community in order to make it more efficient and involved.

[5] Howard Gardner, Emma Laskin and Howard E. Gardner, *Leading Minds: An Anatomy of Leadership*. (New York: Basic Books, 2011), 16.

[6] Roger E. Olson, *God in Dispute: "Conversations" among Great Christian Thinkers* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic), 239.

[7] Delbert W. Baker, *The Unknown Prophet*, the Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1987. William C. Henry Sr, *The Unknown Prophet*, AuthorHouse, 2005.

[8] Nicolas Notovitch, *The Unknown Life of Jesus Christ*, Radford: Wilder Publications, 2008. Robert Siblerud, *The Unknown Life of Jesus*, Trafford, 2012.

[9] Raymond W. Bernard, *The Secret Life of Jesus the Essene*, Pomeroy, 1966. David Aaron, *The Secret Life of God: Discovering the Divine Within You*, London: Shambhala, 2004. Hugo Grotius, Jean Le Clerc, *The truth of the Christian religion*, London: Baynes, 1829.

[10] Gary B. McGee, Miracles, *Missions & American Pentecostalism,* American Society of Missiology Series, no 45, 2010.

11 Thomas D. Ice, „The Latter Rain Revival Movement", in *DigitalCommons@ Liberty*, 2009, paper 48. http://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/pretrib_arch/48 (Last accessed: November 12, 2016).

12 Ibid, 6.

13 "Tawhid", in Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia. Accessed 4.9.2016, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tawhid. (Last accessed: November 12, 2016).

14 Juan E. Campo, *Encyclopedia of Islam* (New York: Facts on File, 2009), 665.

15 Aaron W. Hughes, *Muslim identities: an introduction to Islam* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013), 82.

16 Karen Armstrong, *Islam: A Short History* (New York: The Modern Library, 2002), 15.

17 Vamik Volkan, Killing "in the name of identity: A Study of Bloody Conflicts," 233. Taking into consideration the permeability of the psychological boarder between the child and the caretaker, the later deposits an adult's self-image or internalized images of other persons into the developing self of a child (a lasting and very special kind of projective identification.

18 As the pattern of deviant behavior proves, any substance used in excess or by a deprivation of it would give to the subject the feeling of being elected.

19 This substance is used in different quantities by lots of people, but with a certain control, it can create a state of unpleasant emotions (sadness, melancholy, anxiety, and frustration) and even limits the consciousness. These experiences are due to the effect of alcohol on the *hippocampus* - a brain area where the processes of brain related to memory take place, and also has suffered from the toxic effects of alcohol itself. Alcohol acts on the *brain reward system* with its euphoric effect (*Neuro-Anatomy and Physiology of the "Brain Reward System" in Substance Abuse*. Cf http://ibgwww.colorado.edu/cadd/a_drug/essays/essay4.htm (Last accessed: November 12, 2016).

20 Deprivation of sleep cases many and odd side-effects, among which would be interesting to mention lower libidos and less interest in sex. It is hence a logical explanation why monks use this technique to overcome carnal desire and get into trance, hearing voices and having spiritual experiences in their brief sleeping time. There are so many cases of people – saints for religious communities – that used deprivation of sleep to achieve religious ecstasy. St. Symeon created a pillar so small in diameter that he could only stand on it. He spent all night on his feet praying, describing the ecstasy of talking to God. Religious persons of all cultures are known not to sleep for weeks during prayer to achieve trances, joy and peace. Cf. Alexander Golbin, M.D., *Sleep Deprivation for Mind Control*. http://www.sleepandhealth.com/sleep-deprivation-mind-control (Last accessed: November 12, 2016).

21 Cf. to the *Institute for Behavioral Genetics,* University of Colorado Boulder. http://ibgwww.colorado.edu/cadd/ (Last accessed: November 12, 2016).

22 *Neuroanatomy and Physiology of the "Brain Reward System" in Substance Abuse*. http://ibgwww.colorado.edu/cadd/a_drug/essays/essay4.htm (Last accessed: November 12, 2016).

23 William Foster Marchett, „Repeated Hallucinatory Experiences as a Part of the Mourning Process among Hopi Indian Women," *Psychiatry* 35 (1972): 185–94.

24 See Dale C. Allison, Jr., *Resurrecting Jesus: The Earliest Christian Tradition and Its Interpreters.* https://books.google.ro/books?id=ZbGoAwAAQBAJ&pg=PA274&lp-g=PA274&dq=Matchett+(1972)+noted+repeated+hallucinatory+experiences-+as+a+part+of+the+mourning+process+in+Hopi+women&source=bl&ots=h-Kzn1eRNiX&sig=wEGf3sfdK8Wa9PpEEYflGR5peT0&hl=ro&sa=X&ved=0a-hUKEwjUgPDH1ozMAhUGCywKHejkBY4Q6AEIJTAB#v=onepage&q=Match-ett%20(1972)%20noted%20repeated%20hallucinatory%20experiences%20as%20a%20part%20of%20the%20mourning%20process%20in%20Hopi%20women&f=false (Last accessed: November 12, 2016).

25 John k. Nagel, "Unresolved grief and mourning in Navajo women," *American Indian and Alaska native mental health research* 2(2): 32–40. http://www.ucdenver.edu/academics/colleges/PublicHealth/research/centers/CAIANH/journal/Documents/Volume%202/2(2)_Nagel_Unresolved_Grief_32-40.pdf (Last accessed: November 12, 2016).

26 Edward P. Farrell, "The nature of sacerdotal and religious vocation," *Proceedings of the Twelfth Annual Convention* (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: June 24–26, 1957), 171.

27 Ibid., 171–191.

28 Stefan Pertz (2013), *The Guru in Me - Critical Perspectives on Management*, (GRIN: Verlag), 2–3.

29 Joel Mlecko "The Guru in Hindu Tradition," *Numen*, Volume 29, Fasc. 1 (1982): 33–61.

30 Ibid., 33.

31 Ibid., 34.

32 Ibid.

33 "Clergy" in *Wikipedia*, (Last accessed: September 13, 2016).

34 Ibid.

35 "There is no other, there is no one like the Lord our God" (Gen 41:39; Exo 8:10; Deut 4:35; 1 Sam 2:2, et.al).

36 "We know that an idol is nothing in the world and that there is no other God save one." 1 Cor 8:4. "There is no one who does what is right" for "Jesus answered him 'I am the way [to God], and the truth [to believe], and the life [to live]. No one can go to the Father, except through [believing in] me'" (Rom 3:12; John 14:6).

37 Reza Aslan, *No god but God: The Origins, Evolution, and Future of Islam*, New York: Random House, 2005.

The Concept of Sect in the Interwar Period

Lucian Ionel Mercea, PhD (cand.)

Academia Română, Institutul de Istorie „Nicolae Iorga", Bucharest, Romania

lucianmercea@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT: Due to the mechanisms of socialization, urbanization and globalization, the society resembles increasingly the structure of an intimate ecosystem. Therefore, when one approaches various subjects or, even more importantly, when one enunciates various concepts one must take into account their impact and significance at global level. As this paper analyses the use of the concept of "sect" during the interwar period, the author notes how the term had different connotations on each side of the Atlantic Ocean. On the Western side, the term "sect" had designated a state of affairs that emerged from the segregation of a group of believers from the mother–community of faith, and it is found used both as colloquialism as well as in academic settings. In Europe, however, the term "sect" acquired strong pejorative meaning, as the term was used with the intent to marginalize and stigmatize those labeled as such.

KEY WORDS: sect, State, Church, Neo–Protestant, interwar

Introduction

An analysis of the concept of "sect" in the interwar Romanian historiography can prove significant as it introduces a new dimension in the discussions regarding the history of the neo-protestant confessions. The undertaking is useful within the conceptual history, as "the conceptual history seeks the renewal of perspectives on a historical entity by assuming an alternative cultural paradigm, that is, by adopting political languages similar to the advanced societies of the European Union."[1] The study of history, as witness of the past, must be correlated also with the evolution of language, culture and political thinking, and not only with the account of events and facts or statistic data. When it comes to the history of the cultural-linguistic minorities and majorities, it is essential to overcome the parallel languages.[2] The language has changed in the course of the years and some of the terms have acquired new valences; at present, they can no longer define the same things as a century ago. Given all these, we will begin by looking at the sociological and theological meaning of the term; then we will analyze the way in which the concept of "sect" has been used in the state church language, in legislation and the news media; and, finally, we shall see what relevancy still holds today the usage of this term.

1) Sect: Sociological and Theological Perspectives

Etymologically, the term comes from the Latin *sequi,* meaning also "to follow a model, a person, an idea, a party etc."[3] The second etymology—erroneous, but more popular—comes from the Latin term *secare,* meaning "breaking up, segregation from the church." From a theological point of view, beyond the etymological meaning of the term, the "sect" results from the segregation from a "mother church" or a larger community, separation triggered by a divergent understanding of the religious truth or a religious practice, different interpretation of the Scriptures etc. In the view of the mother-community, this schism constitutes an apostasy; in the view of the dissident community, it means a return to or a progress toward a better or purer faith. Thus, the "sect" involves theological and/or religious practice differences and schism or only schism, for which reason it will always stand in opposition with the mother-community with which it broke. Still, despite this opposition, the sect's antithesis remains intimately connected with the mother-church's thesis, be that Orthodox, Roman-catholic or Protestant. From a sociologically point of view, the "sect", as form of religious organization, is defined, beginning with Max Weber and Ernst Troeltsch, in relation to and by comparison with the mother-church. While the latter is a religious

organization well-integrated in society, large-sized, impersonal and bureaucratized, with the majority of its members being born in it, the sect is a voluntary association that does not claim authority on the religious life and the conduit of the non-members and that stands in a tense relation with the overall society.[4]

In the Romanian historiography, the "sect" concept has not been approached save with a very few exceptions and usually and most often with an emphasis on emotional issues, statistical data, brief histories of diverse newly appeared confessions or with the purpose of upholding the idea of freedom of religion. All of these have played a major role in defining the "sects", as well as the way in which the State and the society relate to them.

A real difficulty raised by the term "sect" is given by the fact that it has different purports, depending on which side of the Atlantic you are. Thus, in the United States, the term is understood strictly as a sociological concept, as it was used by Max Weber and Ernst Troeltsch. But, in the European colloquial language, "sect" has turn into a value judgment. Being used by the Christian churches in an apologetic and polemical way, to describe the heretical groups that segregate from the official Christianity, the term has acquired in the last century, a negative and derogatory connotation, thus losing its original meaning. In the colloquial language, the negative meaning of the term prevails, while the sociological meaning is totally ignored.

Across the centuries, religion has played an essential role in defining the identity of a society and its coagulation. The victory of liberalism in the modern times made this role appear obsolete, with religion being a matter of personal choice, indifferent to the State, as guaranteed by the 1923 Constitution, Article 22.[5] Most often, this remained only a desideratum because, in reality, the State was never indifferent to religious matters, given the importance held by religion in the lives of its citizens. Also, the State couldn't afford to be indifferent to the social power yielded by religion, which was far from being weaken. It is important to note how "different religious cults were controlled in the name of the 'police' role that the State must assume, as harmonizer of the social environment and the public morality."[6] This way, it becomes justified that room for maneuver that the State ensures for itself in the existence of most European

constitutions, by stipulating that a cult is recognized as long as its ideas do not contradict "the public order and the morals and manners,"[7] a concept with a broad sense that usually included those manifestations likely to lead to the destructuralization of the society.

Nonetheless, when the State was granted a more important role and the sense of lack of cohesion within the State was more acute, it can be noticed a permanent and active intervention of the state authorities within the cults, leading to the rediscovery in the modern era, of the political role that religion can play. Especially in Eastern Europe, this phenomenon was very intense. In the East, the case of Russia and the role played by Orthodoxy represents a notorious example; while in the West, we can note the importance of Catholicism in the life of the Habsburg Empire. The most interesting example remains the Bismarckian Germany, promoter of the *Kulturkampf* politics by which it was sought to counteract the Roman-Catholic Church and to increase the role of the Lutheran Church in the life of the State and the German society. There was a legacy of German Protestant traditions, of the *cuius region, eius religio* principle, valorized in the modern sense of the *raison d'État*.[8]

In this cultural environment, the modern definition of "sect" was penned by the German sociologist Ernst Troeltsch. According to Troeltsch, within the Christian religion, two utterly opposed forms of organization existed: the Church and the State. As Bryan Wilson underscores, "Troeltsch had in mind as a church model, the traditional churches as they looked in the national states of his time, and especially the 'German Evangelical Church', building the specificity of each as a series of dichotomous variables."[9] Although this pattern was built on the premise that the "perfect" model of church is that of the German national Protestant Church, Troeltsch thought to extend it also for the Catholic Church. From the Roman-catholic side objections were raised, especially by Werner Stark.

In the works of Troeltsch's disciples, we find defined with more precision a series of "sects" characteristics, useful to be mentioned here:

1. The exclusivist character—by this it was understood the unacceptability of a double religious affiliation.
2. The claim of monopoly on the religious truth, in its totality.

3. The tendency to take on a secular profile due to its overall anti-sacerdotal character.

4. The rejection of any type of classification or division of the social body, on religious criteria, with the exception of the founders or the leaders, and that only in certain cases.

5. The voluntary character—each new "sect member" adheres freely and willingly to the respective religious group, often after having been submitted to verifications (tests) in order to be accepted.

6. The high moral standards maintained within the group.

7. The complete loyalty imposed to the adherent by the "sect", with membership becoming the most important identity element, at the expense of the national loyalty, for instance.

8. The character of dissenting group—whereas in the Middle Ages and at the beginning of the modern era, the protest was aimed at the Church, its teachings and its priests, as we approach the present times, the protest turns against the increasingly secularized society, the "sect" defining most often a purpose, an objective surpassing the common morality, often imposed by the State, but manifested in gestures, attitudes that could contradict what was promoted by the State.[10]

It can be noted that although an objective analysis of the sectarian phenomenon is attempted, there is in these definitions, in a latent state, a strong deprecatory shade that will evolve with time, charging this idea of "sect" with negative connotations.[11] According to a recent definition by Peter Berger, "a sect is a religious small group, existing in a state of permanent tension with the entire society, impervious to its influence, and demanding from its members total fidelity and solidarity."[12]

Thus, the "sect" is the ferment of a crisis, of a rupture within the society, if not through an attack against the "morals and manners", at least by separating itself from the rest of the community and by questioning the existent social institutions. Also, the "sect" is the enemy of the institutionalized or State-subservient religions (after the Constantine model) by virtue of the new teachings it propagates

and the often aggressive proselytism aimed, at least in the initial phase, against the group from which it segregated. Sometimes, the "sect" becomes the adversary of the State by the segregation and fragmentation it initiates, by its detachment toward the State's commandments, and such acts could only displease an increasingly authoritarian State.[13]

In conclusion, the "sect" defines a religious and social category comprising the new religious groups that do not stand yet in harmony with the rest of society and the State (for some, this intermediary state could last for centuries). Frequently, in order to acquire a legal status, these sects will have to go through a legislative "purgatory" set up by the State, with the purpose of convincing the State that they don't pose any threat to it, and the "sects" will endeavor to assure the State by various manifestations that they are loyal to the established order. Nonetheless, there will be cases in which the "sects" will refuse to adapt or the State will do everything to place in the "sect" category, various cults that are incommodious to its authority.

2) The Concept of "sect" as Used by the Ministry of Cults and Arts in the Interwar Period and During the Antonescu Regime

The official recognition of the Adventist and Baptist confessions came with the Ministerial Decision no. 32950/June 1921,[14] signed by the Minister Octavian Goga and comprising three points. The first point specified that "the exercise of the Baptist Cult and the Adventist Cult is free." For these cults to be free, the second point of the decision stipulated that "the propaganda will avoid denigrating the existent churches and the ecclesiastical personnel." Afterwards, these two neo-protestant confessions will be recognized through repeated ministerial decisions. In 1933, the Plymouth Brethren confession was recognized through the ministerial decision no. 114119/August 21, 1933.

In the official acts issued by the Ministry of Cults in the interwar period, there can be noted the avoidance of using the "sect" terminology for both the recognized and the illegal cults. The ministerial decision no. 5735/January 29, 1925, Article 1, reads as

follows: "There are utterly forbidden the following associations of religious character (religious sects): (1) The Nazarenes (the penitents); the International Association of the Bible Students (the Millenists); (3) the Reformed Adventists; (4) the Reapers; (5) the Pentecostals; (6) The Inochentists, due to the fact that the doctrines they propagate contravene to the State's Laws and institutions and by virtue of their practices they go against the public order."[15] Article 2 stated that "The Baptist and the Seventh-day Adventist associations continue to enjoy the rights and freedoms granted by the Constitution to associations, in general."

It can be noted the tendency of the Ministry of Cults to avoid the usage of the term "sect", this term being used only within brackets and for explicatory purposes for the general public—as in the case of the designations appearing next to some religious associations. In all ministerial decisions issued in the interwar period, the State avoided to use the term "sect" with reference to some cults or religious associations already recognized. Nonetheless, we can discern a duplicitous character when it comes to secret circular orders sent to prefects or constabularies, in which the term "sect" is used for some confessions already recognized.

The term "sect" doesn't appear at all in the text of the Ministerial Decision no. 114119/1933, issued by the Ministry of Cults. The first article of this decision stated that "it is utterly forbidden the activity of the following religious associations: The International Association of the Bible Students, the Millenists, the Jehovah's Witnesses (or the Witnesses of God—Jehovah), the Pentecostals, the Apostolic Church of God, the Nazarenes, the Inochentists, the Adventists—Reformed and Reapers, due to the fact that their doctrines contravene to the State's Laws and institutions, and by virtue of their practices they go against the public order and morality."[16] The second article announced the recognition of a new religious confession, along with the Adventist and Baptist confessions: "The rights and freedoms granted by the Constitution to associations, in general, will be enjoyed by the religious associations of the Seventh-day Adventists, the Baptists and the Plymouth Brethren."[17]

The idea of "sect" begins to be overtly used by the Ministry of the National Culture and Cults, during the dictatorship of Marshal

Antonescu, as we can see in the decree by which Antonescu took away the official status of all neo-protestant religious associations that had been recognized by the State, in the interwar period. The second article of this decree specified that "the existent religious associations (sects), *de iure* and *de facto*, are and remain abolished."[18] In the report presented by the Minister of National Culture and Cults to Marshal Antonescu and which form the basis for the decree from December 28, 1942, we can see a change in language, as the idea of "sect" is used profusely in connection with the up-till-then recognized religious associations, as well as with those religious associations not yet recognized. The idea of "sect" will be profusely used during the Antonescu period, in reference to the previously recognized Neo-protestant cults.[19]

3) The Concept of "Sect" in the Orthodox Discourse

Grigore Comşa,[20] Bishop of Arad, was an emblematic personality given the offices he had occupied in the Ministry of Cults and Arts, after the Great Union (Secretary, Vice-director, then General Vice-director between 1920 and 1925 at the Ministry of Cults and Arts in Bucharest), and his "anti-sectarian" writings. By reading his works, one can discern his preference for the term "sect" over the phrase "religious association" that the Ministry of Cults and Arts was using for the recognized neo-protestant confessions. We mention here some of the books he published and in which he used profusely the term "sect" in connection with some State-recognized religious associations and confessions: *Călăuza cunoaşterii şi combaterii sectelor*,[21] *Pentru neam şi lege*,[22] *Baptismul din punct de vedere istoric, naţional şi religios*,[23] *Cenuşa de pe capul baptiştilor*,[24] *Combaterea catehismului baptiştilor*,[25] *Lupta baptiştilor împotriva preoţimii române*,[26] *Credinţa şi botezul – lămuriri pentru baptişti*.[27] From a study of these apologetic and pastoral books and brochures, it can be noticed the preference for using the term "sect" in reference to the recognized neo-protestant confessions, although Grigore Comşa had been working for a considerate time in the Ministry that had recognized those cults and granted them a new designation. Thus,

we can affirm there was a difference between the official, academic language and the doctrinal, apologetic and ecclesiastical language.

In his work "Confesiuni şi secte" (1929),[28] Bishop Grigorie Leu Botoşăneanu includes in the "sect" category, the Neo-protestant confessions recognized through repeated ministerial decisions and through the Law of the Cults from 1928.[29] Such examples are numerous in that period, and only in extremely rare occasions, the Orthodox Church officials did refer to the Neo-protestant confession using the designation conferred to them by the Romanian State. This continuing use of the "sect" term regardless the new designation gained by the recognized Neo-protestant confessions demonstrated the pejorative and negative character of this term, used with predilection by the Orthodox Church with reference to these confessions.

Deacon P. I. David himself noted that "the terms 'sect' and 'cult' are quite scornful and seem to imply a rather negative judgment.[30] Therefore, he suggests that "more neutral terms could be used instead, such as *new religious movements, new religious groups.*"[31] Not in the least, the problem becomes more sensitive when it comes to distinguish between these sects of Christian origin and the churches, ecclesiastic communities or legitimate movements within the churches. This last distinction is very important. "Heresy" and "sect" are two words by which, in the course of its history, the Church has designated those who broke up with the right faith.[32] Jean Francois Wayer noted: "The sect is the other. Nobody likes this label stuck by the society and the *official* church to the minority religious groups, against their will. Having a clearly pejorative connotation, the designation of 'sect' has always been a means to exclude some faiths from the *respectable* religious paths category, as *sect* reminds of doctrinal absurdity, of fanaticism, of interdictions, of sectarianism."[33]

4) Neo-Protestant Confessions and Their Use of the Concept of "Sect"

With reference to the Baptist, Adventist and Plymouth Brethren confessions during the interwar period, the historian Viorel Achim

states that "the three organizations were not religious sects[34] either doctrinally, or from the perspective of the Romanian legislation (the Law of the Cults, from 1929, the subsequent laws)."[35] Yet, after September 1940, the three denominations had become the target of systematic politics to limit the freedom of faith, intended to intimidate the believers and make them to relinquish their religion and join the Orthodox Church. Gradually, at administrative level, it took place an assimilation of the Baptist, Seventh-day Adventists and Plymouth Brethren with the religious "sects."[36]

The researches done in the State Archive didn't find any documents created by these confessions and addressed to the State, in which they would have assumed the "sect" designation. Nor in the Neo-protestant archives dating from this period (1918–1944)[37], have any documents been found to prove that these confessions were designating themselves as "sects". This fact indicates that in the period of 1918–1944, these confessions regarded the term as bearing a negative connotation that was not putting them in a favorable light within the society. Consequently, they sought to avoid and get rid of this label.

Moreover, in the Annual Report from 1997, the UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion makes very clear his position with regard to the broad application of the concept of "religion" and the necessity of an equal treatment for all religions, including the so-called "sects" or "cults".

In the first place, the Rapporteur noted the inadequate character of labeling certain faith communities as "sects":

> The tern "sect" seems to have a pejorative connotation. A sect is considered to be different from a religion, and thus not entitled to the same protection. This kind of approach is indicative of a propensity to lump things together, to discriminate and to exclude, which is hard to justify and harder still to excuse, so injurious is it to religious freedom.[38]

The Rapporteur concluded: "All in all, the distinction between a religion and a sect is too contrived to be acceptable. A sect that goes beyond simple belief and appeals to a divinity or, at the very least,

to the supernatural, the transcendent, the absolute, or the sacred, enters into the religious sphere and should enjoy the protection afforded to religions."

Hence, we can note in the present times a distancing and dissociation from the term and concept of "sect" precisely because of its negative connotation that it has received and with which it has been used over the time. Therefore, we are assisting at the transformation of a term, made possible by its evolution in the Romanian language, which itself has changed over the years, with some words acquiring new valences and ceasing to define the same things as a century before.

Conclusions

First, the "sect", as form of religious organization, is defined by appealing to Max Weber and Ernst Troeltsch in relation to and by comparison with the mother-church. While the latter is a religious organization well-integrated in society, large-sized, impersonal and bureaucratized, with the majority of its members being born in it, the sect is a voluntary association that does not claim authority on the religious life and the conduit of the non-members and that stands in a tense relation with the overall society.

Second, the term "sect" has different purports, depending on which side of the Atlantic you are. Thus, in the United States, the term is understood strictly as a sociological concept, as it was used by Max Weber and Ernst Troeltsch. But, in the European colloquial language, "sect" has turn into a value judgment. Being used by the Christian churches in an apologetic and polemical way, to describe the heretical groups that segregate from the official Christianity, the term has acquired in the last century, a negative and derogatory connotation, thus losing its original meaning. In the colloquial language, the negative meaning of the term prevails, while the sociological meaning is totally ignored. The negative highest point was reached during the totalitarian regimes.

Third, it can be incrementally noted that although an objective analysis of the sectarian phenomenon is attempted, there is in

these definitions, in a latent state, a strong deprecatory shade that will evolve with time, charging this idea of "sect" with negative connotations. This can be seen in the language used in the interwar era by the Orthodox Church, who conferred the designation of "sect" to the Adventist and Baptist confessions, although they had been recognized by the State as religious associations, with the exception of the Antonescu dictatorship, when they were outlawed.

Last but not least, currently, it can be noted a distancing from this term both in the State official papers and the traditional churches language, and an attempt to avoid the use of this term, as the State, and more recently, the church, too, become aware that we live in a world with democratic values and freedom of speech and faith.

NOTES

1 Victor Neumann, *Este utilă rescrierea istoriei României? Evoluția conceptelor social–politice și alternativele interpretative* în *Istoria României prin Concepte* (București: Polirom, 2010), 29–30.

2 Ibid., 26–27.

3 Gheorghe Guțu, *Dicționar latin–român* (București: Humanitas, 2012), 456.

4 William H. Swatos Jr., ed. „Church–Sect Theory" in *Encyclopedia of Religion and Society*, (New York: Altamira Press, 1998), 90.

5 *Monitorul Oficial* nr. 282/29 martie 1923.

6 George Enache, "Problema sectelor în România. Din a doua jumătate a secolului al XIX–lea până în 1948" *Analele Universității 'Dunărea de Jos' Galați*, Seria 19, Istorie, vol. VI (2007): 106.

7 *Monitorul Oficial* nr. 282/29 martie 1923.

8 Enache, 106.

9 Bryan Wilson, *Religia din perspectivă sociologică* (București, 2000), 106–107.

10 Ibid., 108–110.

11 Enache, 107.

12 *Apud* Jean–Francois Mayer, *Sectele. Nonconformisme creștine și noi religii* (București, 1998), 6.

13 Enache, 108.

14 Decizia Ministerială nr. 32 950/iunie 1921, as quoted by Dumitru Popa, *Pagini din Istoria Bisericii Adventiste de Ziua a Șaptea din România 1921–1936*, vol. II (Bucuresti: Editura Viață și Sănătate, 2013), 48.

15 *Monitorul Oficial* nr. 31 din 10 februarie 1925. See also *Curierul misionar* nr. 3 (1925): 34–35; and A.N.D.J. Arad, fond Prefectura Județului Arad, Dosar nr. 6/1924, f.16–17.

[16] ANIC, fond Ministerul Cultelor şi Artelor, Direcţia de Studii, dosar 1/1933, f.3.

[17] Ibid.

[18] *Monitorul Oficial*, Partea I, nr. 305, 30 decembrie (1942): 11231–11232.

[19] See Viorel Achim, "Situaţia sectelor religioase în Provincia Bucovina. Un studiu al Inspectoratului Regional de Poliţie Cernăuţi din septembrie 1943," in *Archiva Moldaviae*, vol. VI (2014): 351–427.

[20] According to the *Dictionary of the Romanian Theologians*, Grigore Comşa (or Gheorghe Comşa) was born on May 13, 1889, in Comana de Sus, Făgăraş (Braşov County), died on May 25, 1935, Arad. He attended the Lyceum in Făgăraş (1900–1908), the Theological Institute in Sibiu (1908–1911), the School of Law, University of Budapest (1911–1915), from which he received also his Doctor's degree. In parallel, he studied theology at the Catholic College of Theology in Budapest; afterwards he received his MA degree (1921), then the Doctor's degree (1925) at the College of Theology in Bucharest. He serves as deacon in Sibiu (1915), editor at *Telegraful Român* (1918), sub-director and general sub-director at the Ministry of Cults and Arts in Bucharest (1920–1925), at the same time–deacon at Amza Church, deputy in the first Parliament of the Unified Romania (1920). On May 3, 1925, he was elected Bishop of Arad, tonsured at Sinaia, receiving his monastic name of Grigorie, ordained as bishop on June 14, installed on July 12, 1925. He was honorary member of the Romania Academy (1934), of the Society of the Romanian Writers and of the Syndicate of the Journalists in Banat, member of the Astra Central Committee. Esteemed oratory and missionary bishop, he was a fervent defender of the Orthodox faith against the religious proselytism; he founded a number of theological collections (The Library of the Orthodox priest, The Library of the Orthodox believer). He coordinated the activity of the Theological Academy in Arad, of the Official Bulletin "The Church and the School" and the whole church life in the diocese. He published over 75 works (sermons, anti-sectarian brochures etc.)

[21] Grigore Comşa, *Călăuza cunoaşterii şi combaterii sectelor*, Bucureşti: Tipografia Bisericească, Cernica, 1926.

[22] Grigore Comşa, *Pentru neam şi lege*, Bucureşti: Editura Librăriei Diecezane, 1923.

[23] Grigore Comşa, *Baptismul din punct de vedere istoric, naţional şi religios,* Arad: Tiparul Tipografiei Diecezane, 1927.

[24] Grigore Comşa, *Cenuşa de pe capul baptiştilor*, Arad: Tiparul Tipografiei Diecezane, 1931.

[25] Grigore Comşa, *Combaterea catehismului baptiştilor*, Arad: Tiparul Tipografiei Diecezane, 1926.

[26] Grigore Comşa, *Lupta baptiştilor împotriva preoţimii române*, Arad: Tiparul Tipografiei Diecezane, 1925.

[27] Grigore Comşa, *Credinţa şi botezul – lămuriri pentru baptişti*, Arad: Tiparul Tipografiei Diecezane, 1926.

[28] Grigorie Leu Botoşăneanu, *Confesiuni şi secte. Studiu istoric-misionar*, Bucureşti: Tiparul Cărţilor Bisericeşti, 1929.

[29] Ibid., 41.

[30] P.I. David, *Călăuză Creştină. Sectologie. Pentru cunoaşterea şi apărarea dreptei credinţei în faţa prozelitismului sectant* (Curtea de Argeş: Editura Episcopiei Argeşului, 1994), 11.

[31] Ibid.

[32] "In theological language, 'heresy' designates both the erroneous teaching that caused the breaking up with church of a group of believers, and the group as such, while 'sect' designates only the group in itself. In Romanian, especially in the contemporary language, the term 'heresy' is used to designate the wrong teaching upheld and disseminated by a sect." Cf. editor *Biserica şi sectele* (Bucuresti: Asociaţia Sf. Grigorie Palama, 1992), 18.

[33] Jean–Francois Wayer, *Sectele*, translated by Ruxana Pitea (Bucuresti: Editura Enciclopedică, 1998), 5.

[34] Here he was referring to the Neo–protestant confessions officially recognized by the Romanian state, that is the Baptist, the Adventist and the Plymouth Brethrens confession.

[35] Viorel Achim, "Situaţia 'sectelor religioase' în Provincia Bucovina. Un studiu al Inspectoratului Regional de Poliţie Cernăuţi din septembrie 1943 în *Archiva Moldaviae*, vol. VI (2014): 351.

[36] *Ibidem*, p. 351–352.

[37] I have made researches in the archives of the Seventh–day Adventist, Baptist and Plymouth Brethren confessions.

[38] https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G97/100/15/PDF/G9710015.pdf?OpenElement (Last accessed May 2 2016).

Orthodox Perspectives on Globalization: The Imperative of Interfaith Dialogue

Stelian Manolache, PhD
Faculty of Orthodox Theology, University of Ovidius, Constanța, Romania
stelian81stely@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT: This paper represents an Orthodox Christian perspective on globalization and also claims that interfaith dialogue is a missionary imperative. Globalization, the fundamental trait of our time, requires a rising to the opportunity offered by the *ever larger and increasingly dense network of interconnections and interdependences of the social life*—a new view of the world, of man, of life and faith. In other words, between globalization—perceived as a socially determined substrate for post–modernity—and the manifest subjectivity of the religious beliefs and practices (by means of a spiritual superstructure), an inseparable two–way relationship will be generated, which may prove stimulating for the interaction of ideas, religious beliefs and practices that, inevitably, will integrate into the multitude of connections feeding the ever more open character of the society. This paper attempts to answer several general questions on the relationship between globalization and dialogue. Therefore, under the circumstances, what particular trait of globalization may come to (re)define and (re)calibrate the dialogue among the great religions of the world? In other words, why does globalization—which reduces the contemporary man to the temporal flow of production and consumption[1]—make a dialogue inevitable and socially necessary? And why such dialogue meets the significant challenges brought about by the global interconnection? KEY WORDS: globalization, inter–faith dialogue, post–modernity, Christian Church

The Foundations of the *New* Inter-Faith Dialogue

In the environment of the global interconnections within post-modernity, which seems to overcome the gaps between cultures and spiritual faiths, it incurred a true *shrinkage of space and time* (David Harvey) within the global village (Marshall McLuhan) which the society seems to have grown into[2]. Submitted to analyze from a multitude of perspectives, be it political (A. Mc. Grew, 1992), sociological (S. Lash, J. Urry, M. Castells), cultural (S. Hall) or anthropological (J. Friedman), globalization will incur several major mutations, in the religion and religious faith as well, from the point of view of both communities themselves and individual faith, interconnected with the involution of the traditional religiosity or the dilution and the relativization of the faith itself. In other words, we are confronted with an obvious reality, marked by a paradoxical religiosity—on the one hand, more and more strongly individual and growingly diffuse along with the proliferation of the gnosiological and soteriological relativism and, on the other hand, growingly *public* and publicized, resulting from its transformation into a subject within the huge flow of data which our contemporary global society circulates. Consequently, the classical thesis about the coexistence of a dialogue and inter-religious relations as well as the major institutionalized religions, will be updated along with the new factor represented by globalization, into a new imperative and with a new understanding of the present religious time. The contemporary inter-faith dialogue is—in other words—specifically connected to the global society and its dominant *ideology*—postmodernism; it is adapting to a new reality which tends to subject everything to its own momentum toward relativism, even though, unlike the past modernity, will avoid exposing the traditional religions and their related institutions to disapproval. A dialogue in which, as shown by W. T. Anderson, beliefs *growing aware of the existence of others . . . can contemplate one another*[3] in the context of religious practice flowing inexorably towards autonomy, the political, the social and the cultural *emancipating themselves in such a way that the religious is a simple element of the latter*.[4]

In such circumstances, the contemporary world—divided among ethnicities, cultures and religions, will be called into globalism as though, only by means of the post-industrial society and the technological and scientific revolution—a world devoid of God—would aspire to regaining its original unity and restoring the original condition of space for manifestation of the human nature, bearing, however, the indestructible seal of the divine image within man. A global world which, coveting its own autonomy, could only relate to the immanent limits prescribed by the institutionalization of modernity, taking on and fetishizing the political, economic, social and cultural values; *a modern global world* that will (re)define its own axiological references and will design / build them, subordinating to these the appropriate elements of its contents.[5]

Under these circumstances, the space-time frame of each religious faith grows to encompass the whole world; a global world will demand from the religions, and necessarily so, to rediscover and re-empower their universal vocation in order to provide an answer *to man's inner longing for religiosity and communion with the Divine.* In the globalization context, religions assimilate their condition of *social actors*, thus being inevitably subjected / exposed to the interactions with other similar actors; moreover, the shrinkage of the physical distances by means of the cyberspace, is borne out by the reality of a *global culture* fueled by an extreme stimulation of the exchanges occurring among cultural and spiritual values, because *every culture is tentative; it is always open to receiving, assimilating . . . and, in turn, eager to provide something worthy*[6] for other cultures, so that the faiths are in an unprecedented position of losing more and more of their traditional dimensions, especially the ethnic and civilizational ones, which had been previously defining each of them.

Under such circumstances,

A) the actual course for globalization may be regarded/ interpreted as a politically and geopolitically, economically and socially determined result of the mutations occurring—along the transition to post-industrial era—in the production and consumption of the material, cultural and spiritual assets: an age where science and technology are prevailing, where production management and technical intelligentsia are the leading force, *exporting* energy

and less qualified manpower-consuming technologies to other countries and which, in many cases, provide living standards hitherto unimaginable. Therefore, an *objective* determinism is manifest in the development and generalization of the course towards globalization, production and consumption becoming polycentric human activities -coagulated into tentacular, transnational networks—which are guided by the unique and defining resort of pragmatism and efficiency, ultimately aiming at a financial profit. Thus, being a product of the post-industrial society and the scientific-technical revolution, globalization has been, in a sense, inevitable, a step in the evolution of mankind on a historical scale. At the same time, it is irreversible,[7] as long as the basic mode of production can not be dismantled without the risk of a global as well as a social collapse.

B) Being established on a foundation and having finalities that are both aiming at a lucrative finality—economical, financial and technically-productive—globalization is produced to be lacking spiritual and religious meanings of the same magnitude. In fact, the religious dimension can be no other than what post-modernity can produce—and whose vehicle it is. Therefore, not surprisingly, globalization lacks a *vertical dimension*, dwelling the limits of a *horizontal manifestation*,[8] less prone to provide theologically coherent and valid answers to the basic human quest—ever the same, nowadays as well as in the past or future. And even if it were to do that—a consequence of the postmodern temptation for a reconsideration of the religious thought and practice—it would conceive, formulate and advance solutions with too meagre a chance to face the commands of the theological coherence and sustainability. In these circumstances, the referential values of the *recent man* (HR Patapievici) are subjected to a radical transformation, generated by human society itself; for, the obsession for efficiency and profitability could not be converted into anything else than a new form of hedonism, empowered by utilitarianism (Benjamin Barber), consumerism and individualism. In the same way as the obsessive lust for pragmatic efficiency—immediately convertible into profit—dominates the global social action, the *recent man* is limiting his own quest favouring his aim, immediately compatible with what the surrounding globalizing abundance allows him to

discover: hedonism. Man will thus then tend to flatten his existence, to compress his vertical dimension and to cancel his openness to metaphysics, getting to cease being a real *anthropos* as long as his skyward gaze becomes more indifferent and estranged. The destructuration force of globalization proves to be so huge; it stresses—a solvent and a mixer—on a man who, though living in a world more transparent than ever, is, paradoxically, in the position of being alone, constrained to a condition of absolute solitude by a society which, as the sociologist Thomas Luckmann was saying back in the 1960s, has primed the force of the individual motivation/individualistic work over, weakening ever more the frail connection that was making the individual human to exist as a community[9] being. Enslaved by what Father professor John I. Ică jr. called *the perverse triad* consisting in production, profit and consumption/performance/communication,[10] the human living in the global world is already in a major crisis of identity, his existence being unilaterally laid under the spectrum of the efficiency converted into consumption—a fact that is hereby proven able to establish a *culture—a global culture* devoid of spiritual fabric, with *a purely utilitarian trait and unilaterally oriented towards material values*.[11] Respectively, the global world's human abdicates, willingly and in exchange for temporary and questionable benefits, from his authentic vocation, replacing his life—preamble of a singular eschatological destiny in this universe—with a *specious living founded on the convenient mediocrity of consumption, which substitutes the true human identity by refusing the existential depth*.[12] Therefore, outlined is here the image of a man absolutizing one's actual condition, because *modernity starts from the actual state of man, defining him precisely by placing man in such a state, seen as unsurpassable*,[13] suppressing man's inward call to transcend one's own humanity.

C) In these circumstances, position of the Christian Church within the global society will be determined by the following sentences with a decisive role:

1 post–modernity decreed the equality of all religions, while their origin *and cause* which is deemed to be purely immanent, rational and not transcendent, divinely determined;[14]

2 the contemporary man is medially positioned between the sky—which he reject because he had lost eschatological reflex and hope, and earth—from which he finds himself estranged by repudiating his lost identity—ethnic, cultural, religious.[15]

In fact, what we have merely indicated above are the terms of the secularization expression, which excludes the Christian Church, the global society striving *to eliminate religion from the social life,* a consequence of *the artificial separation between the public and private sectors,* so that *man forgets his spiritual assets.*[16] But it is not the secularization itself the cause of the Christian Church being excluded from the socially recognized assets of the contemporary field, but *post-modernity which overlaps and takes control over its spiritual dimension*. However, globalism/universality are not stranger to the Christian Church; on the contrary, they are—in a certain sense—its constitutive; for, the Church Fathers, especially St. Athanasius the Great, saw the cosmic dimension of the Church as a *reflection of Trinitarian communion which emphasizes the identity of each nation and culture's particular but also the loving binding all of them together*.[17] From this perspective, from a biblical perspective, one may even speak of the existence of *a history of globalization*, such as Noah's Ark or its opposite, *the gigantic utopian project of the tower of Babel, a testimonial for the hubris that had gripped mankind, but also the divine sanction that was drawn thereupon*. In fact, theology is the subject which, eschatologically, does produce *the perfect form of globalization*, i.e. the *heavenly Jerusalem, where the elect will be reflected in harmony under the rule Lamb*.[18] Eventually, *the global constitution dwells inscribed in the inner core of creation*,[19] not in itself antagonistic to the divine economy from the point of view of the prescribed social coagulation; in fact, the history between the fall and the eschaton is the element altering the globalism as a origin and final goal of humanity, rendering it with dimensions and meanings foreign to its genuine vocation. In other words, the globalization that we live and receive as a universal model for the marginalization of the Church and faith, can only be a deformed, dark shadow a unit of genuine humanity, which will rediscover the fundamental meanings at the Eschaton.

Postmodernism and Globalization: An Orthodox Christian View

If, from the formal point of view, globalization seems to be fully compatible with the Christian idea, its contents reveals its purely human origin, for the contemporary man alone—and without any recourse to theology and faith—has discovered that transcendence of the ethnic, linguistic, cultural and spiritual borders, simply facilitates his individualistic and mercantile, dominating ends. Thus, paying the price of tearing off his true vocation, man has built a world just with himself and for himself, the self/ego becoming the only landmark, the only goal and the only means, for *ancient man was in a dialogue with the Cosmos; the Medieval man was in a dialogue with God; whereas, modern man is in a dialogue to himself.*[20] In these circumstances, Father John I. Ică jr. noted that, under the pressure of post-modernity, religiosity tends to reflect two completely different state of affairs, i.e.[21]

1 the assumption of political and national/nationalist meanings and identity, so that the essential purpose of religion is duplicated by subjective factors which can be easily instrumented political and economically;

2 the dissolution of faith into a sentimentalist and Pietist approach, easily manipulable, and easily failing into an individualistic-egocentric vision—susceptible to sooner place the faithful on the trajectory of the individual pursuit of happiness and fulfillment.

A) In fact, *the spiritual goal* of postmodernism seems to be rebuilding the religious, the re-theoretization of the religion, so to speak. And the temptation for this kind of enterprise is proving to be a major one, as long as Jurgen Habermas talks about *the need of returning to the sacred, to religious,* while Martin Riesebrodt speaks of the *return of the religion during the globalization age,*[22] leading to a veritable resurrection of religiosity. However, the reality and consistency of such quests—fueled by the too easily forgotten detail which, in the words of Nikolai Berdyaev, *man is a natural being, but with a supernatural vocation*—is altered and even compromised when it is placed outside the divine revelation. *The recent man* does not hesitate to seek his religious ideal that he has regained consciousness of and is eager to explore God, but without knowing how, and therefore failing in his attempt. Man will proceed to search for the transcendent landmark, valuing it as a source for his passage through the world, or will (re)lay the Divine at the origin of his moral-ethical standards. He will achieve that, however, solely by means and methods available to his nature, to his limits—to be more precise—and fatally failing, because such a quest is *no longer communely oriented on the vertical axis of transcendence-immanence or temporal past-future, but on the individualistic and purely immanent horizontal axis of sense-nonsense, life-death, health-sickness, ego–non-ego, imaginary-real*[23]. This failed attempt will reveal, once again, the consequences of the human Fall; although there is something lying at his very core—indestructible and significant—that pushes him relentlessly towards his Creator, the synergistic content of the authentic theophanies will limit man's ability to retrieve his true religion. Therefore, despite its somewhat laudable trait, the human striving toward God is imperative required to be fully connected to the sole criterion of Truth: The Church.

B) Going beyond modernity, with its hostility to religion and religiosity—a position made possible as long as positivism and scientism serve for answers to the need *for believing*, such an intrinsic need for man - in fact, even constitutive to him—*the recent man, as if into a curvature of the historical space* (J. Baudrillard), seems to suddenly rediscover his past, and moreover, man is reconsidering it[24]—because, unlike the completely unpredictable future—the past anchors man to a minimum of certainty. Going into this time warp, the postmodern man is merely asserting *his natively-perennial dimension of [his own - emphasis added] religiosity* (G. Schmitchen); so that, obviously, the globalization age and the isolation of the religious from the social by means of secularization, *does not stand, by far, for the end of religion.*[25]

Moreover, because *even dead, God would still remain the one uncontrollable reference for the world,*[26] and in these terms, we may also speak about *the chance of religion—for reinsertion into the social [emphasis added], into postmodernism and globalization,* because the present *tends to deepen the new—meaningful and precious—metaphysical and religious dimensions with whom we*

do coexist in spirit, although that is *a system of faith provided for public consumption*.[27] The critical term in this equation is "consumption", actually the idea—fundamental to the reality of postmodern spirituality—of subordination of the religious to the market requirements, enshrined in a world where the optimal sale of goods and services has become decisive. Thus, post-modernity opens to the religious thought and practice; yet, not to the world of traditional religions, but to a universe of individual religiosity, diffuse, relativistic, anonymous and syncretistic, ecclesiastically un un-commissioned,[28] in which the inclusivist language no longer distinguishes between truth and error.[29]

The Current Condition of Interfaith Dialogue

Bringing together cultures and civilizations that were barely—if at all—interacting, globalization does also produce a very specific social context of communication and interaction among the world religions, that is, an inter-religious dialogue. This situation - fueled by many factors, from the generalization of global electronic communication to - for instance, economic immigration and waves of refugees - is overlapping what is proper to the postmodern thinking: namely, *a primacy of diversity at the expense of unity, a heterogeneity of the discourse, a diversity of life [and] worldviews*.[30] In other words, globalization carries along, inseparably, the idea of pluralism (i.e. religious pluralism, in respect with our topic), even more so as—given the value stressed on the virtually universally accepted freedom of conscience—the pair made by the religious freedom and religious pluralism can not be infringed without the risk of utmost negative social implications.[31]

In these circumstances, we can systematize the spiritual-religious circumstances of the contemporary inter-faith dialogue as follows:

1 *the transformation of the existence into a source of insolvent experience of the tragic: the modern and postmodern human tragedy due to the fact that he is forever longing for God, the search for Christ*; this inner tendency, doomed to remain unanswered as long as it would not find a normal way, the search for the God beyond the world, by means of and exclusively sustained by the supernatural revelation as it is reflected in the Church *by the Holy Scripture and the Holy Tradition,* is incurring a confusion on man, who shall not be able to find peace, and shall live in a restless and troubled state,[32] to constantly seek answers and certitude—anchors among the mixed value state incurred by the contemporary world;

2 *the extreme relativization of the religious truth: no religious community can continue to claim - other than in a purely subjective manner—to hold the absolute truth*;[33] In fact, the postmodern world, marked by the gnosiological failure of positivism on the fundamental philosophical interrogations—world, its origin and cause, life, man and his destiny, etc.—tends to reject the idea of certainty, single truth, preferring a *polycentric world* mentioned by Andrei Kuraev, a pluralistic world that makes it possible for one *to exclude God from the Universe "in a" fatalistic vision . . . [about the Universe], with a God devoid of power*;[34] but a polycentric world creates *a risk of slipping toward a radical pluralism, absolutely relative, and whoever would accept such a pluralism, would be forced to declare that there is no common basis for assessing the same truth[35]* so that a *postmodernist spirit deepens into the relativist drama and legitimizing relativity . . . in relativizing everything, postmodernism is prone to legitimize anything, even what is unacceptable*;[36]

3 *the significant erosion of the doctrinarily-structured religions;* the relativization of the truths of faith outlines *a new religious horizon, an agnostic belief, ontological and not biblical and dogmatic-ecclesial, of an individual religiosity - believing without belonging, lacking any confessional allegiance*;[37]

4 *the resurrection of spirituality in typical postmodern forms that make man, once again, to recognize different forms of pluralism*;[38] on the other hand, *the return of the religious and (re)enchantment of the world* leads to the redefinition of faith and religious practice as a *new religiosity, imprisoned within the walls of immanence, created by man according to his own desires, pleasures, interests*,[39] and so very heterogeneous that it opens the path of "the dissolution of the universal perspective" of the religious faith[40]. The fact that a globalized world—spiritually structured along the lines of post-

modernity—is seeking its religious roots, is in itself a desirable fact. But mostly directing these searches for the sensitive ego, lacking existential depth and eschatological openness—*because "today" has become the mantra of the human existence; because today the achievement of all promises is being sought for*[41]—does expose, if need be, man's inability of emerging, by himself, from immanence. Being egotistically bound for oneself, for personal success, comfort and success, *the recent man* grows even further atrophied into his fallen condition, altering it even more so by rejecting the Truth of the Church, for the simple fact that man [can] no longer believe in a universal truth, taking a programmatic option favoring *relativism, in the most radical expression of this philosophy*.[42]

Orthodox Christianity and the World of Religious Pluralism

In a world where religions and beliefs are claiming, each of them, not only legitimacy, equal forces—if not soteriological exclusivity—and an overall gnosiological sustainability, while any mutual disregard gradually cease to be a politically and socially acceptable solution in a global society, the Christian church is in a position to seek for the best line of conduct; the possible options were expressed by Peter Ludwig Berger as follows:[43]

1 *adapting to pluralism*; this solution implies a continuous accommodation of the Church—from the point of view of the professed faith, religion and ethics—to the confessional diversity of the environment. This attitude is obviously unacceptable as long as it will certainly lead to *loss of identity, in the sense that pluralism, which is in constant change, will force the Church to continuously adjust and readjust*;

2 *rejecting the multi-confessional reality*; this position is also regarded as unacceptable because that would imply *isolation of the Christian Church, ghettoization, giving up the universal vocation, becoming a homogeneous closed system, claiming to be the depository of the absolute truth.* Furthermore, according to the theologian J.B. Metz or the sociologist G. Schmied, *any lack of openness towards modernity and pluralism could lead to a possible fundamentalist approach*;

3 *the acceptance by the Church to take part in the competitive market of the coexisting confessions*; Peter L. Berger believes that, in fact, given the *competitive environment* in which the denominations suggest for *consumption* extremely diverse anthropological models, soteriological solutions and moral-ethical values, the Church *should accept a third solution, namely, to comply with the rules of the market economy*, a view that he has advanced as the only valid, to the Synod of the Evangelical Church in Germany (1993). Peter L. Berger made clear the eminently secular context in which the Western Churches are placed and are operating, in which, "The Church has become a specialized agency . . . limited to managing individual salvation,"[44] a religious social entity among other similar entities, subjected (and exposed) to the criteria of a competitive market, in which the ratio between "the demand for spirituality" and "the market supply" is decisive and where "no normative is accepted as absolute."[45] Prior to being theorized by Peter L. Berger or, for example, by J. P. William—who spoke of "a market of religions" i.e. *the psycho-market*, driven by "small companies of salvation," advancing "soteriological supply" in competitional terms[46]—this trend has been conceptualized and practiced by the Western post-Protestantism, as a multinational religious organization—a kind of corporate body, capable to coalesce and multiply local communities of believers, sometimes morally rigorist but with little inclination toward the teachings of the faith itself; such organizations, operating in the form of a multitude of coagulated nodal centers within a tentacular network, obey the rules of the global market, are able to obtain and redistribute resources, instituting *the new religious movements* so characteristic for the postmodern global society. Obviously, from the point of view of Orthodoxy, a market solution of the kind is not and cannot be a solution; it continues to believe that, as Jurgen Moltmann has put it, the Church "is still the crown of society"[47] while, it is impossible [*for the Church - TN*] to descend towards the criteria for validation by the secular world, since, as the mysterious body of Jesus Christ the Redeemer, simply cannot obey them. Then again, Orthodoxy can not enter a soteriological competition against other religions, in a purely human of race for gaining new adherents, mainly because salvation is a divine act par excellence, whereas the institution of

conversion by secular advertising is totally foreign [*to the Orthodox Church - TN*]. Orthodoxy believes that "the human factor, with his striving, cannot be all it takes to convert people, . . . but it takes God's work", because, in general, "man can do nothing alone, without God's help "(I Corinthians 3: 5–9).[48] The purpose of the Orthodox mission "aims rather to bring God to the people than to bring the people to God,"[49] because it assumes that "the most important thing, even in which concerns that mission, is the intensity of the ecclesial life ", being mainly interested in "its own life, especially sacramental."[50]

In these circumstances, acknowledging the surrounding confessional diversity and regarding pluralism as an open reality, which leaves " mutual openness, trust and responsibility", excluding the danger of radicalism,[51] Orthodoxy will be able to comply to the following coordinated action, suggested by Father Ioan I . Ică jr.[52]

a) by regaining "*the inner spiritual forces*" and overcoming the ambiguity generated by a search for external support, "most of times in a humiliating servitude;"

b) by assuming "the condition of a minority and a spiritually, morally, socially and culturally active Diaspora"—in a radically secularized world—by regaining the "the spirit of the witnessing Christian and of the apologists of the pre-Constantinian age," in order to "become the soul of the body of the world" and to "enliven the humanity flesh with the life of God."

The Possibility of Interfaith Dialogue

Starting from the fact that it is God who "*wishes all men to be saved and to come to the true knowledge*" (I Timothy 2:4) and Jean Delumeau's observation that "different religions exalt, each in their language, wisdom and compassion, sincerity and humility, precious common assets that nobody may want to see disappearing,"[53] the inter-faith dialogue is emerging as having sufficient ground for institutionalization and permanence. In relation to the current configuration of the inter-faith dialogue, there is a lot of history. Among these, it stands out the establishment in Chicago (1893) of *the World's Parliament of Religions*, Chicago, 1893 at the initiative

of Paul Carus (1852–1919)[54] who rediscovered in Dao De Jing—the classic Taoist writing—the sign of the revelation of Yahweh within the space of Chinese culture and civilization,[55] the Edinburgh Conference (1910) with their Commission *The Missionary Message in Relation to Non-Christian Religions* or the Conference *The Christian Life and Message in the Relation to Non-Christian Systems* of Jerusalem (1928), the latter criticizing "the exclusive attitude of Christians towards other religions."[56] After 1948 and especially after 1968, the *World Council of Churches* has stimulated the inter-faith dialogue, for whose needs it developed the *Guidelines on Dialogue* (1979), which sets the guidelines of communication and relationship with the non-Christian religions; this was after, un Nairobi (1975), "it was necessary to define the nature, scope and limits of the inter-faith dialogue in order to eliminate the danger of syncretism." Finally, we quote the message "*A Common Word Us and You*" (2007) of a total of 138 Muslim scholars who pointed out that "the necessity of love for God and for the neighbor stands for the connection between Christianity and Islam."[57] In respect with the inter-faith dialogue itself, we believe that the first problem that arises is the very possibility for that; in other words, in the context of a variety of religions and religious beliefs—which may hardly foresee the existence of convergent elements—could the idea of a dialogue in itself prove theologically sustainable, within the aforementioned institutionalized forms? We do believe that the necessarily favorable response is favoured by the following features, specific to the Christian thinking:

a) a multitude of forms of religiosity stems from the alienation of nature and the human condition incurred after the fall—their state being able to compromise the bond of communion with God, which ensure the frameworks for man's genuine worship; from this point of view, religions are merely the expression, more or less successful, of man's attempt—again more or less assisted by God—to be restored to the heavenly communion with the Creator; implicitly, religions will contain more or less Truth, according to "the dose" of the included supernatural revelation, and will gnosiologically and doctrinarily fructify these so that, "no matter how degraded as a religion, it will

still stay human"[58] i.e. within the sphere of the legitimately and specifically human aspiration toward God;

b) the non-Christian religions comprise a glimpse of Truth either as an "echo of the primordial revelation, or as a result of the *Spermatikos Logos'* action, followed by the arrival of the perfect Logos οτασλογοσ"[59]—such glimpses determining at least a minimum of compatibility;

c) the ontological unity of the human race ("*And He made every nation of men from one blood, so they may dwell on all the face of the earth.*" Acts 17:26), complemented by the structural unity of mind, aspiration and destiny of the whole mankind,[60] makes man prone to finding his peers within and through dialogue, with whom, in fact, he is consubstantial and whom he receives under the spectrum of otherness only as a consequence of the ontological disturbance of his nature, as a result of the sin; in this respect, one may glimpse the perspective of the mysterious recuperation of the unity of humanity within Christ, for the Savior "retrieves us from our own isolation and puts us in an intimate relationship with all our peers;"[61]

d) taking human body, Christ assumed—in order to deify it—the very human nature as such (save the sin), thus overcoming, within His own hypostasis, any ethnic or religious difference; in Christ, mankind—so heterogeneous nowadays—has the revelation of the primordial unity; for "*one is neither Jew nor Greek; one is neither a slave nor free; one is no longer man or woman; for you are all one in JesusChrist* "(*Galatians* 3, 28); the incarnation of the Word restores the human condition, correcting the tendency towards fragmentation into separate hypostases—leaving no trace of the perceptible common origin—because God, through Christ, "has entered Himself in relation to the people of all faiths and all times, featuring the Gospel of salvation;"[62]

e) finally, we also note the argument in favor of a dialogue formulated by the Indian Christian theologian Stanley-Jedida Samartha (1920–2001), a remarkable militant for inter-faith dialogue, which emphasized the role of the immediacy of the Holy Spirit in fostering communication between religions, relying on the direct promise expressed by the Savior: *"and when He comes, the Spirit of Truth, He will guide you into all truth ..."* John 16:13—within

a universal work aimed at transfigurating all creation, like that of Christ Himself: "*TheWord was the true Light that enlightens every man that cometh into the world*" John 1:9; therefore, "all men are open, in a way, to the work of God's Spirit" so that, as S. J. Samartha says, the Holy Spirit "can only be regarded as a property monopolized by the Judeo-Christian tradition"—thence, the need for a "more sensitive recognition of the comprehensive work of the Holy Spirit;"[63] therefore of the possibility and necessity of an inter-faith dialogue.

The Christian Church in Dialogue

In respect with the non-Christian religions, the Church recognizes them as partners, working together for the "fulfillment of the contemporary world great ideals,"[64] as recommended by *The World Conference for Cooperation and Development* (Beirut, 1968), given that they produce "a profound piety and obedience to a merciful God, near to the believer," accepting "the consciousness of the interconnection of all things, the transitory nature of all existence [and] suffering as part of life," prophesizing "man's ability to avoid being subjected by the material goods "and acting according to the creed of "the principle of inflict the least damage of all creation," as the report of *The Conference on faith, science and the future* (Cambridge, 1979).[65]

When in a dialogue with the other great religions of the world, the Church is fully aware that each of them may claim and sustain, apologetically and missionarily, their own faith, regarded as redemptional, their own theological, gnosiological, anthropological and soteriological teachings. Therefore, the fundamental purpose of the inter-faith dialogue is to detect and quantify the common religious values, as well as moral and ethical, for the involved parties, building on the assumption that "every Christian should be . . . aware of his human solidarity with all peers, regardless of their manifest faith or lack of faith." This way, Christians will engage with a "sincere enthusiasm to listen to the part we want to communicate with; . . . and in this situation, the dialogue is the result of work of the Spirit"[66]—for, "The wind blows where it wills, and you hear his

voice, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit" (John 3:8). The dialogue with the non-Christians expresses the Church's awareness about the unity of humanity beyond its infinite fragmentation, stemming from the disobedience of the original sin; by means of the dialogue, "... we share our common humanity, dignity and we express our common concern for this humanity."[67] Being a Christian means discovering the others, and therefore those of another faith, in the light of our faith in Christ the Savior of the world, who calls to regaining our original unity and enjoying its eschatological fulfillment, because "God was in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself . . . and sowing us with the word of reconciliation" (2 Corinthians 5:19), and "the mystery of His will" is "all be again united in Christ, things in heaven and those on earth - all in Him," Ephesians 1:9–10.

Compared to the non-Christians, he who believes in Christ will always open into a "*p*ersonal and humble" communication,[68] fully aware that "in every nation, he who fears Him and does righteousness is acceptable to Him," Acts 10:35 and then, "When the Gentiles who have not the law, by nature do the law, these, not having the law, are their own law, which showing the deed of the law written in their hearts, by testimony of their conscience and judgments, accusing or defending them" Romans 2:14–15.

A humble dialogue humble, with love, for the love for Christ has saved the world, the appropriating and recognizing what is truly valuable and soul-uplifting in the non-Christian religions[69], should not lead, however, to a dilution of Christocentrism, to an abdication from the force lines and the dogmatic references of the doctrinal Christianity, the danger of relativism and syncretism[70] being ever present. Relevant for such a danger is the situation that occurred at the seventh *General Assembly of the World Council of Churches* (Canberra, 1991), when Chung Hyun Kyung, from the University of Seoul—in a study on the acculturation of Christianity in Asia and Africa—identified the Holy Spirit with the personal spirit of some biblical characters (Agar, Uriah or the children killed by Herod), and also with the spirits of the victims of Hiroshima, Nagasaki, Chernobyl, the victims of the Crusades or those of Tiananmen Square and, finally, the traditional Korean spirits.[71] Staying within the exclusively

institutional framework of the dialogue—which can be carried out without a missionary-kind temptation for deviating approaches, because "no other realization of the human condition of our time has the potential for conciliation which Christianity produces"[72]—the Church reasserts love and understanding toward the non-Christian brethren precisely because the belief in the One God, "a God and Father of all, Who is above all and through all, and in all," Ephesians 4:6, and whose glory fills the earth (*Isaiah* 6 3) and whose Kingdom comprises the whole world: "his kingdom doth reigns over all"— Psalm 102:19 and "the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof; world and all who live in it"—Psalm 23:1—a God whom those on the other side, despite the fact that they would not know to name Him as such, they do sense Him with their entire being: "And Whom, in times past, suffered all nations to go their own ways, Though He Himself has not left un-confessed, making you well, giving you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling your hearts with food and gladness"—Acts 14:16–17.

Concurrently, the Christian Church enters into a dialogue with the non-Christians, strengthened by the call addressed to the world in the name of Christ—"Behold the judgment for all the earth is the hand stretched out over all nations!"—Isaiah 14:26, not forgetting that it is treasuring the overwhelming love of God: *for God so much loved the world that He gave His begotten Son so that whoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life*—John 3:16. In this way, the Church will recognize, in the multitude of the contemporary religions "a gift of God" and as many forms "of expression of the awareness of the divine mystery" —as it has been expressed at the *Conference of the Catholic Bishops* in 1989—and, at the same time, a further call for compliance to Christomorphism, which is the truly fundamental and unique truth [of the Church - TN].

Conclusions

As Nicholas Achimescu has emphasized, the inter-faith dialogue occurring between the world religions is a human response of the whole mankind, starting from the archetypal dialogue in which

God Himself enters the world with the embodiment of Jesus Christ as man. From this point of view, consistent with the Trinitarian Christocentrism, and thus to the ecclesiocentrism of our faith, we understand that, being in a dialogue with our non-Christians brethren, we will be in the natural logic of a radical ontological change brought about in our nature by Christ. Thus, such a dialogue could be seen as "a joint effort to advance towards Truth,"[73] as an attempt "to achieve a true communion . . . through forgiveness, reconciliation and a new creation" from all faiths and active religious ideas, within that which W. Walsh called *the home with several dwellings* and which is the contemporary world.

Extrapolating, in fact, in the specific matter of the inter-faith dialogue, the Christian Church can do nothing else but what our Master Jesus Christ did, the one Who, by means of His sacrifice and resurrection, opened a way to salvation for every individual, so that, among those of other faiths, our goal will be to follow Christ, whose work "aimed at all humanity, Christian and non-Christian."[74]

NOTES

[1] Ioan I. Ică Jr., Globalization - Mutations and Challenges, in *The Church in Mission. The Romanian Patriarchy in Anniversary* (București: EIBMBOR, 2006), 692.

[2] John Tomlinson, *Globalization and Culture*, transl. Cristina Gyurcsik (Timișoara: Amarcord Publishing House, 2002), 11.

[3] Dumitru Popescu, *Orthodoxy and Globalization. Global Culture and Particular Cultures*, in *The Church in the Globalization Age* (Alba Iulia: Reîntregirea Publishing House, 2003), 12.

[4] Olivier Clement, "Christianity, Secularization and the Europe," in Ioan I. Ică, Jr., Germano Marani, eds., *The Social Thought of the Church. Foundation, Documents, Analyses, Perspectives* (Sibiu: Deisis Press, 2002), 509.

[5] Tomlinson, 2002, 73.

[6] Marin Aiftincă, "Global Culture and Cultural Identity," in *The Church in the Globalization Age*, 213.

[7] Popescu, 2003, 92–93.

[8] Dumitru Popescu, *The Rootless Man* (București: Publishing House Nemira, 2001), 86.

[9] Cătălin Raiu, *Orthodoxy, Post-Communism and Neoliberalism* (București, Publishing House Curtea Veche, 2012), 15–16.

[10] Ică Jr., 2006, 693.

[11] Popescu, "Orthodoxy and Globalization," 87.

[12] Adrian Lemeni, "Globalization: A Diversion from the Unification of the World Into Christ," in *The Church in the Globalization Age*, 444.

[13] Anca Manolescu, *The Style of the Religion in the Late Modernity* (Iași: Publishing House Polirom 2011), 63.

[14] Nicolae Achimescu, *Religion, Modernity and Post-Modernity* (București: Publishing House Trinitas, 2013), 491.

[15] Ică, Jr., 690.

[16] Popescu, *The Rootless Man*, 482.

[17] Popescu, "Orthodoxy and Globalization," 90.

[18] Ovidiu Pecican, "Church, Globalization and Posthistory: Anti-Babel or An Apocalyptcal Age?," in *The Church in the Globalization Age*, 235–236.

[19] Dumitru Popescu, "Orthodoxy and Globalization," 16.

[20] Nicolae Balca, *The Crisis of Culture*, in *Telegraful român*, nr. 42 (1936): 58.

[21] Ică, Jr., 695.

[22] Achimescu, 236; 300–301.

[23] Ică, Jr., 695.

[24] Ibid., 694.

[25] Achimescu, 179.

[26] H. R. Patapievici, *The Recent Man* (București: Publishing House Humanitas), 87.

[27] Marin Aiftincă, *Culture globale et identite culturelle* (București, 2001), 9.

[28] Valer Bel, "The Witnessing Community in the Environment of A Secular and Global World," in *Symposium: Modernism, Post-Modernism and Religion*, edited by Vasile Nechita (Constanța: 2005), 34.

[29] Gheorghe Petraru, "Modernist and Postmodern Conceptual Paradigms and Their Impact on Theology and the Mission of the Church," in Nechita, 55.

[30] Achimescu, 312.

[31] Ibid., 511.

[32] Vasile Citirigă, *The Mistery of Man and His Tragedy in the Postmodern Age*, in Nechita, 239.

[33] Achimescu, 401.

[34] Gheorghe Istodor, *Postmodernism: A Major Challenge For The Mission of the Christian Church*, in Nechita, 124.

[35] Achimescu, 521–522.

[36] Emil Stan, "Nae Ionescu and the Post-Modernism," in *Viața Românească*, nr. 11–12 (1998): 170–174.

[37] Petraru, 56.

[38] Istodor, 116.

[39] Petraru, 53.

[40] Ion Popescu, *The Phenomenon of Personalization in Post-Modernism*, in Nechita, 251.

[41] Horațiu Trif, "Tradition and Eschaton: A Short Anamnesis On The End of Modernity," in *Verso*, nr. 2–3 109–110 (2014): 8.

42 Adrian Niculcea, "The Romanian Intellectual between 'The Death of God' and the 'Imagined' Christianity," in Nechita, 262.

43 Achimescu, 346–347.

44 Ică, Jr., 698.

45 Petraru, 59.

46 Achimescu, 207.

47 Ibid., 155.

48 Constantin Coman, *quoted art.*, in Nechita, 335–336.

49 Ibid., 336–337.

50 Ibid., 331.

51 Achimescu, 512.

52 Ică, Jr., 698.

53 Achimescu, 20.

54 Adrian Boldişor, *The Importance and the Actuality of the Inter-Faith Dialogue For the Contemporary World: History, Perspectives, Solutions* (Craiova: Publishing House Mitropolia Olteniei, 2015), 17.

55 Dan Ţăreanu, *The Modern Anti-Trinitarism—Theological Presumptions and Conceptual Structures* (Sibiu: Publishing House Andreiana, 2015), 157–158.

56 Boldişor, 18–20, 22–26, 51.

57 Ibid., 70–71, 133.

58 Achimescu, 53.

59 Ibid., 59–60.

60 C. Sârbu, "The Main Position of the Orthodox toward Other Religions, in *Ortodoxia*, XXI nr. 5 (1969): 511.

61 Achimescu, 19.

62 Ibid., 15–16.

63 Ibid., 30–31.

64 Ibid., 47.

65 Ibid., 38.

66 Ibid., 20–21.

67 Ibid., 27.

68 Ibid.

69 Emilian Vasilescu, "Preoccupations Within the Romanian Orthodoxy Concerning The Non-Christian Religions," *Ortodoxia* nr. 1 (1971): 40.

70 Emilian Vasilescu, "The Religious Syncretism In Our Times," *Studii Teologice* nr. XIX nr. 3–4 (1967): 150.

71 Boldişor, 158. See also Vasile Nechita, *The Abrahamic Religions in the Post-Modernist Context* (Iaşi: Publishing House Vasiliana, 1998, 2010), 240.

72 Andrei Marga, *Modernity, Religion, Culture*, in *The Church in the Globalization Age*, 30–31.

73 Nicolae Achimescu, *Religions in a Dialogue* (Bucureşti: Trinitas Publishing House, 2006), 15–18.;

74 Ibid., 19.

Law as a Drive for Social Development in Philippe Malaurie's Thinking

Ligia–Roxana Rotaru
Independent Scholar, Romania
ligia_sunflower@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT: The paper defines the concept of law and its role in the development of a society, in Philippe Malaurie's thinking. In this endeavour, this paper offers a historical sketch of personalities who, through their ideas on legal science, have contributed—to a lesser or a greater extent—to the harmonious development and the progress of society.

KEY WORDS: law, ethics, principles, progress, heroes

Society can be defined by the multitude of people who make it, people interconnected through social, economic and legal relationships. Due to the importance of law science in society through the legal norms it imposes upon people's conduct, it cannot be separated from the evolution of society.

Law is an aggregate of principles, concepts and legal norms that embody the fundamental conditions and moral ideals of a society and which serves a double purpose. The first one is to prevent illicit behaviours and to encourage people to a high legal and moral conduct. The second purpose is punitive, as law tries to restore the original legal order through sanctions.

As the worldwide society is composed of a multitude of nations, cultures and beliefs that we could define in one word as diversity, there was a need to build a mechanism that would regulate the relationship between these different states. This has led to the

regulation of international law that was established in "the process of collaboration and struggle between the states of the international community."[1]

International law aims to settle and resolve those conflicts that could arise due to existing domestic laws from different countries. This need has made its presence felt more and more acute with the increasing trade agreements between states, as well as with the increasing relations in areas like tourism, culture, sciences, etc.

With the ever-growing development of society, specialized international institutions have been created to ensure compliance with the legal norms and respect for the rights of states and their citizens. These institutions include the *International Court of Justice*, the *International Criminal Court*, the *European Court of Justice* and the *European Court of Human Rights*.

As we mentioned in the beginning, society is made up of people, and the progress in various areas over the centuries, is also due to them. Some of them have made impressive contributions in the evolution of law ever since it was not yet formed as an independent legal science.

At the beginning of our society there were talks about a so-called "natural law." It consisted in a set of rules of conduct for various situations, but it was not written, but it was transmitted by word of mouth through successive generations. One of the first ones to regulate these principles was Moses. History speaks of him as "one of the greatest heroes of mankind, the founder of a religion, father of a nation, legislator, moralist, liberator, conqueror."[2]

Through Moses, God gave for the first time the written law consisting of the Ten Commandments given on Mount Sinai. Thus, the Moral Law of God has always been considered the legal basis of all law systems.

Since the people of Israel were, at the time, a fairly intolerant and aggressive people, some laws are intransigent. As an example, we find the death sentence for apostasy: "If there is found among you, within any of your gates which the Lord your God gives you, a man or a woman who has been wicked in the sight of the Lord your God, in transgressing His covenant, who has gone and served other gods and worshiped them, either the sun or moon or any of

the host of heaven, which I have not commanded, and it is told you, and you hear of it, then you shall inquire diligently. And if it is indeed true and certain that such an abomination has been committed in Israel, then you shall bring out to your gates that man or woman who has committed that wicked thing, and shall stone to death that man or woman with stones" (Deut. 17:2–5).[3] One also finds Lex Talionis (the law of retaliation) "Your eye shall not pity: life shall be for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot" (Deut. 19:21).[4]

Going further, we come to the three great Greek philosophers who, through their ideas and work, have tried to impress unto the Western world a moral and intellectual basis whose presence would be felt over the centuries. Plato, in particular, along with Socrates and Aristotle, devotes much of his work to the endeavour of trying to fight against moral, social and political decadence. He thought that these degrading vices had appeared in society because his Sophist opponents had argued that everything was relative, that there was no absolute justice or absolute good, and that each individual should only relate to himself.

Another name that has left its mark on the development of society was that of Cicero. It is said that he was the greatest lawyer of his time. He was the embodiment of courage, assuming the work he wanted to do even by risking his own life. In the end he was assassinated, but for us he stayed as an example of "lawyer, humanist and martyr for freedom."[5]

A true illustrious of law and, in the same time, someone who has influenced society to this day is Justinian. In his capacity as Emperor of the Eastern Roman Empire, he wished for legal order and unity over the land he was leading. He wished for the law to be written and accessible to everyone, both to the ordinary and to the rich. This is how he began his vast work that includes: the *Digesta*, the *Institutiones*, the *Codex*, the *Novellae*, and the *Corpus*. He managed to establish only for a short time the legal unity he wished for, but his imprint transcended over the centuries, so that he accomplished what he himself declared at the end of his vast and impressive work: "For a few pennies, the poor and the rich can now buy the laws and obtain at a low price the quintessence of wisdom."[6]

Blaise Pascal proves us that society cannot progress if it only relies on one area. His connection with law is a secondary one, as he was interested in religion, philosophy and, his main interest, the human being as a whole. Pascal's complex interest only proves that, without respecting the norms, man's life and destiny cannot follow their natural course. Through his work, Pascal tried to capture the fine difference between man's grandness and man's nothingness, and to show that without God's laws there was no law and justice. "What sort of freak then is man! How novel, how monstrous, how chaotic, how paradoxical, how prodigious! Judge of all things, feeble earthworm, repository of truth, sink of doubt and error, glory and refuse of the universe! Know then, proud man, what a paradox you are to yourself. Be humble impotent reason! Be silent, feeble nature! Learn that man infinitely transcends man, hear from your master your true condition, which is unknown to you. Listen to God."[7]

France gave one of her most famous writers and philosopher of the Lumières, Voltaire. Voltaire came from a family connected with law, his father being a notary. He thus had solid knowledge in law although he never finished his law studies because, as he affirmed, school filled his mind with a lot of nothingness. Despite his statement, he remained faithful to law, and he fought for a common law all over France because, he used to say: "A man who takes the post-chaise, in France, changes laws more often than he changes horses."[8] This great thinker left his mark mainly on criminal law, which he tried to reform on the occasion of the Calas business.

His work does not present Jean-Jacques Rousseau as a man of contrasts, having a decisive influence in the French Revolution and on French constitutional law. However, he was convinced that the civil society of his time, through the laws it was passing, was destroying the State of Nature established by divinity. He strongly advocated that the right to property should not belong to each individual, but it should be a common right, a so-called "savage good" belonging to all. Voltaire, in turn, vehemently contradicted this concept of no individual goods or properties, and at some point they even had an exchange on the subject. Voltaire wrote the following as soon as he received Rousseau's book on the topic: "I have received, sir, your new book against the human species; . . . no one has ever been so

witty as you are in trying to turn us into brutes: to read your book makes one long to go on all fours. . . . I must confine myself to being a peaceful savage in the retreat I have chosen—close to your country." Rousseau, a man full of energy, replies: "I dislike you. You have caused me offenses to which I was especially sensitive—I, your disciple and admirer. . . . Finally, I hate you for what you wanted this, but hating you, I realize that I could love you, if you so wish."[9]

From the above, we can easily come to the idea that social progress lies in people and the ideas they bring. Even though norms and values of a scholar do not always match the thinking and understanding of another, over time, these principles and controversies have left their mark in the development of the society. Thus, society has been able to test theories and principles and to keep only those norms and discoveries it found useful.

We have reached the apogee of the Age of Enlightenment, where the concept of natural law would slowly find its end. This period was marked by the personality of a celibate philosopher, Immanuel Kant, who lived a quiet and accurate life, without too many daily events. It is said that those around him used to fix their watches according to his regular daily walks. His writings are also rigid, formal, devoid of charm and difficult to understand. However, we owe him for his profound leaning on the topics of law and morals and the link between the tow, as well as for the principle of autonomy of the will. As his writings are difficult to present in common words, as they can always be interpreted in various ways, we shall quote use a quote help us notice the way he saw this link between equity and morality: "Suppose that a domestic servant is paid his wages at the end of a year in money that has depreciated in the interval, so that he cannot buy with it what he could have bought with it when the concluded the contract. The servant cannot appeal to his right to be compensated when he gets the same amount of money but it is of unequal value. He can appeal only on grounds of equity (a mute divinity that cannot be heard). . . . The motto (dictum) of equity is, «the strictest right is the greatest wrong» (*summum ius, summa iniuria*). But this ill cannot be remedied by way of what is laid down as right, even though it concerns a claim to a right; for this claim belongs only to the court conscience (*forum poli*: *forum*

= court, *polus* = sky, polar star), whereas every question of what is laid down as right must be brought before civil right *(forum soli; solum* = earth)."[10]

Thanks to Kant's theory and to other philosophers and jurists, we have now the theory of imprevision, which allows changes in the contract terms or its adaptation so that it corresponds to the reality of the moment when it is performed. Are taken into account those situations when, due to major unforeseen circumstances or irreparable changes, the one who signed the contract would suffer unjust damages. It is thus desirable to eliminate the effects of inequality between the contracting parties.

The last well-known name we shall submit to a brief analysis on his contribution to law is Honoré de Balzac, who in his works insister more on private law, the law dealing with relationships between people, governing the institution of marriage, relations between neighbours, etc. We could say that this is a guiding line for society so that its people could develop in peace, freedom and harmony, freedom that exists for each individual as long as it does not limit the freedom of another.

Thus a topic that particularly draws Balzac's attention is that of marriage. He addresses the topic in many of his works, but especially in *A Marriage Contract*. He argues that the marriage institution is fundamental to society, but blames bourgeois marriages. He says that laws are not to blame for the existing abuse of power of the men in the institution of marriage and for women being invited to commit adultery. The ones to be blamed are the morals. So, he concludes, the morals of a society are the ones who should change, not its laws.[11]

In conclusion, we could say that social progress is indissolubly linked to its people. We have presented briefly some ideas of outstanding personalities of the world over the ages, personalities who left their mark through their work and their reformist ideas and principles. Sometimes conflicting, sometimes convergent, all these ideas have nurtured our society and made it develop culturally, socially and morally.

NOTES

1 Gheorghe Bobos, *Teoria Generală a Dreptului* (Cluj–Napoca: Editura Dacia, 1994), 175.

2 Philippe Malaurie, *Antologia Gindirii Juridice* (București: Editura Humanitas, 1997), 13.

3 *The Holly Bible*, New King James Version.

4 Ibid.

5 Malaurie, 39.

6 Ibid., 47.

7 Ibid., 107.

8 Ibid., 127.

9 Ibid., 140.

10 Ibid., 166.

11 Ibid., 207–220.

Gender Differences in the Health Status of Elderly People

Marius Nechita
Universitatea Tehnică din Cluj-Napoca, Romania
Centrul Universitar Nord, Baia Mare, Romania
Seminarul Teologic Ortodox „Sfântul Iosif Mărturisitorul", Baia Mare
pr.nechita@gmail.com

ABSTRACT: Even though there are particularities within every age group which can be applied to the entire population, the seniours constitute the population's most heterogeneous segment and their functioning differs more from one person to another in comparison with the case of other age groups, due to the different aging rhythm, genetic heritage, psycho–spiritual profile, life experience, familial and socio-cultural context that the person lives in, and the events experienced in one's life.[1] The existing studies point out that there is a great variability and individuality in what concerns the experiencing of the aging process and, implicitly, regarding the experiencing of the various needs and their satisfaction. Therefore, this paper attempts to focus on the elderly and explore the health care status based on gender.
KEY WORDS: community development, old age, family, community, social assistance, religion, society

One of the agents that have a major contribution in determining the difference in experiencing the aging process is represented by the gender. The gender seems to have a significant effect on the third age people's life, experiences and satisfactions. It is safe to say that, generally, the third age–class is a different kind of experience for women and men.[2]

Nowadays, the aging of the population and the gender are prominent aspects of the international forums and important areas of the social demographical preoccupations. McMullin stated that there is "a remarkable absence of theoretical preoccupations concerning the relation between gender and aging." (McMullin 1995) The interest for the gender often focuses on the elder people's economical and social vulnerability. Many of these researches have focused on studying women (Gibson 1996). It is generally considered that women are more vulnerable in comparison to men (Afzal 1996; HelpAge International 2000; Metha 1997).[3]

Friedman and his collaborators (Friedman 2003) have identified in the specialty literature two hypotheses concerning the existence of a greater vulnerability of the third age women:

- *the perspective over the life course, highlighting the gender differences in early and late life periods* (Hatch 2000) This hypothesis affirms that the relative disadvantage of older women relates especially to the differences regarding the economical and nursing role that they have had over their entire life and the rewards they received for having accomplished them (Hoyman, 1999). Explaining the gender differences by reporting to the disadvantages of the previous status constitutes as well a limit of this approach. The advantages offered by the previous status are being ignored.
- *the double juggling hypothesis* In this perspective, the accent is *put* on the negative effects of occupying two stigmatizing status: being a woman and being an elderly one.[4]

Gender differences concerning the third age people's mental state of health

The changes of mental health are the result of the effects induced by the age, having at their basis internal factors, such as heredity and hormonal changes, and external factors, such as retirement, the decrease of the biological potential, associated pathology, the

decrease of the number of family members and the death of some relatives or friends of close ages.

The specialty literature is dominated by the existence of three mental disorders at the third age people: depression, delirium and dementia. The evaluation of these disorders is performed through interviews, self description and description of the people within the elderly person's proximity, psycho-physiological methods and direct observations and evaluations of the performances.[5]

Gender differences concerning depression and depressive symptoms of old people

The depressive symptoms may occur as a response to the loss of a beloved person or of the feeling of control over his own life, as secondary effects of the existence of some chronic diseases or of the prescribed medication for other diseases and disorders. Schnittker (2005) outlined that those people who develop early chronic diseases and/or disabilities tend to experience even more depressive symptoms in comparison to those people who develop later chronic diseases and/or disabilities.[6]

Some of the studies on third age–class depression doubted the conviction that aging is related to high levels of depression (Charles, Reynolds & Gatz 2001).[7] The epidemiological researches reveal that acute depression incidence is lower for the third age population in comparison to young adults. Even though there is a great variability in experiencing the depresive symptoms, variability that can be caused by the differences in gender and ethnicity too, in general, a decrease of depression once with the aging process is observed.

Some meta-analyses of the epidemilogical studies concluded that the prevalence of slight or subclinical depression it is much more spread among the third age-class in comparison to major depression and the depression prevalence tends to decrease at advanced age.[8] Ruegg and his collaborators concluded that the depressive symptoms of elderly people can often be obscured by somatic accuses and physical symptoms, which leads to them being overlooked, misdiagnosed and treated superficially. The depressive

symptoms are strongly related to a grown risk of functional disability, weak social support, an intensification of the use of care services and a negative state of well-being (Bruce et al.1994; Henderson er al. 1997; Pennix et al. 1998; Han 2002; cited. Katsumata, Arai, Ishida, Tomimori et al. 2005).[9]

Nguyen and Zonderman (2006) highlighted the fact that there is some degree of stability of the depressive symptoms in the case of people aged under 70. Even though the state of depression and the interpersonal issues remained stable, in the case of people aged over 70, there was an increase of somatic symptoms and a lack of well-being. No gender differences were noticed in the presented study.[10]

Silverstein and his collaborators (1999) stated that the depression prevalence is equal within both sexes and the depression's somatic subtype is more prevalent in the case of women. Some studies offered empirical support for Silverstein's hypotheses (Nolan & Wilson 1994, Kornstein et al. 2000, Frank et al. 1998; Young et al. 1990).

Generally, the studies revealed that the symptoms of major and atypical depression are more prevalent in women case in comparison to men (Weissman & Klerman 1977; Vasquez-Barquero et al. 1992; Dewey et al. 1993; Kessler & al. 1993; Weissman et al. 1993; Stechtman et al. 1997; Zunzungui et al. 1998; Prince et al. 1999; Zunzunegui, Minicuci, Blumstein, Noale et al. 2007.) The researchers brought up for discussion various biological and psychosocial reasons concerning the existing gender differences (Piccinelli & Wilkinson, 2000).[11]

As for the elderly population, Forsell and his collaborators, analyzing the depressive symptoms distribution, ascertained that women manifested more depressive symptoms related to the disposition, while elderly men had more depressive symptoms related to the motivation.

Kockel and Heun (2002) examined the gender differences concerning the experiencing the depressive symptoms in the third age people case. The data obtained from the 236 elderly participants diagnosed with depression before the age of 50 and 357 participants from the general population revealed that women from the genereal population manifested more depressive symptoms as compared

to men, especially appetite and joyfulness disorders. The gender differences concerning the number of depressive symptoms from the general population were fully explained by the gender differences concerning the psycho-social variables, such as the familial status. As for the elderly people, there was no identification of gender differences concerning the number of depressive symptoms.

Women and men diagnosed with major depressive disorder presented a distinct profile of the depressive symptoms which could not be fully explained by psycho-social factors. The depressive elderly women manifested more appetite related disorders, while elderly depressive men reported they were more agitated. The explanations invoked by the study's authors for these results outline the possibility for women to present a different subtype of depression or to have differences of perception and expression of the depressive symptoms.[12]

Major depression at the third age-class appears under some partially different symptoms in the case of men and women. These results suggest that the gender differences concerning the experiencing of major depression symptoms at the elderly population reflect gender differences in the depressive symptoms perception and expression.

Preventing and reducing depressive symptoms have an important role in maintaining a high level of life quality for the elderly population. Identifying the depression's risk factors is useful both for planning some adequate prevention strategies and for improving the knowledge base concerning the treatment of depressive symptoms in the community that elderly people are part of. Among the risk factors significantly associated to the depressive symptoms at elderly people we can include the physical disability, the deficit of social support and isolation, the appearance of some life stressing events and the presence of chronic diseases (Beekman et al., 1995, Prince et al., 1997).[13]

Djernes (2006), while making a review of the relevant publications and of those from MEDLINE and Psychinfo data base, ascertained that the main predictors of the depressive disorders and of the depressive symptoms are: feminine gender, somatic diseases,

cognitive diseases, functional disease, the lack or loss of close social contacts and the historic of a depression.[14]

Katsumata and his collaborators (2005) examined the gender differences concerning the contribution of some risk factors to the depression's appearance at the third age population, using a sample of 665 elderly Japanese people. The evaluated risk factors were the demographic features, health status and disability, stress and the social networks. The depressive symptoms were evaluated using 30 items from the Geriatric Depression Scale (Brink et al. 1982; Yesavage et al. 1983; Niino et al. 1991). This study's results indicate the fact that the stress risk factor contributed the most to the explanation of the depressive symptoms variance at men and the health status and disability were the best in explaining the depressive symptoms variance at elderly women (see Appendix 2).[15]

Sicotte and his collaborators (2008) revealed that close social relationships are associated with a lower prevalence of depressive symptoms, independently of the stressors' presence. Those women who were or are married, live in extended families and develope close social relationships with relatives and children manifest a lower prevalence of depressive symptoms. Men manifested less depressive symptoms if they were married and didn't live alone.[16]

Special attention should also be given to the way in which elderly people's gender influences the management of depression. Some studies highlighted the fact that elderly women receive less medical intervention in the case of major disorders, as compared to men (Ethical and Legal Affairs Council, American Medical Association 1991, Ayanian & Epstein 1991; Ramani, Byrne-Logan, Freund, Ash, Yu & Moskowitz 2000; McMahon, Wolfe, Huang, Tedeschi, Manning & Edlund 1999).[17]

Frayne and his collaborators (2004) examined the way in which the gender of the elderly population influences the the management of depression performed by the doctors who are taking care of them. The results of the study they have made with the help of a *stratified random sample of* 243 doctors revealed the fact that the patient's gender does not influence the recommendations for the management of depression made by the doctors both for the young elderly people (ages 67–79) and for the old elderly people (aged over 79).[18]

Gender differences in the anxiety of older people

Fuentes and Cox (2000) examined the gender differences regarding anxiety within a sample of 132 elderly participants, 39 women and 45 men. Women obtained a higher score on anxiety as a feature as compared to men (see Appendix 3). Using a sample of 636 elderly participants aged 56 to 103, Reybolds and his collaborators (2003) identified significant gender differences under the aspect of manifest, chronic anxiety.[19]

Gender differences in the older people's posttraumatic stress dynamic

Numerous epidemiological studies revealed that the posttraumatic stress (PTSD) tends to become more prevalent among women as compared to men (Breslau & Davis, 1992; Kessler, Sonnega, Bromet, Hughes & Nelson 1995). Other studies focused on identifying the causes that determine a different experiencing of this disorder by women and men. The incriminated causes were:

- women tend to experience more traumatic events
- women tend to experience different types of traumatic events (more severe or pathogen events, perhaps)

The studies that have been made starting from these hypotheses did not always provide empirical support for the existence of gender differences in experiencing posttraumatic stress.[20] On the contrary, other studies highlighted the fact that men tend to experience more traumatic events as compared to women.[21] The gender studies' inconclusive results can be also attributed to some methodological problems, such as:

- the use of convenience samples
- the use of different assessment tools for posttraumatic stress (semi-structured interviews, questionnaires, for example)

Analyzing numerous articles that have been published over the course of 25 years, Tolin and Foa achieved an ample quantitive review of these, trying to provide some conclusive results concerning gender differences related to genus and posttraumatic stress disorder. The meta-analyses concerning the gender specific risk of experiencing potentially traumatic events and the posttraumatic stress disorder indicated that the women participants manifest a higher probability to match the DSM criteria for posttraumatic disorder as compared to male participants, even though the former experience less traumatic events. The two authors outlined that the gender explains just partially the differences between the two sexes in the risk for experiencing the traumatic events and the generated stress.[22]

Gender differences in older people's alcohol consuming

The excessive alcohol consumption contributes to increasing the risk for the type II diabetes (Wannamethee, Shaper, Perry & Alberti 2002), coronary diseases, cardiac arrhythmias and the risk of other diseases' appearance, too(Bartholow, Sher & Krull 2003).

Schonfeld and Dupree (1994) evidenced that about 60 % of the USA's 35 millions elderly people consume alcohol at least occasionally. Numerous studies evidenced the apparition of abusive alcohol consumption in the late adult age-class. Most of the researchers estimate that 10 % of the elderly people have had episodes of abusive alcohol consumption (Mirand & Welte 1996; Hays, Greendale, Damesyn & Reuben 1999). The abusive alcohol consumption within the elderly population could be dangerous due to the physical changes that concern the way in which alcohol is distributed and processed. The risk of adverse interactions presented by the medication-alcohol interactions increases due to the increased number of medication that elderly people take. The alcohol could cause additional problems such as falls, accidents, too.[23]

Wiscott, Kopera–Frye and Begovic (2002) evaluated the differences between alcohol consuming young–elderly people and old–elderly people. The results revealed that the old–elderly people are 15.7 times less predisposed to abusive alcohol consumption as

compared to the young-elderly people. Elderly women were 19.7 times less predisposed to abusive alcohol consumption, in general. Due to the differences concerning the composition of the body and metabolism of the alcohol, elderly women who abusively consume alcohol have an increased risk of confronting various negative aspects such as depression.[24]

Gender differences in the third age people's suicide

The risk factors that contribute to the elderly people suicide include the aging process, male gender, physical diseases, social isolation (Parker, Cantrell & Demi 1997), widower status and psychiatric disorder (Barraclough 1971; Lindesay 1991; Cattell & Jolley 1995; Baldwin 1997; Harwood & Jacoby 2000; cited. Salib & Green 2003), substances abuse, especially alcohol (Bird & Hutchinson 2003). From these factors, the age and the gender are the most associated to suicide. Generally, men appeal more often to suicide compared to women and elderly people have an increased suicidal rate compared to younger people.[25]

The studies confirmed gender differences concerning the suicidal behavior, elderly men having an increased suicidal rate compared to elderly women (Breed and Huffine 1972; Cattell 1988; Conwell et al. 1991; Cattell and Jolly 1995; Quan 1999; Harwood & Jacoby 2000). In male gender people' case, the suicidal risk increases especially after their wives or life partners' death. (Bock and Webber 1972; Cattell and Jolley 1995; Li 1995; Harwood and Jacob 2000), social isolation being a risk factor (Bock and Webber 1972). Conwell and Duberstein (2001) outlined that another elderly men group presenting an increased suicidal level is of the ones who don't have active contacts with the staff providing healthcare services.[26]

Salib and Green (2003) came with a review that examines third age people's gender differences concerning specific social aspects of the suicidal act and contacting the care services before suicide. Data revealed that male gender people had less knowledge concerning psychiatric services and they reported less suicidal attempts compared to female gender people. There were no differences between men and women on physical and psychiatric morbidity, the frequency of contacts with the generalist doctor, isolation and lonely living.

Parker, Cantrell and Demi (1997) examined the attitude of the elderly people towards suicide, being especially interested in gender and race differences concerning this subject. The participants manifested a moderate level of empathy for the suicidal behavior and a low level of agreement for the suicidal actions. There were no gender or race differences concerning the empathy for the suicide people or for the suicidal acts. There were no identifications of significant interaction effects between race and gender on attitudes about suicide.[27]

Gender differences in taking decision related to health

The efficiency of deciding process declines once with the aging process. Usually, third age people don't try to find out too many information about decisional alternatives and tend to rely on what they already know. This domain performances become weaker and weaker, compared to the young people ones, in those situation when elderly people are requested to be creative or inventive in their decisions, in lesser known areas for them.[28] Due to some problems like the poor medical practice and the lack of emphasis the importance of the patient's autonomy, we are witnessing a dramatic change of how treatment decisions are taking place in current medical contexts (Pierce 1996). Currently, medical treatment is more patient-oriented and the patients are more involved in the selection of treatment, especially in areas where there are several treatment options such as breast or prostate cancer (Davison & Degner 1997).[29]

Meyer, Talbot and Ranalli (2007) conducted two studies that examined if elderly people take faster decisions in comparison with young people about treatments for breast and prostate cancer. The results showed that the elderly take immediate decisions compared to young people. This research is important not only because it demonstrates the effects of age regardless of domain consistency, gender, ethnic group, education, but also because it investigates a model that tries to explain the effects of age on decision making. Data

indicate that when making decisions about medical treatments that they should follow, elderly people rely on their treatment knowledge, interest and involvement and cognitive resources. These reasons relate to different ways of processing information about treatment and preferences for immediate or delayed decisions. People who had a rich store of knowledge about immediate treatment have taken immediate decisions. Instead, people who possessed more cognitive resources and showed a greater interest in the types of treatment took late decisions. In the presented study no gender differences were found among elderly people in terms of speed of decisions about medical treatments they could opt for.[30]

Gender differences in the medicines costs

The consequences of diseases of third age people are the emergence of additional medicines costs and longer or shorter hospitalization, food deprivation, reduced mobility and in more severe cases, even the loss of autonomy in some degree, problems exacerbated by the lack or reduction of medicines' accessibility and healthcare assistance. Money for medicines is a financial burden for the elderly people. Some researches have shown that women tend to spend much more money for medicines compared with men (Blustein 2000; Gibson & Foley 2000; Mojtabai & Olfson 2003). This can be explained by several factors, including the gender differences on use, receipts coverage and financial income.

Elderly women require more often receipts prescription (Mojtabai & Olfson 2003; Moon & Herd 2002; Poisal & Murray 2001). Many women do not have financial coverage for receipts, having a relatively low income (Sambamoorthi, Shea & Crystal 2003).

Gender differences in the informational functioning of the elderly people

In terms of speed and efficiency of information processing, they decrease with age and depend on the processing level and task's

particularities. The possible explanations for the decreasing speed of informational processing are represented by the fact that at every level of informational processing more information is lost compared to young people's situation.[31]

Many researchers have shown that this cognitive decline is not uniform, since the changing patterns present a great intra– and inter–variability.[32]

Gender differences in the attentive functioning

The attentive deficit and the mental slowing have a major role in the age related decline of several cognitive abilities (Albert 1988; Craick & Byrd 1982) and they have been associated with Alzheimer's dementia, even in its average forms (Nestor, Parasuraman, Haxby & Grady 1991). Studies in this area highlighted a decrease in efficiency of voluntary attention, but not for the involuntary one, too.[33]

In the third age–class, a decline of attention's focusing capacity is observed (Filley & Cullum 1994).

Although some studies have found that normal aging does not cause changes in attention, Mazaus and his collaborators (1995) found out that third age people showed reduced attentive skills and a lower speed of execution once with aging. Female gender and low education level were related with a weaker functioning of the attentive processes and operating performance.[34]

Gender differences in the loneliness and isolation of elderly people

The third age period is often seen as a time of loneliness.[35] The loneliness was defined as the subjective complaint against the interpersonal relations that occurred from changing the current social relationship or from changing needs and desires for relationships (Peplau & Perlman 1982). The loneliness occurs when relationships do not satisfy social needs, when they fail to fulfill personal desires or when social rewards lower.[36]

The researches have shown that loneliness is more frequent as people get closer and closer to the moment of death (Penninx et al. 1997).[37] The loneliness is closely linked with isolation, low education level, low income, death of somebody significant and unemployment (Fischer & Philips 1982), celibacy (Weiss 1975, 1976). The personality's variables associated with loneliness include: low self-esteem, shyness, feelings of alienation, locus of external control and the conviction that the world is not a rightful place (Jones, Freeman & Goswick, 1981), inhibited sociability (Horowitz & French 1979), boredom, anxiety and unhappiness (Perlman, Gerson & Spinner 1978), suicide (Jacob 1971; Wenz 1977), physical illness (Lynch 1976), depression (Bragg 1979; Schultz & Moore 1984), low assuming of the social risk and low motivation affiliation (Russel, Peplau & Cutrona 1980; Schultz & Moore 1984) and self–criticism (Loucks 1980). The studies concerning the interpersonal dimensions of loneliness indicated that single people evaluated themselves and evaluated the others negatively and expect others to negatively evaluate them, too (Jones et al. 1981). Alone people tend to evaluate themselves as having a high self–awareness, as being unfriendly, unaccepted by the others and unattractive for the opposite sex (Jones et al. 1981), they make internal negative attributions, particularly in interpersonal situations (Anderson 1983; Anderson, Horowitz & French 1983).[38]

Wenger and Burholt (2004) found that isolation and loneliness are associated with a poor physical health, depressions and diseases that are devastating for the elderly people (Rokach, Matalon, Rokach & Safarov 2007). In general, the loneliness is related to isolation, negative disposition, inadequate assignments and deficient social skills. However, these relationships are moderated by age and gender (Schmitt & Kurdek 1985). The elderly people often face a variety of eating disorders (Roy, 1986), friends or life partner's death, (Rabasca, 1999) and various degrees of social isolation (Delisle 1988). These circumstances, these life events affect the way elderly people live their life, they evaluate and confront the demands of life.[39]

Rokach, Matalon, Rokach and Safarova (2007) conducted a research that explored the qualitative aspects of loneliness of the third age people. The data were obtained from 89 men and 239 women, participants from both categories having the age between 61 and 94 years. The five qualitative aspects of the evaluated loneliness in this study were: emotional distress, inadequence and social alienation, growth and breakthrough, social isolation and self-alienation. The results confirmed the hypothesis that elderly women live the loneliness differently than men. The female people' scores were significantly higher in the scale of growth and breakthrough. This indicates that women are more likely to perceive the positive aspects of loneliness. For the other aspects of loneliness no gender differences have been identified. The comparisons performed in order to determine whether marital status affects living the loneliness, indicated that married elderly men obtained lower scores on interpersonal isolation scale compared with unmarried elderly men.[40]

Schmitt and Kurdek (1985) examined the age and gender differences in terms of personality correlated with loneliness in different social relationships: familial, friendship, romantic/sexual, and in larger groups. Compared with young women, the third age people showed a higher level of satisfaction for their relationships with family members and those belonging to the larger groups they are part of. Instead, the elderly people said they were less satisfied with their relations of friendship.[41]

NOTES

[1] Maria E. Sorescu, *Third age people social assistance*. Craiova: Craiova's University Publishing House, 2005.

[2] A. Rokach & F. Neto, (2005). "Age, culture and the antecedents of loneliness," *Social Behavior and Personality* 33/5 (2005): 477–494.

[3] J. Friedman, J. Knodel, B. T. Cuong, & T. S. Anh, "Gender dimensions of support for elderly in Vietnam," *Research on Aging* 25 (2003): 587–629.

[4] N. L. Chappell, "Health and helping networks among the elderly. Gender differences," *Journal of Aging and Health* 1 (1989): 102–120.

[5] A. Muntean, *The Psychology of human development*, Iaşi: Polirom Publishing House, 2006.

[6] J. Schnittker, "Chronic illness and depressive symptoms in late life," *Social Science & Medicine* 60 (2005): 13–23.

7 S. T. Charles, C. A. Reynolds, & M. Gatz, "Age–related differences and change in positive and negative affect over 23 years," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 80 (2001): 136–151.

8 H. T. Nguyen, A. B. Zonderman, "Relationship between age and aspects of depression: Consistency and reliability across two longitudinal studies," *Psychology and Aging* 21.1 (2006): 119–126.

9 K. Katsumata, A. Arai, M. Tomimori, K. Denda, H. Tamashiro, "Gender differences in the contribution of risk factors to depressive symptoms among the elderly people dwelling in a community, Japan," *International Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry* 20 (2005): 1084–1089.

10 10 H. T. Nguyen, A. B. Zonderman, "Relationship between age and aspects of depression: Consistency and reliability across two longitudinal studies," *Psychology and Aging* 21.1 (2006): 119–126.

11 M. Kockler, R. Heun, "Gender differences of depressive symptoms in depressed and non–depressed elderly people," *International Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry* 17 (2002): 65–72.

12 M. Kockler, R. Heun, "Gender differences of depressive symptoms in depressed and non–depressed elderly people," *International Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry* 17 (2002): 65–72.

13 K. Katsumata, A. Arai, M. Tomimori, K. Denda, H. Tamashiro, "Gender differences in the contribution of risk factors to depressive symptoms among the elderly people dwelling in a community, Japan," *International Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry*, 20 (2005): 1084–1089.

14 J. K. Djernes, "Prevalence and predictors of depression in populations of elderly: a review," *Acta Psychiatr. Scand.* 113 (2006): 372–387.

15 K. Katsumata, A. Arai, M. Tomimori, K. Denda, H. Tamashiro, "Gender differences in the contribution of risk factors to depressive symptoms among the elderly people dwelling in a acommunity, Japan," *International Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry*, 20 (2005): 1084–1089.

16 M. Sicotte, B. E. Alvarado, E.–M. León, M.–V. Zunzunegui, "Social networks and depressive symptoms among elderly women and men in Havana, Cuba," *Aging & Mental Health*, 12.2 (2008): 193–201.

17 S. M. Frayne, K. M. Skinner, H. Lin, A. S. Ash, K. M. Freund, "Effects of patient gender on late–life depression management," *Journal of Womens's Health*, 13.8 (2004): 919–925.

18 Idem, 62.

19 P.A Lowe, C. R. Reynolds, "Do relationships exist between age, gender, and education and self–reports of anxiety among older adults?" *Individual Differences Research* 3.4 (2005): 239–259.

20 R. M. Giaconia, H. Z. Reinherz, A. B. Silverman, B. Pakiz, A. K. Frost, E. Cohen, "Traumas and posttraumatic stress disorder in a community population of older adolescents," *Journal of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry* 34 (1995): 1369–1380.

21 N. Breslau, R. C. Kessler, H. D. Chilcoat, L. R. Schultz, G. C. Davis, P. Andreski, "Trauma and posttraumatic stress disorder in the community: The 1996 Detroit Area Survey of Trauma," *Archives of General Psychiatry*, 55 (1998): 626–632.

22 D. F. Tolin, E. B. Foa, "Sex differences in trauma and posttraumatic stress disorder: A quantitative review of 25 years of research," *Psychological Trauma, Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy* (2008): 37–85.

23 L. Schonfeld, L. W. Dupree, "Alcohol abuse among older adults," *Reviews in Clinical Gerontology* (1994): 217–225.

24 R. Wiscott, K. Kopera–Frye, A. Begovic, "Binge drinking in later life: Comparing young–old and old–old social drinkers," *Psychology of Addictive Behaviors* 16.3 (2002): 252–255.

25 C. Pritchard, L. Hansen, "Comparison of suicide in people aged 65–74 and 75+ by ender in England and Wales and the major Western countries 1979–1999," *International Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry* 20 (2005): 17–25.

26 E. Salib, L. Green, "Gender in elderly suicide: analysis of coroners inquests of 200 cases of elderly suicide in Cheshire 1989–2001," *International Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry* 18 (2003): 1082–1087.

27 L. D. Parker, C. Cantrell, A. S. Demi, "Older adults' attitudes toward suicide: Are There race and gender differences?" *Death Studies* 21 (1997): 289–298.

28 A. Muntean, *Psychology of Human Development*, Iaşi: Polirom Publising House, 2006.

29 B. J. F. Meyer, A. P. Talbot, C. Ranalli, "Why older adults make more immediate treatment decisions about cancer than younger adults," *Psychology and Aging* 22.3 (2007): 505–524.

30 B. J. F. Meyer, A. P. Talbot, C. Ranalli, "Why older adults make more immediate treatment decisions about cancer than younger adults," *Psychology and Aging* 22.3 (2007): 505–524.

31 A. Muntean, *Psychology of Human Development* (Iaşi: Polirom Publising House, 2006), 425.

32 32 P. B. Baltes, "Theoretical propositions of life–span developmental psychology: On the dynamics between growth and decline," *Developmental Psychology* 23.5 (1987): 611–626.

33 33 V. Bucur, A. Macivan, "Third age people problems," in G. Neamţu (ed.) *Social Assistance Treaty,* Iaşi: Polirom Publishing House, 2003.

34 J. M. Mazaus, J. F. Dartigues, L. Letenneur, D. Darriet, L. Wiart, M. Gagnon, D. Commenges, F. Boller, (1995). "Visuo–spatial attention and psychomotor performance in elderly commmunity residents: Effects of age, gender, and education," *Journal of Clinical and Experimental Neuropsychology* 17.1 (1995): 71–81.

35 M. Jylha, "Old age and loneliness: Cross–sectional and longitudinal analyses in the Tampere longitudinal study on aging," *Canadian Journal on Aging* 23.2 (2004): 157–168.

36 A. Rokach, F. Neto, "Age, culture, and the antecedents of loneliness," *Social Behavior and Personality* 33.5 (2005): 477–494.

37 A. Rokach, R. Matalon, B. Rokach, A. Safarov, "The effects of gender and marital status on loneliness of the aged," *Social Behavior and Personality* 35.2 (2007): 243–254.

38 A. Rokach, F. Neto, "Age, culture, and the antecedents of loneliness," *Social Behavior and Personality* 33.5 (2005): 477–494.

39 Idem, 105.

40 A. Rokach, R. Matalon, B. Rokach, A. Safarov, "The effects of gender and marital status on loneliness of the aged," *Social Behavior and Personality,* 35.2 (2007): 243–254.

41 J. P. Schmitt, L. A. Kurdek, "Age and gender differences in and personality correlates of loneliness in different relationships," *Journal of Personality Assessment* 49.5 (1985): 487–496.

Relative Type Extra–Ecclesiastic Activities and Their Contribution to the Consolidation of Relations between the Members of a Church

Remus Soare, DMin
Independent Scholar, Spain
soareremus@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT: This article is part of a chapter titled "Extra–ecclesiastical strategies based on friendship to improve consolidation," from a DMin. thesis titled, "Development and application of a friendship program for the consolidation of the members of the Madrid–Calatrava Adventist Church,"—an unpublished manuscript written in Spanish and defended at Andrews University, USA, in July 2016) under the original title, "Desarrollo y aplicación de un programa de amistad para la consolidación de los miembros de la Iglesia Adventista de Madrid–Calatrava." This article highlights the significant potential of four types of extra–ecclesiastical activities which help strengthening a church. Sports, trips, organized games, and birthday anniversaries were the core activities analyzed, which demonstrated a strong capacity to develop high level inter–personal relationships between the participants. Due to the unlimited structural legitimacy and addressability of these activities in relation to the human being, the author suggests that these activities can be incorporated as a common part of the life of any group which will help its cohesiveness and consolidation.
KEY WORDS: consolidation, games, play, trips, sports, birthday anniversary, strategies, activities, church

A church needs activities through which to express the closeness between its members. They lead to progress in relational ambitus and consolidation. Churches generally have internal

structures and strategies that develop members' assertiveness about the congregational environment and the feeling of belonging. This article proposes four types of extra–ecclesiastical activities: play, sports, trips and birthdays, through which a church can advance towards consolidation. Although the article's conclusions are based on the results of implementing these activities within a church program, they do not have transferability limits. The four activities are instruments of general interest that apply to the consolidation of any group of people, the faculties of playing, traveling, practicing sport and celebrating being essential parts of all individuals, not of the particular contexts.

In pastoral ministry, ecclesiastical and evangelism activity must undoubtedly be accompanied by a pastoral consolidation of members. Consolidation is not only aimed at preserving the results, but edifying the believers within the congregation. Trying to solve this problem only in the ecclesiastic environment proves to be insufficient. To fulfill the desideratum of church consolidation, pastors generally use classical methods: visits, telephone, and deaconry. This type of ministry has the disadvantage that it limits the pastor to the faces that the person prefers to expose him to, without getting to know it in depth. Today, people have high expectations, a dynamic spirit, and are particularly involved in active projects with unpredictable ends. For this reason, pastoral attention must be much more diversified and effective. There are alternative activities that consist in discovering and potentiating the gifts of others. A trip with a group of young people, over four days, offers huge opportunities for knowledge. Relationships that develop on that occasion may be more intense than those generated within two years of activity inside the church

The practice of recreational activities is not the synonym of entertainment. Recreation does not mean experimenting with innocent pleasures in your spare time, feelings of cheap holiness or convenience on devotional tones. True recreation prepares the person's soul to re-create; it includes the body and the spirit.

Ketchell (2005), quoting Moore, argues that in the United States, religious camps have reached an institutional status, because they successfully satisfy two relevant needs: godliness and play.

These two aspects are legitimate in the structure of the human being as fundamental needs. In order to strengthen the church, a pastor must find possibilities to agglutinate them in the activities he proposes.

Here are four types of extra–ecclesiastical activities and the role they play in strengthening a church: games, sports, excursions, and birthdays.

Games

M. J. Hess (2012) highlights the clear link between play and church building. The author cites Rendel's opinion that "some churches die because of terminal seriousness," (Hess 2012, 1) Hess himself sees the churches walking in the "valley of the shadow of death" because "the idea of holiness was often associated with an implacable and sober God." As a solution, Hess considers that, on this subject, there is a need for a paradigm shift in the church.

Joviality is an ingredient that can be applied in all areas of pastoral ministry, including leadership, conflict management, evangelism, committee meetings, or worship. Its potential is limited only by the limits of personal imagination.

Showing the role of joviality does not mean presenting a seminar about humor into the church. The game is not a specific singular activity, an episode or a strategy. It is rather a mix of happy experiences, a road that leads the church to consolidation. A jovial recreation has present and future benefits, maintaining the group united.

Moltmann (1972) considers that North American Protestant churches pay a great tribute to puritan ethics on work. This has generated a false notion of the playing spirit, considering it a waste of time or madness. Instead, the work had come to be considered almost a sacred ritual.

The theme of the game has been studied by philosophers, scholars and used and evaluated by educators or therapists over the centuries. It has been and continues to be an important area of concern and research. Huizinga (2015) wrote at the beginning of

the 1940s that the human being is not defined only as Homo sapiens but also as Homo ludens. Although he wrote in a historical period that wasn't very generous with the playful spirit (around the Second World War), this author sees the human being as a player. For this historian of philosophy, play is an essential part of every person, regardless of the degree of acceptance of this aspect from the person.

Koppel (2008) invites religious leaders to discover the vitality of faith in live, creative and playful experiences. He considers the game a materialized theology, the key element of pastoral ministry. In his view, the field of play is a suitable metaphor for ministry. As a teacher, he developed a broad theology around this subject.

Hess explores the subject in greater depth and claims that the church must assume a theology of the game. In his thesis (Hess 2012, 57) Hess presents Rahner's theological vision (Rahner 1967) built on Plato's concept: "To play is to return to God." The author adds that the playing time on this earth is the general rehearsal for heavenly dance that will involve the freedom and joy of the heart. For Plato, creating the world was God's last playtime. For Rahner (1967), eternity in the heavens will be the last recreation room. If God is a person who is playing and we are created in His image, it is also inferred that we are players.

On a theological foundation like this, Azevedo (2010) has developed a project to consolidate the church committee. As a conclusion, he noticed that games reduce stress and anxiety, cause people to relate to a much closer relationship and feel more comfortable with each other. People who play together have more easily accepted the different opinions of others.

In spite of the above, constituting a church environment in which people can play and pray together is a challenging objective. There are mentalities for which, what is funny, amusing cannot be holy. It is inconceivable that a holy thing can generate joy and laughter.

Koppel considered that "playing is not easy for adults" (Koppel 2008, 5). The game invitation must receive an acceptance response from different people. But the situation is not easy. Generally, adults like to have control. A game has its rules, its unknowns and attracts a certain degree of risk. Sometimes it puts participants in situations where they feel incompetent or ridiculous. That is why it is quite difficult for adults to play.

Games have different purposes. Some of them consist of precise exercises that stimulate a greater openness of people in their relationship with others to break down communication barriers. Other games seek to awaken people's sense of solidarity. Others aim for a more effective collaboration that removes indifference or the desire for domination on the part of some. There are also games that lead participants to personal introspection to discover their own abilities, inclinations or limits. At each play, participants can be invited to share ideas, tastes and passions, and join in prayer groups or initiatives.

Playing is not something people simply want, it's something they have to decide. In order to be able to decide to play, a more prominent identification is needed with the happy side of life. In this way, the game can become part of our being.

The Trips

The human being sometimes needs to escape from everyday routine to rest and restore its abilities. This is especially true when the existential context is a modern one, with an excess of urban and technological influences. An idyllic journey facilitates spiritual and relational growth.

Ketchell (2005), in the preface to his doctoral thesis, presents the conclusions of three authors (Abbas, Grafanaki and Karlis) who consider that there is a close connection between excursions and communion with God and others. These authors indicate three transcendent effects that a trip can have. The first is communion with God and the facilitation of spiritual growth. The second is to discover the meaning of life as an opportunity for self–discovery. The third is connecting with the group to get the sense of belonging in the context of this strongly fragmented social life.

Trips usually attract people who enjoy traveling and who are characterized by a recreational ethos. In order to involve less passionate travelers or less economic possibilities and / or

reluctant to long distance travel, different types of excursions can be envisaged: weekend excursions for groups of up to 40 people or one–day others for various groups or for the whole church.

Well-organized, combining planned and improvised activities, trips can increase the relational climate among the participants and can contribute to the development of their friendship.

The Sport

We live in a culture saturated with sports. It has been converted into an universal language and church members are also very connected to it. There are churches that organize sportive activities as a strategy to make themselves known to others.

Rodger (1993) considers that there is a rather strong theological foundation on which to base a department of sports in the church. Wyman (2010) is of the opinion that among the many qualities God possesses, a few belong to the sporting environment: redeeming, relational, creative, liberating and gracious.

Although he particularly studied sport in relation to church growth, Wyman (2010) offers three observations on the role of sport in human relations. The first states that sport builds new relational bridges between the participants. The second looks at sport as a tool for restoring old, damaged relationships. The third argues that sport strengthens existing relationships between people.

The idea of associating sport with the Christian message is not new. On some occasions, the apostle Paul uses images of athletics to communicate the message more clearly to his audience (Galatians 5: 7; 1 Corinthians 9: 24–27; 2 Timothy 4: 7–8). This does not mean that Biblical thinking promotes competitive sport; Paul also uses war images, for example, without making an apology for the war. The spirit of competition is not suited to Christian conduct (see Phil 2: 3). This must not be overlooked when we want to organize sporting activities in the church.

Sports competitions, such as football games, can be designed in a way that is enjoyable. A census and some friendly and conciliatory sanctions change the dynamics of confrontation in a

pleasant environment. Irregular actions can be penalized with cards containing pleasant tasks that the litigants need to do during the following week (e.g. to buy flower bouquets for the instructresses from the church's children school, to offer deaconesses books or other gifts, to buy gifts for children ...)

Within these activities, the composition of the groups must be determined on the spot and must be constantly changed to give each member the opportunity to relate to as many people as possible and to ensure that activities do not degenerate into prolonged competition between different groups.

Anniversary of birthdays

People, by their structure, are created to share with other people their stories, dreams, or anniversaries. Cox (1969) describes the human being as Homo festivus. A desirable and pleasant activity for people is to meet for the celebration of the birthday. The anniversary of the birthday surpasses in all emotional intensity all other common holidays. There is no more important date for a person, no stronger memory, such as the birthday. In the questionnaire Meaning of the Community, published in the book "Measure of the Religiosity" by Hill and Hood (1999, p. 483), under the item "Members consider themselves to be part of the same family" its mentioned between brackets: '(e.g. visits to sick people, anniversaries of birthdays, etc.)'. Setting the birthday on the same level as visiting the sick is to give it a great spiritual value.

On the occasion of a birthday anniversary, people relate physically, mentally and spiritually in a positive way. These meetings offer moments of joy that far outweigh those inserted into the daily routine. There is an inborn tendency of the human being to regain the joy of living. For the church, it is essential to promote these types of meetings if it wants to strengthen the ties between its members. Remembering the other and congratulating him, helps you survive both as a person and as a religious or cultural entity.

Conclusion

In the pastoral process, churches must seek to include different strategies, structures and extra–church activities to develop interpersonal relationships. The failure to adequately integrate people into community life is not always due to personal problems of relationship but because they do not find the favorable social climate. The opportunity to open up and express themselves in a recreational, playful environment can be a valuable resource for promoting their integration. When consolidation occupies a central place among church concerns, as a result, members strengthen their sense of belonging to it, are more creative in fulfilling their tasks, more readily accept differences and disagreements among themselves, improve their interpersonal relationships and their relationship with God.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Azevedo, D. H. (2010). *Teaching a church board how to play: How learning to play can strengthen a church board* (Order No. 3410236). ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (366588589). http://search.proquest.com/docview/366588589?accountid=8313

Cox, H. (1969). *The feast of fools: A theological essay on festivity and fantasy*. Nueva York: Harper & Row.

Hess, M. J. (2012). *Holy fun: A path to church consolidation* (Order No. 3508411). ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (1019057307). http://search.proquest.com/docview/1019057307?accountid=8313

Huizinga, J. (2015). *Homo ludens*. Madrid: Alianza Editorial.

Ketchell, A. K. (2004). *Holy hills: Religion and recreation in Branson, Missouri.* (Order No. 3164443). ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (305171875). Recuperado de http://search.proquest.com/docview/305171875?accountid=8313

Koppel, M. S. (2008). *Open hearted ministry: Play as key to pastoral leadership*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press.

Moltmann, J. (1972). *The theology of play*. Nueva York: Harper and Row.

Rahner, H. (1967). *Man at play*. Nueva York: Herder and Herder.

Rodger, O. (1993). *A theology of sports ministry.* Campbell, CA: Church Sports International.

Wyman, C. (2010). *The contribution of sports ministry to growth in church membership* (Order No. 3407458). Available on ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (305231979). Recuperado de http://search.proquest.com/docview/305231979?accountid=8313

Redefining the Idea of Society by its Holistic Development

Iacob Coman, PhD
"Dimitrie Cantemir" University, Târgu Mureş, Romania
iacob_coman@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT: The concern about the uniformity of the population of the earth, in terms of human and fundamental rights, has become a constant concern over the past decades for the majority of politicians, particularly those from the developed countries. This reality, also known as globalization, has benefited from both sympathy and appeals. This phenomenon was taken over by Literature, Philosophy, Sociology, Theology, etc., and each field has specifically proposed different aspects of what would happen in the future. Therefore, this paper attempts to capture the phenomenon of globalization from the point of view of the holistic development of the society. The approach is critical to provoke thinking on this issue and less concluding with normative consequences. What this study adds to is that it is surprising that the approach to holistically develop the society is actually one that changes or intends to replace it. The argumentation system for this thesis is based on the evolution of some systems and the way they are used. We are talking about the theological, financial, political, psychological and social assistance system. We propose this perspective as a dialogue and as a way of directing scientific thinking to areas, considered, solved.

KEY WORDS: society, church, holistic development, virtualization, political assistance, psychological assistance, theological assistance, financial assistance, mass–media assistance, social assistance

Introduction

The complex and holistic development of our century society must not escape the exigencies and rigor of independent judgments. Personal demand means not to say what *we* say and not to say what *everyone else* is saying, but here the researcher says what *he* wants. The multiplication of such voices can help and correct the global enthusiasm, that is heading towards "something" about which, punctually, is very little spoken. The tendency of contemporary society is not the development, but its definition and self–definition. Contemporary society does not develop, it is replaced!

In the present research, we try to provide a perspective subordinated to the honesty of what is the holistic development of the society and what would, in fact, imply such a development. The history of this century is not about the development of the society, but about its change. "Because the Creator of all made the conjugal community the beginning and foundation of human society," the family has become "the basic and vital cell of society."[1] Although the declaration "the family is the basic and vital cell of society" has remained, its content is long overdue. Redefining intra–family and inter–family relationships, redefining the notion of father, mother, boy, girl, etc. makes this statement even ridiculous. The longevity of undivorced families is not just exotic but disturbing. We are in another century, we are other people or, at least, we want to be other people. Reviews like: "Keeping marriage together is the will of God. On the contrary, its dissolution from human causes constitutes a grave violation of His will, which often leads to personal or collective tragedy,"[2] no longer represent anything normative. In the most positive situation, it can be an evocation of a classic idealism or the point of view of some that hinders social progress.

Old existential situations have "emigrated" from person towards the *communeautaire person*, then towards the *state person*, the *economic person,* the *sociological person* and, finally, towards the *virtual person*. This more or less assisted and imposed migration has come to kill the person's personal being. We are talking today only about the personal nature of society in the trend.

Those who see the Earth as a whole give us very little real information about the changes we all share. The great international conferences of the world "should be defined as a kind of cultural councils, during which common truths should be formulated, that should be raised to norms for the existence of humanity."[3] The probability or the idea of *should*, existing in this statement have already turned into a reality. The *international* formulates common truths that *it* raises to norms for the existence of humanity. We talk about the well–being of the virtual society, while the real private or collective being retreats and is replaced. The well–being that compels us is replaced by the well–being that we create and adapt. "The well–being in the Judeo–Christian theistic ethics is not something that adapts itself to human nature, but that something to which the Creator obliges the human nature."[4] The society of our century proposes a relative *good* that does not compel anyone and which, under the dream of freedom, constrains us all to change us; soon we will not be *ourselves*, but we will be *others*.

The present study aims to review the problems mentioned through the perspective of the most important contemporary realities through which society develops its change. This change has redefined the past and used it as a pretext for the need to transform the contemporary society; transformation in which there is no option, only binding. Thus, we will address the holistic development of the society through the means by which it operates: virtue and virtualization of money, virtue and virtualization of social protection, virtue and virtualization of psychological assistance, virtue and virtualization of the church, virtue and virtualization of politics.

(A) Virtue and Virtualization of Money in the Holistic Development of the Society

In the postmodern society *to have* involves necessarily *to be* and *to be happy*. Nobody any longer doubts this change, made through the redefinition of *existential* common sense and replaced with *conventional* "common sense." In Antiquity *to be* and *to be happy* meant to know how to speak. The expressed rhetoric, eloquence and

the art of grammar ensured the *to be* and *to be happy*.[5] This reality has been metamorphosed, Camil Petrescu notes, reaching money, the only value that allows us to be and to be happy. Their distribution as needed in the global development seems to be a great achievement of humanism and the appreciation of all people, only to avoid knowing the meanings: financial values are not distributed to the needs of many, modest or poor people, but invoking their strict needs, the financial values are distributed according to the needs of those who are for good separated from reality, that is, the extremely rich. This allows a footballer to receive twenty million euros annually and a mother of seven to ten children to receive social support of several thousand euros per year.

The financial values are the virtue. Keeping closer to this virtue requires virtualization. The virtual currencies, the necessity of individual financial existence only through the bank, salary and shopping cards, etc. all imply and impose the virtualization of financial values. This reality, as if demanded by people and appropriated without any protest, clearly contributes to the holistic perspective of the new society. The antithesis remains the native perception of the situation. Sociologically it would be all about education, but it is not. At the level of the being it is the need for affections of the being; the being needs beings and less of anything else when it comes to living oneself. The infrastructure: the material needs, financial ones, etc. are just the means. "Although they are surrounded by hardships that resist educational work, much worse today, parents must form sons with confidence and courage for the core values of human life. Sons must grow up in a fairness to material goods by adopting a simple and austere lifestyle, being convinced that man has greater value through what he is than through what he has!"[6]

This statement by John Paul II radically undermines virtualization of money and virtue. He returns to the words of Jesus Christ: "*Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.*" (Matthew 6:19–21) This perspective is not just about salvation, but it captures

the human dimension from the perspective of its affections, the inner depths that lead it to life, to goodwill, to the collective joy, and to the futureistic projection of it and its descendants.

The virtue of money and virtualization implies two realities that disengage man from being free and transforms him into a modern slave. These two realities are: controlled money and love of money. As mentioned above, the state, the banks and some of the very wealthy people turned into a hysteria about controlling the way of each penny. This slowly mounts each living creature of this planet and configures it very strictly in terms of needs and aspirations, needs and aspirations that it will no longer be able to change. We are talking about a segregation of people based on money, a segregation first at the level of information, and then imposed. Although this phenomenon can be called development, yet it contains some things that show that it is a process of changing the society and redefining it. In such a case, people's hope is not to develop the society but to change it. Tomorrow we will exist like others, or we will not exist at all.

When it comes to love of money, the situation becomes more complex. Their virtualization is a result of the pathological love that the supervisors have over money. The holistic development of the society, which also takes into account this approach, does not mean that money, once virtualized, require virtualized security; a simple click, and ordinary people have no money left. In other words, the future society takes our safety from our hands and promises us a higher level of security in its hands. Isn't this the way to a violent modern slavery? There is a difference between wanting to be modest, resembling a life of simplicity as a virtue, and imposing a status that slowly removes you from the area of your humanity's taste in a slave robotic area. The Bible writes the following words: "*For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.*" (1 Timothy 6:10) Probably the holistic development of the society from the money perspective should be cosmetized, should open our perspective to a person's well–being, a person who has in his own hands the safety of today and with his own hands is

planning the safety of tomorrow, a peace that begins to disappear from the people.

Misinformation must be replaced with silence. We do not need to be informed, not even correctly, about our commitment, but we must give up this violent change of society. "The meeting of the dominant economic powers to regulate the economy became global, became the field of ideological battle of the post–communist era. While, on the one hand, technology and economy are understood as a vehicle of radical human freedom, their omnipresence with its inherent norms is now alarmingly signaled as a global dictatorship and fought with anarchic anger, in which freedom of destruction presents itself as an essential element of human freedom."[7] Money must come out of virtue and virtualization. The holistic development of the society must leave the money on the method level, the means by which every person ensures, according to what he/she is and hopes, that he/she will go well.

In conclusion, the development of the society remains a virtue, while its redefinition can crush consciousness and being. Material possessions remain as a gift from God through which we move life and joy a day further, but by changing this paradigm, the virtualized wealth of each of us becomes the sadness and the burden through which we want tomorrow to no longer exist.

(B) Virtue and Virtualization of Social Protection

Another means by which we witness the holistic development of the society or its replacement with another society is social protection or social assistance. Man is about to become the only creature that can not sustain itself. The food is provided by others, the clothes are offered by others, the house is made by others, the children are educated by others, etc. We have ourselves, with nothing, or sometimes not even that. Social surveys decide whether I, as husband, or maybe we, as parents, can support our children, if we, as children, can support our parents, and if they find the opposite, we are robotically separated; there is no feeling, no one has rights over his being or over those that come from him. This certainty

and assurance from the outside is welcome as long as is required by those concerned, but it is slavery when coming over the people who did not seek it. It is very important to decide whether this is a development or a change of the society. Only in this case we can be correct about the projection of the future of the society and about its development or change.

Developing plenarily a society means avoiding human humiliation and dismemberment. If this is ignored, we are talking about terror, we are talking about the extermination of metaphysical identity and the identity of love. We kneel the being in front "of the car"! The biblical side of social progress is entirely different. "The Church, faithful to the commandment of Christ, its founder, has always been present, through its works designed to give the man in need a material support that does not humiliate him and does not lead him to the state of the assistance, but help him get out of his precarious condition by promoting his personal dignity."[8] The holistic development of the society must not mean changing it but promoting it in the fundamental three–dimensionality of its core: person, love, people. "Our love either creates a personality, a hypostasis, more beautiful, more vital and more durable than you and me, or it will be just barren pleasure."[9] Social protection and social assistance are not supposed to offering the human being to institutions that have man and family at their own discretion, but serving man and family if they ask for it. We, the *old* people, are scared of protection, we are terrified at the thought that someone rules over our homes, our feelings, the educational relations stemming from the sangvinist affiliation and the affiliation on the path of love. "The right and duty of parental education are considered essential, being related to the transmission of human life; as original and primary, compared to the educative mission of others, and this is because of the relationship of love that exists between parents and sons; as being irreplaceable and inalienable, because they can not be entirely entrusted to others or usurped by others."[10] In other words, we can not protect ourselves, putting us in danger and we can not love ourselves, hating ourselves. The corporeal lineage and the parental love began to be replaced by civilian duty. This task is very closely monitored by "the protector"[11] with an iron whip. No, it is

not development but the accession to the elimination of the existing society and its replacement with another. "The Bible talked about human alienation. It described two other types of alienation, and even more radical than the economic and the political ones. One is the alienation from God, our Creator, and the other is our alienation from each other, from our fellows. Nothing is more dehumanizing than the breaking of fundamental human relationships. In fact, when this happens, we become strangers in a world where we should have felt at home, and we are strangers instead of being citizens."[12] The holistic development of society through these systems is well received and necessary in order to protect familiarity, family, decency and the ability to remain natively human.

The way we see and perceive social progress affects and deliberately changes the mentality of the new generations. They begin to have serious skirmishes about their attitude towards existence and life. These generations refuse the natural psychosomatic constitution in favor of some life's *impossibilities* called alternative forms. "A mentality against life was born (*antilife mentality*), as is evident from many of today's problems: let us think, for example, to a certain panic derived from ecology studies about the demographic future of mankind, which sometimes exaggerates the danger of demographic growth of humanity to the detriment of quality of life."[13] There is an exaggerated fear and "maturity" towards existential natural. We started to be afraid to be human, to be afraid to be men, to be afraid to be women, to be afraid to found families, and this reality allows the redefinition of man, woman, family and force, on behalf of *human rights*, that the anomalies are preferred, legalized and take the place of the natural accredited by time and God. Remaining in the original existential space and accredited by what we actually are is called *homo phobia*, and the one who gets such a nickname is marginalized, booed, and excluded.

The development of the society on social protection, mistakenly, disables man from responsibility and empowerment. Virtuality and virtualization of his protection and his well–being lead to pseudo–existence, pseudo–valorisation and pseudo–love. We can not currently estimate the good or bad of this change, but we feel it does not respond and does not fit the natural. It does not matter

if those who think like this are majority or minority, it matters that we are. We claim it to be known!

Consequently, social protection, by its very definition, must preserve our native existence. Its virtue is to keep old walls around the human community and in no case to destroy them through a post–modern *Trojan horse*. Rethinking this, the hope for the holistic development of the human community becomes real and responds to the aspirations that remain in us above the promises of Postmodernism.

(C) Virtue and Virtualization of Psychological Assistance

Another pillar of the development of the society, which recovers years of absence through an exponential multiplication, is the psychological assistance. The multiplication of the population, the problem of inter–human connections, the harmful bombardment of the movie houses, the chaos of the music being consumed, the fear of tomorrow's existence, etc. all these has brought many into a worrying mental state. The need for mental health, relational health and communeautaire health is acute. The holistic development of the contemporary world can not neglect this reality. For this reason, the psychological assistance offer has grown enormously and is considered indispensable. On the other hand, the psychological assistance, although it is a very subjective branch of science, sometimes even close to occultism (see hypnosis, thoughts reading, etc.) has come from inertia or intentionally, to have absolute authority, sometimes being irreversible.[14] Through this universalized branch, was forced the entrance into the family, a reality that changes the meaning: is not the family the one that gives birth to society, but this way, the society determines the family. Since the kindergarten, boys and girls have been assisted in developing in themselves the idea of not being what they are. Most parents do not know this phenomenon, nor do they estimate its effects. Psychological expertise can also decide whether a parent can still keep his children or not, or if a husband can stay with his wife or not. In other words, we have come to offer psychological assistance a segment that fundamentally

changes the order of creation, the order of existence of the human being, and it irreversibly changes it.

What is important to know and realise in this context is that no man can be absolved of moral obligations. Returning from various slippages is not done by gradually *deleting* the responsibility by a psychologist, but by constraint methods (reprehension, fines, imprisonment, etc.) or, at least it was like this so many decades ago. Only those hospitalized for aggravated dementia were exempt from this practice. The deviation from the norms of biblical ethics and accredited by the thousands of years of existence has always been reversible. The scientific segments that submit theses of another nature are not scientific, but intentional. "The Church does not dwell on proclaiming the moral norm that must lead the responsible transmission of life. The Church is not the author of this norm, nor is its judge. By listening to the truth, who is Christ, whose image is reflected in the nature and dignity of the human person, the Church interprets the moral norm and proposes it to all people of benevolence without hiding its radical requirements and the perfection of this law."[15] By universalizing an authority that arbitrarily declares us fit or inappropriate, which decides against our sex or opens the way of sexes that do not exist, against the psychosomatic constitution, not only rights are offered to those who want to live otherwise, rights that we recognize, but slowly and surely alienate the human community. "So all those in society dealing with school leadership should never forget that the parents have been designated by God Himself as the first and main educators of their children and that their right is absolutely inalienable."[16] From this area, the family area starts the development of the society. By exacerbating the so-called laws of the rights of man, woman and child, the innocent family, the home of the first bliss, the oasis of the first games and memories, have no right. Man became the most vulnerable and most unprotected in the place where he was once the safest.

We conclude from all this that the idea of social development should be subject to other criteria also. If the intent of the international community is to replace contemporary society, then everything is correctly done, but if the intention of the international

community is to develop the contemporary society, then certain issues need to be discussed again.

Ultimately, the virtue of psychological assistance must remain under the native authority of parental psychology, psychology that starts with the act of marriage, and complements itself by throbbing at the moment that the wife has become pregnant. And, with the birth, erupts natively and constituently the quality of psychologist of both mother and father. No one has the right or duty to modify this divine human climate and for no reason. "The original cell of human society was represented by the family... As a result of a complex historical development guided by Divine Providence, the complication of social relations led to the emergence of the state."[17] As a result, the plenary development of the society must come from the family, not from the state, through the psychological networks of constraint and determination of the human psyche. The state is us, the families! And we, the families, are never against ourselves. The society is not disturbed by those who create illusory or concrete forms of existence, the society is disturbed by the reason of their imposition. Normality is defined by normality through itself, not by opening perspectives under syntagms: redefinition of freedom, redefinition of family, redefinition of man, redefinition of woman, etc. Paul Evdokimov noted the following: "The fools, the maniacs exist, but how sad it is to impose their vision or to present it as belonging to all mankind! The patterns of psychopathology—important in their genre—must not exceed the limits of their own world."[18]

In conclusion, psychological assistance belongs first to the being we are born of, then to our being and optionally belongs to others. Disapproval of parents and being from their authoritative role of their own psychology and their own psychic by requiring the specialist, and then by imposing it, is a serious attack on the dignity of the human being and then on its freedom. Moving from the area of virtue into the area of virtualization of psychological assistance changes the society, does not develop it. Apparently it can be a matter of success. What we do not know is that man can not be changed with a man of another race or hybrid because there is no other race. This forces us to conclude that by what we do we take man out of his being.

(D) Virtue and Virtualization of the Church

One of the somewhat dilematic situations of our Europe lies in the fact that it offers a future for holistic development abdicating, in substance, the phrase "Christian Europe." It seems, every day, that the global Christian and European Christian population is less interested in its religious dimension, especially when it comes to "civilian life," ie the exacerbation of illicit pleasures, or new perspectives on LGBT rights. Without infringing in any way the right of everyone to choose to live as he/she wants, we ask ourselves questions about the meaning, sense and purpose of developing the society in this direction? In this equation is included the Church, an institution that in a certain way is composed of the same people. The Church, as virtue, is somehow left in our being, but as a rule is excluded. Its virtualization in the moral, behavioral, and aspirational space seems to remove it from our lives, or at least place it in a shadowy cone. The official areas of judgments and discussions do not include the church in any way, although a large number of officials belong to the church for their life as an annex. Social and individual splitting is so successful that the questioning of life in state or European institutions have, either in tone or subject, no connection with the quests, the quiet and the peace that the same people have on Sunday at church.

However, from the hierarchical areas of each Christian Church are imposed, at an informative level, quite antithetic attitudes to what is happening today in social development. This is not defining, but can not be ignored. In the context of our study, the church is very reserved, even antagonistic, with both the political element and the individuals that belong to it. Church hierarchy and militant members of Christianity see the need for the development of the society on grounds contrary to what happens in the society and in an opposite direction. In addition, the foundation of Christian teachings is frozen; in the doctrines and dogmas of the churches nothing changes.

Even if at the level of public statements we can observe some permissiveness, when it comes to formalized formulas of faith, nothing changes. "The Church strongly believes that human life, even weak and suffering, is always a wonderful gift from the God of goodness. Against the pessimism and selfishness that shadow the world, the Church is on the side of life, knowing to discover in every human life the splendor of that *yes* and *amen* that is Christ himself. Against the *no* invading and hurting the world, the Church responds with a strong *yes*, thus defending humanity and man from all those who shake and hurt life."[19] As incisive are men in their liberatinism, as docile and sensitive are in moments of spiritual research.

At the conceptual level, since the time of the Roman Empire, the spiritual dimension and the "civil" dimension were regarded as an indestructible unit. Moreover, the civil authority participates militantly in keeping the biblical Christian concept untouched. "The idea of a Christian and universal empire presupposed that the Emperor had obligations, both as a guarantor of faith and as a witness to God's mercy towards man... The king's vocation is to do good, and that is why he is called a *benefactor*, and when he does not succeed in doing the good, he forgets his imperial dignity."[20] What has given a new meaning to the holistic development of contemporary society, development which is substituted by the rigid idea of change, is that the Absolute Good has been replaced by the relative good, the negotiable good, the created good. Most political and social decisions are taken in relation to our good, not with the Good.

This reality produces and maintains a tension at social level, between the Church and the political social element and, at individual level, between the secular tendency and the religious dimension in man. This tension is not cultivated and interested, but it is an intrinsic tension, it is a constitutive tension from the eternal and original constitution of the human being. "Man can not exist without God, or apart from God. There is no one who can do it. Through his own life, man is rooted in Him Alive... Every beating of our heart is an act of faith."[21] The post–modern social–political will to move the rhythm and the pleasure of existence from the constitution of creation on the desired constitution is under implementation. For this reason, the age level for taking the child out of the family for social education has dropped drastically. From seven to ten years in the sixties of last century, to three years today. In this way the child can no longer take anything from the order of creation, but only from the implemented order. We become the witnesses and promoters of changing the idea

of man into something else. For this reason Paul II declared: "The Church is called to show again to all, with the strongest and most clear conviction, its willingness to promote human life in any way and to defend it against any against any wickedness addressed to its being, at any stage of development."[22] From a Christian point of view, a danger is estimated, from a secular point of view, a progress is estimated, and the finality in itself is reserved for the future.

Through virtualisation of the church, a return to the frustration of communism is expected, " when the Church was forced to restrict its activity within the places of worship"[23] and, with time, their elimination. We overlook the fact that this is impossible since the people of the church form the society, that is, they express the church continuously and universaly. This reality goes beyond the battlefield of ideas, ie religious ideas and secular ideas, and declares the area of struggle of existence, we exist or replace existence. The universality of the church found in all those who exist in the society is a matter that relates to the being of Christ and by His extension, to our being. "The Christological character of universality stems from the fact that the church is universal, not in its capacity as a community aiming at a certain moral perfection, but as a community that experiences and reveals the unity of all creation to such an extent that this unity is a reality in the person of Christ."[24] Dialectic is not of the ideas! We are not talking about evolutionary theory and creationist theory in a room of scientific communication, but we are talking about a social experiment, we create, as in a chemistry lab, physical reactions using people. Under these circumstances, it is possible to target our own existence and what we call development to become change or even destruction. "The Church is not from this world, just as its Lord Jesus is not from this world... Its goal is not only the salvation of men in this world, but the salvation and restoration of the world itself."[25]

In conclusion, from the perspective of church thinking that is not intrinsic the dogma, but intrinsic the being,[26] holistically, it does not mean what we *do*, but what we *should do*. In this context, the church institution is likely to succumb to the holistic that involves changing the being, but the being can not cave in because it is against its condition of existence; however, it can be destroyed. Is the orientation of contemporary holistic development an orientation of destruction?

The Church is worried not about the phenomenon, but about imposing it on the family's intimacy: at the relational, educational, sentimental level and in the framing of it in society. "The rights" have violently invaded the family and the house, so the family and the house are left with no right. This determines John Paul II to declare: "If schools teach ideologies contrary to Christian faith, the family, along with other families, and if possible with family associations, must by all means and wisely help the children not to ward off from the faith. In this case the family needs special help from the spiritual shepherds who must not forget that parents have the inviolable right to entrust their sons to the ecclesial community."[27]

(E) Virtue and Virtualization of Politics

In this historical social concern of holistic development of the society, an important and defining role has the political virtue. The ways of solving and the political proposals are so important and dictatorial, that they must be obeyed by justice, truth and life without the right to appeal. Even if they are innocent sacrifices, they must be brought.[28] People do not have access to this vision, and their manipulation is extremely easy, especially when the ordinary person can not aspire and create good forms, but he is the victim of the imposed good: to be able to live and have a vacation elsewhere than at home. The Church is moving hard enough to improve this situation. It "can not adopt a stable system of relations with the worldly power because the relations are always temporary."[29]

Another issue that arises is that the holistic development of the society, although it seems an aspiration to all people, is very partisan. There are more and more political parties that out of more or less known interests deny the dimension of holistic existence of the society in favor of their orientation, not even in favor of the interests of the people they represent. Through this reality the political perspective completely dissociates from the perspective of the human being and the church that is concerned with the whole. "The role of the Church is not to divide by different political options and ideologies, but to work to preserve the unity. Even the notion

of *party* shows that it is only a part of the whole and not the whole as such, while the role of the Church is concerned not only with the part but also with the whole."[30]

Under these conditions, politics as an option of society has turned into a dictatorial unilateralism of interests. Voting in recent decades in very small percentages shows that society no longer wants a political system or not of this kind. However, its dictatorial ferocity can not take into account either the change or the dissolution of politics. "The totalitarian state tends to absorb the nation, the society, the family, the religious communities and even the people.[31] We do not see this attitude as a way in which contemporary society can develop holistically, but as one in which society is bound to be different.

All this reality leads to a phenomenon that we will develop in the next chapter: the man of our society is no longer informed or disinformed, but he is instilled another way of thinking and perception with the help of foreign and destructive information to human nature. The existential instinct of being is guided to confusion. "*Homo consumans* calls on *homo sanitas*, *homo tehnicus*, *homo scientificus*, very little on *homo religiosus* and even less *homo christianus*."[32] Solutions are offered in health, technology, and science, while they are required in spirituality, in Jesus Christ. This more or less deliberate confusion relativises the joy of existence of the being and the ecstasy of prolonging itself in history and time through procreation. "Some wonder if it is good to live or it was better not to have been born; they wonder if it is allowed to bring others to life, since they can curse their own lives in a cruel world, whose cruelty can not yet be predicted."[33]

The holistic development of the society should have the effect of reducing this feeling, this psychosomatic cry, not its multiplication. The being, without knowing and consenting, is willing to sacrifice itself in favor of those who follow it, but this is not in sight either.

Virtue and virtualization of politics has come to violently submit life. Contrar sau complementar acestei laturi a ei, tot ea luptă pentru dezvoltarea holistică a societăţii şi, implicit, a vieţii. This dilemma, this Gordian node, if it is instrumental, has no more solving from the point of view of the decisions of the society. If it is not instrumental, then there is the possibility of intimation and

self-intimation. We do not lead into mistake, but we are mistaken, we do not replace but replace ourselves, we do not constrain but constrain ourselves, we do not destroy but we destroy ourselves. The saddest thing in this phenomenon is that it sent its roots into the family. The family has grown like a pot that slowly and surely is filled with the roots of a foreign plant, roots that slowly exhaust it and remove it. This phenomenon jeopardizes both the family life and the life of the foreign plant.

The political virtue and its virtualization will end up in self-elimination; we will not be what we have been and we are what we will never be. "The society and especially the state must recognize that the family is *a society that enjoys its own and primordial right* and, therefore, in their relations with the family, are seriously bound to maintain the principle of subsidiarity. Under the force of this principle, the state can not and must not take from the families the duties that families can freely exercise alone or associated, but they must favor them positively and maximize the responsible initiative of families."[34] The family should not be choked by the roots of politics, but must be the root of politics. This change of optics tolerates alternatives but does not allow removal.

Consequently, the holistic development of the society must not be anchored in the political element, but the bulb of human existence, namely the family, must be found in the political element in its nativity, and this presence accentuates the aspirations for development that give us the complement of life with even more happiness. Or, such a phenomenon can not be separated from the christic dimension of being.

(F) Virtue and Virtualization of Mass–Media

The exacerbation of the so-called "right to information" has created in postmodern society the most ridiculous situation in the modern history of mankind. The words of a dignitary or of an organic law, the claim of a scientist in his branch or a gunman about his weapons can not be the object of reality in the front of the anger of press trusts or press rubbish that we consume on a daily basis. The idea of press

freedom that is multiplied by many acolytes and seekers of fame and bread can no longer be warned about truth, fairness, respect, dignity, etc. by any other authority on earth. The reaction of the population and the politics that one might forbid the press from lying or mislead or defame and discredit different personalities has become terrifying.

However, an important factor in the holistic development of the society is the media that has an almost decisive contribution. It instrumentalizes the minds and reactions of the individual and society, it imposes reactions from the political or the religious and it also processes them so that when they come to us they express what the press wishes. What the contemporaneous society has forgotten is that *not knowing* declares a superior existence with relation to *knowing wrong*—especially when this wrong is imposed as correct. "The vision of the world of a blind is poorer but not altered."[35] However, it is preferable to give up intelligence, thinking and self–esteem in favor of any reality that is in trend. Man distanced from himself and became arrogant with himself. Man does not want to know but wants to be told, the man does not want to be told something, but he wants to be told, man does not want to react, but wants to hear reactions, man created a community that forced him to give up the luxury of thinking. The media make the most of this post–modern "convenience" and its success is undeniable.

These forms of information anesthetize the opinion of contemporary society and raise within it a different society. It is a society that has no inherited landmarks, but its landmarks are ahead. They wait for "parents," "grandparents" and "great–grandparents" to be born. In other words, for those born today parents are going to be born in the future. Their real parents are just a way and a method for this generation to come into the world, but, authority over this generation, its education is at the fingertips of the "true" parents who belong to the future. The delight in such a calendar of existence has become so popular and enforced that it is very complicated to be questioned and impossible to change. How holistic this development is? "A sometimes courageous, but often hurried, search today leads to an omnipresence of sexuality. Mass media, advertising, the "revolutionary" pathos, they all broadcast a vulgarized Freudianism, in which the very meaning of death…

disappears in the paradisiacal reveries of Freudo–Marxism. The fear of "repression," the diffuse excitation of the senses, nerves, imagination, are, apparently, linked to a whole set of deceptions."[36] Any solving is followed by some unsolved realities, the latter not representing any interest due to the goal.

The information and formation of the upcoming generation has become dependent on everything that means screen. The so–called exclusion of censorship is the appearance of a violent dictatorship on the human being and a barbarous rape of human consciousness and his brain. "Television is seen as an ideal tool for shaping the subconscious, because during watching the spectrum of brain waves moves from the high frequency of the beta waves to the alpha waves, during which a huge amount of information is transmitted and written into memory. This is the best explanation for the special influence that television has on modeling the thinking and behavior of individuals."[37] Besides promoting immorality directed extremely beautiful, the contemporary film industry has gone to a more violent level, the horror movies. These films are consumed, they receive very positive and artistic reviews, they are awarded in the art of cinema, etc. Victims do not matter. Ad pollution in any broadcast or movie, which in turn are also pollution, has come to express the fact that the human being represents, at the individual level, just as much as can be removed something worthwhile from it. When this becomes impossible, humanitarian calls are made for the abandoned body, in a nursing home, but dying, to get some more money.

Virtue and virtualization of the media is already a reflection of the corrupted family. The pride of not being what we are is a virtualized virtue and is the only landmark for the future generations of the European and American world in particular.

In conclusion, through the holistic development envisaged in the current historical, political and social context, it seems that society and man will be redefined. This is a violent redefinition. This happens so crowded and tough, that the native instinct of the being is no longer able to perceive it and react. If the existence of God is a myth, then this development approach will produce something desirable and destructive. If the existence of God is not a myth, then this process will produce something desirable but severely sanctioned by God.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Clement, Oliver, *Întrebări asupra omului (Questions on Man)*, Alba–Iulia: Editor Anne Sigier, 1997.

Evdokimov, Paul, *Femeia și mântuirea lumii* (Original title: *Woman and the Salvation of the World)*, Bucharest: Publishing House of Christiana Christian Medical Association, 1995.

Evdokimov, Paul, *Taina iubirii – sfințenia unirii conjugale în lumina tradiției ortodoxe* (Original title: *Le Sacrement de l'amour: Le mystère conjugal à la lumière de la Tradition orthodoxe*), Bucharest: Publishing House of Christiana Christian Medical Association, 1994.

Gheorghe, Virgiliu, *Efectele televiziunii asupra minți umane – și despre creșterea copiilor în ziua de azi (The Effects of Television on Human Minds – and Raising Children Today)*, Bucharest: Publishing House of the Institute of Psychosocial Research and Bioethics, 2013.

Henry, Carl, F. H., *Etica creștină personală (Personal Christian Ethics)*, Oradea: Cartea Creștină Publishing, 2004.

John Paul II, Enciclica *Centesimus annus (*The Encyclical *Centesimus annus)*, in Ioan I. Ică jr. – Germano Marani, eds. *Gândirea socială a Bisericii*, Sibiu: Deisis Publishing, 2002.

John Paul II, *Exortația apostolică FAMILIARIS CONSORTIO (The Apostolic Exhortation FAMILIARIS CONSORTIO)*, November 22, 1981, http://www.ercis.ro/)magisteriu/ioanpaul2exo.asp?doc=fc

Ioja, Cristinel, *Homo economicus – Iisus Hristos, sensul creației și insuficiențele purului biologism (Homo economicus – Jesus Christ, the Meaning of Creation and the Shortcomings of Pure Biology)*, Timișoara: Marineasa Publishing, 2010.

Manzaridis, Georgios, *Morala creștină (Christian Ethics)*, Bucharest: Bizantină Publishing, 2006.

Nikos, A. Matsoukas, *Teologie dogmatică și simbolică (Dogmatic and Symbolic Theology), volume II*, Bucharest: Bizantină Publishing, 2006.

Meyendorff, John, *Teologia Bizantină* (Original title: *Byzantine Theology*), Bucharest: Publishing House of the Bible and Mission Institute of the Romanian Orthodox Church, 1996.

Petrescu, Camil, *Doctrina substanței (The Doctrine of the Substance), volume I*, Bucharest: Scientific and Encyclopaedic Publishing House, 1998.

Popescu, Dumitru, *Omul fără rădăcini (The Man without Roots)*, Bucharest: Nemira Publishing, 2001.

Ratzinger, Joseph, *Europa, globalizarea și noua ordine mondială: spre o utopie a ororii? (Europe, Globalization and the New World Order: towards a Utopia of Horror?)* – in Ioan I. Ică jr. – Germano Marani, eds. *Gândirea socială a Bisericii*, Sibiu: Deisis Publishing, 2002.

Sinodul Episcopal Jubiliar al Bisericii Ortodoxe Ruse – Moscova, 13–16 august 2000, in Ioan I. Ică jr. – Germano Marani, eds. *Gândirea socială a Bisericii*, Sibiu: Deisis Publishing, 2002.

Stott, John R. W., *Noua societate a lui Dumnezeu, Societatea Misionară Română (The New Society of God, the Romanian Missionary Society), 1987*

Zizioulas, Ioannis, *Ființa eclesială* (Original title: *L'Être ecclésial*), Bucharest: Bizantină Publishing, 1996.

NOTES

[1] Pope John Paul II, *Exortația apostolică FAMILIARIS CONSORTIO*, November 22, 1981, http://www.ercis.ro/magisteriu/ioanpaul2exo.asp?doc=fc

[2] Georgios Manzaridis, *Morala creștină* (Bucharest: Bizantină Publishing, 2006), 323–324.

[3] Joseph Ratzinger, Europa, globalizarea și noua ordine mondială: spre o utopie a ororii? (Europe, Globalization and the New World Order: towards a Utopia of Horror?), in Ioan I. Ică jr., Germano Marani, eds., Gândirea socială a Bisericii (Sibiu: Deisis Publishing, 2002), 521.

[4] Carl F. H. Henry, *Etica creștină personală* (Oradea: Cartea Creștină Publishing, 2004), 239.

[5] Camil Petrescu, *Doctrina substanței, vol I*, Bucharest: Scientific and Encyclopaedic Publishing House, 1998.

[6] Pope John Paul II, Ibid.

[7] Ratzinger, 521.

[8] Pope John Paul II, Enciclica *Centesimus Annus*, in Ioan I. Ică jr., Germano Marani, eds., Gândirea socială a Bisericii (Sibiu: Deisis Publishing, 2002), 175.

[9] Paul Evdokimov, *Taina iubirii – sfințenia unirii conjugale în lumina tradiției ortodoxe* (Bucharest: Publishing House of Christiana Christian Medical Association, 1994), 138.

[10] Pope John Paul II, *Exortația apostolică*.

[11] That is the State. The state accomplishes this through social protection and monitoring systems: social welfare networks, psychology offices in most institutions etc.

[12] John R. W. Stott, *Noua societate a lui Dumnezeu, Societatea Misionară Română, 1987*, 63.

13 Pope John Paul II, *Exortaţia apostolică*.

14 The decision whether or not to have a gun permit, driving license, the right to be a teacher etc.

15 Pope John Paul II, *Exortaţia apostolică*.

16 Ibid.

17 Episcopal Jubilee Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church – Moscow, August 13–16, 2000, in Ioan I. Ică jr., Germano Marani, eds., Gândirea socială a Bisericii (Sibiu: Deisis Publishing, 2002), 191.

18 Paul Evdokimov, *Femeia şi mântuirea lumii*, Bucharest, Publishing House of Christiana Christian Medical Association, 1995.

19 Pope John Paul II, *Exortaţia apostolică*.

20 John Meyendorff, *Teologia Bizantină* (Bucharest: Publishing House of the Bible and Mission Institute of the Romanian Orthodox Church, 1996), 285.

21 Oliver Clement, *Întrebări asupra omului*, (Alba–Iulia: Editor Anne Sigier, 1997), 32.

22 Pope John Paul II, *Exortaţia apostolică*.

23 Dumitru Popescu, *Omul fără rădăcini* (Bucharest: Nemira Publishing, 2001), 75.

24 Ioannis Zizioulas, *Fiinţa eclesială* (Bucharest: Bizantină Publishing, 1996), 179.

25 Episcopal Jubilee Synod, 186.

26 The Church is not the inscription, it is life, life found in just as many people as Christians. The Church is not the decree, or the synodal decision, but it is the man, the man "extracted" from Christ, and neither of us, not even the non-Christians, can have a different origin.

27 Pope John Paul II, *Exortaţia apostolică*.

28 See Iraq, the former Yugoslavia, Syria, etc.

29 Nikos A. Matsoukas, *Teologie dogmatică şi simbolică, volume II* (Bucharest: Bizantină Publishing, 2006), 334.

30 Popescu, 76.

31 Pope John Paul II, Enciclica *Centesimus annus*, 171.

32 Cristinel Ioja, *Homo economicus – Iisus Hristos, sensul creaţiei şi insuficienţele purului biologism* (Timişoara: Marineasa Publishing, 2010), 157.

33 Pope John Paul II, *Exortaţia apostolică*.

34 Ibid.

35 Camil Petrescu, *Doctrina substanţei, vol. I* (Bucharest: Scientific and Encyclopaedic Publishing House, 1998), 250.

36 Clement, 88.

37 Virgiliu Gheorghe, *Efectele televiziunii asupra minţi umane – şi despre creşterea copiilor în ziua de azi* (Bucharest: Publishing House of the Institute of Psychosocial Research and Bioethics, 2013), 63.

The Role of the Holy Spirit in Attaining a Holistic Society

Sorin Badragan, PhD
Baptist Theological Institute, Bucharest, Romania
University of Bucharest, Romania
sorinbadragan@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT: This paper claims that the strenuous task of defining the concept of "holistic society" needs to engage the classical approaches to the matter. Plato in antiquity, More in the middle ages, as well as Durkheim and Galbraith in more recent times, offer useful insights which help us identify the main characteristics of what could be termed "holistic society." With that addressed, the paper will continue with a theological exploration of the role the Holy Spirit plays in achieving a holistic society. The Spirit creates and sustains the society as this is part of the created order which the Spirit vivifies, then it connects it to the very life of the Triune God; the Spirit also imprints His image everywhere it is present by producing His fruit and lastly He bears witness to Christ in order to turn the world (including society) towards the Son so that it participates in the eternal relationships between the Divine Persons.
KEY WORDS: holistic society, Holy Spirit, fullness, community, perfect society

The theme of this symposium is a challenging one for a number of reasons; to mention but a couple, a basic search of the phrase 'holistic society' on the all-knowing internet offers surprisingly few direct entries; more than that, on a puzzling fourth place, lies a New Age book, while the first three places are not straightforwardly related to our phrase. This absence can be noticed also in the

academic literature, the concepts addressed being rather the 'ideal society' or the 'perfect society'. Another motive is related to defining the concept of a holistic society and then to implement whatever presumably difficult principles and measures are needed to achieve it.

Therefore, is a holistic society possible? We will argue that it is, if by that we do not mean a 'perfect' society and if we allow the Holy Spirit to play His instrumental role in this endeavour.

In his famous work 'Republic', Plato presents Socrate outlining the profile of a perfect society which would inhabit a perfect city. Unsurprisingly, given the times when it was written, the theory of a perfectly established society evolves around the harmony between its citizens who, although belonging to three well defined hierarchical classes, accept their place and role in the society as gods' given. However, the hierarchy is not related to value or worth but to different roles within the society and these were ascribed and cannot be changed: 'Each individual can practice one pursuit well, he cannot practice many well, and if he tried to do this and dabbled in many things, he would surely fail to achieve distinction in all of them." (Plato 2004, 78, ll. 394e) This rather simplistic approach to the way in which a perfect society could be achieved was not implemented then, and the chances for that to happen have diminished as the dynamics of a society have got more complicated and the cosmogony severely challenged.

Another well-known attempt to propose a model for a perfect society, following the thinking of Plato and echoing other classical works, but drawing on biblical narratives, was the work 'Utopia' in which Thomas More, in 1516, aimed to sketch out an ideal society; he prescribes in detail all the aspects of the society: starting with prescriptions for the design of the small towns in which the population would be organized—including measurements for the roads: 'The streets are twenty feet broad; there lie gardens behind all their houses' (More, 1516), to addressing the magistrates, agriculture and so on. In order to achieve this, the concept of money should be eliminated, property shared by the whole community and the principles and values of Christian origin adopted without the faith as such. While this work did indeed criticize the medieval societies, especially the English one, the other probable goal, namely

proposing a model to implement by societies, has failed because it is highly speculative (hence the name!) and it relies on a very positive understanding of human nature.

In more recent times, Emile Durkheim emphasized the precedence the individual has over the society which 'has for its substratum the mass of associated individuals.' (Durkheim 1953, 10); more than that, the French sociologist rejects the alleged tension between the two and argues that what he calls 'the cult of the individual' is ultimately determined by the society which is created by the individual, who, in the context of the development of industrial societies, is not oppressed anymore but freed: "Thus very far from there being the antagonism between the individual and society which is often claimed, moral individualism, the cult of the individual, is in fact the product of society itself. It is society that instituted it and made of man the god whose servant it is." (Durkheim 1953, 29) Durkheim continues underlying the goodness of the society which transcends each and all individuals who compose it, being at the same time the very basis for morality: 'Society is the field of an intense intellectual and moral life with a wide range of influence. From the actions and reactions between its individuals arises an entirely new mental life which lifts our minds into a world of which we could have not the faintest idea had we lived in isolation.' (Durkheim 1953, 29) We agree with the eminent French sociologist that the society is a good and noble outcome of the interactions of human beings between themselves, but the issue at stake is whether there can be a good or rather perfect society within itself, in what regards the quality of the relationships and of the life of the individuals within itself.

A helpful analysis came from the John Kenneth Galbraith with his rather different economic perspective combined with social and political insights. In his *The Good Society: the Humane Agenda*, he suggests that perfect society is attainable as long as the difficult task of defining it is accomplished. He reckons that a 'good, even decent society' is possible through the participation of the excluded, through offering a basic source of income to every single person—either 'through' the market (working) or by government help, through maintaining the freedom of the individual and ethnical and racial

equality. (John Kenneth Galbraith 1996, 10–74) While the economics play a very important role in the dynamics of a society, Galbraith overlooks the complexity of the human network and human nature which raise certain challenges for the well–being of a community: the self–centeredness of human beings, competition with others, the improbable moral goodness of people and so on.

In theology, the concept of a perfect society is related not only to the church or the Kingdom of God, as one might expect, but also to the state; drawing heavily on Aristotle, Thomas Aquinas spoke of the state as *communitas perfecta* in the sense that it has capacity to fulfill the *telos* for all its parts and can enforce the law. (Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, Ia–IIae, q. 90) While one could argue that church triumphant can be regarded as *communitas perfecta* in itself, church militant is struggling to be that. Even the social gospel theologian Walter Rauschenbusch, with his optimistic understanding of the unveiling of Kingdom in the present world, admits that *communitas perfecta* is not fully reachable before the eschaton, but he challenges the people to strive to actualize that as much as possible: 'We shall never have a perfect life, yet we must seek it with faith. At best there is always an approximation to a perfect social order. The Kingdom of God is always but coming. But every approximation of it is worth while.' (Rauschenbusch 1907, 77)

In 1893, Washington Gladden emphasized the instrumental role played by the internal regeneration of the individual in order to achieve the transformation of the society; as a matter of fact, the relationship is one of conditionality: 'the end of Christianity is twofold, a perfect man in a perfect society. These purposes are never separated; they cannot be separated. No man can be redeemed and saved alone; no community can be reformed and elevated save as the individuals of which it is composed are regenerated.' (Gladden 2004 [1893], 1)

A proposal for a holistic society as such came from Popescu and Stanciu who coin the phrase 'ecolonomic society' which, in the understanding of the authors, requires a new mindset and a new life style as perceptive human beings, led by true wisdom to an accomplished existence in the context of the wider community with all its complex relationships. (Popescu, Stanciu 2015, 68)

The argument is not very convincing as it does seem utopian and descriptive, but it does indeed confirm the main aspects of what scholars consider to be the fundamental issues of a holistic society.

So far we have actually looked at various aspects of what makes a society function at its fullest potential, which could termed 'good', 'perfect' or 'holistic'. If it were to distinguish between these labels, especially between the last two, the first would focus on the excellence of the network of the society itself, while the latter evolves around the individual—the society is 'holistic' inasmuch it fully addresses the needs of the individual, that is, it does that in a 'holistic way'—taking into account the relationship with the other individuals, with the groups, with the institutions, the economic, political and spiritual condition. In the end, when a society manages to fully do that, 'holistic' equals 'perfect'.

In what follows we aim to explore the role which the Holy Spirit plays in making a society be holistic; taking into consideration the main aspects of the work of the third divine Person, we will evidence the its fundamental part in the forming, preserving and the development of a holistic society.

The work of the Holy Spirit towards a holistic society

It is not the goal of our paper to present the complex work of the Spirit in its entirety, but to mention the facets which are relevant to the society. In a sense, from an economical perspective of the Trinity, everything which happens in the current era of human existence is in the 'dispensation' of the Holy Spirit. But the Spirit does that in a particular, special way; the British scholar Paul Fiddes points to the self–effacing of the Spirit in what regards the relationship with the Father and the Son (the foretold goal of glorifying them—John 16: 12–15), on the one hand and in what regards the work the Spirit is doing in us and in the created world. (Fiddes 2000, 259–261) It is not therefore surprising that the Spirit has been associated primarily with the work within the individual and corporative Christian life: the sanctification of the believers and the constitution and the functioning of the church; Lederle warns not to minimize the ministry

of the third divine Person: 'The Spirit is at work in the world and should not be degraded to an ornament of piety.' (Lederle 1988, 338)

The Spirit creates and sustains life

The creation is ontologically different but related to the Trinity; it came into existence precisely in the context of the overflowing relationships of love between the Three. It was by the power of the Holy Spirit that the creation came *ex nihilo* and it is by the same power that it does not return to nothingness. The Spirit vivifies the whole creation (Psalm 104: 29, 30) so any talk about human life must start there. As Pinnock rightly reminded us, the omnipresence of God is actually the omnipresence of the Spirit who has a 'cosmic duty ' in carrying the creational and redemptive goals of God (Pinnock 1996, 51, 53)

The Spirit generates community

In more recent times, there has been a daring step taken by some theologians in rejecting the classical thesis of the absolute simplicity in the being of God; one of these courageous scholars was Pinnock who rightly suggested that this understanding was adopted uncritically by the first generations of theologians from the greek philosophy and instead he concluded, based on the revelation, that we can understand God as a plurality of Persons in an ontological unity. (Pinnock 1996, 32–35) The influential explanation of the nature and the role of the Spirit within the Trinity offered by Augustine supports the view Pinnock voiced that the Spirit is *vinculum amoris,* the bond of love between the Father and the Son, not as an impersonal intermediary, but as a equally dignified divine Person. (Augustine, *On the Holy Trinity*, 15: 17–19). So by His very nature, the Spirit connects persons, actualizing the capacity of the human beings who are created in the image of God. He does that exactly how he is in his being, as a *vinculum amoris*, which means the Spirit creates a community of love—it is not only the church, as Augustine rightly emphasized, but any community of beings. In this sense, the divine community is a

model to be implemented by the human beings who yet fail to do that thoroughly; at the same time, it must be added that this is not to be done by imitating 'from distance', but by participation in the life of the Triune God. Of the theologians we have engaged with so far, this important point is repeatedly made by Fiddes and Pinnock who speak of our participation in the movements between the Three divine Persons. (Fiddes 2000; Pinnock 1996)

The Spirit connects the community to God

Drawing on Irenaeus, Pinnock points that the creation comes to be within the relationship of love between the Father and the Son through the work of the Holy Spirit; this means that while creation is distinct to God in what regards its nature, it is not outside God, but inside Him. (Pinnock 1996, 58) It can therefore be said that everything is in God by being held by the Spirit who eternally connects the Father and the Son. The implication is that the Spirit can make the society participate in the life of God, this being one of the profound ways to experience fullness in all aspects of its life, to be 'holistic' in the truest sense. This, of course, requires the consent of the society as such; the society is somewhere in the complex relationships between the Father and the Son, but the richness, fullness are experienced inasmuch we open ourselves as individuals and communities to the being of God.

This is especially relevant in the contemporary Western world which has accepted the secularization uncritically, even more, as if this is genuine progress in the development of humankind. While human beings with all their networks are treated as being free by God, they are all under God, for nothing cannot *not* be under Him. By not accepting this, the society resists God, it denies itself the wholeness it could experience by opening itself to Him.

The Spirit produces His fruit within the community (society)

In a well–known passage, Galatians 5: 22, 23, apostle Paul speaks of the 'fruit' the Spirit produces—of the nine values, only one, joy,

is not directly related to life–together, though it often springs out of our relationships. The Spirit, overflowing with love and being perfect only as God can be, produces His fruit not only in the life of the regenerated individuals, that is the ones who have accepted the spiritual renewal effected by the Spirit, but everywhere the Spirit is. This can, actually must be experienced in the families of the spiritually regenerated, in the church which is constituted and inhabited by the Spirit, but also in any community. Life together in the society would be impossible if the Spirit does not, in often times hidden way, mesh together the fundamental values which are implemented within the complex network of the wider community: love, peace, goodness, faithfulness and so on. This is because God has not abandoned this world but continues to pursue His creative and redemptive goals with it, as we mentioned above.

The Spirit bears witness to Christ

In order to fulfil its destiny, the world needs to turn towards Christ and open up itself to accept His rule and experience the plenitude of the fellowship with the Triune God. It is the Spirit who confronts the world with the imperative to submit itself to the King of all, so that the Kingdom of God is actualized. The Spirit glorifies Christ (John 16: 13–15) and works within the world towards yielding to Him. Without this endeavour, the society cannot experience wholeness, for it rejects its destiny. Accepting the witness of the Spirit will not transform society into the church, for the two although overlap in some areas, they are divinely projected to serve different areas of human life. Instead the Kingdom will 'come', the will of the Father will be done on earth as it is in heaven, so the Kingdom will be more thoroughly manifested.

Conclusion

A holistic society is, theoretically, a possible project for it does not mean to be a perfect society—this latter state will be achieved in

the *eschaton*. A society can experience wholeness only by connecting itself to the life–giving Spirit, who created it, who sustains it and works towards drawing it into the sublime eternal divine relationships.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Aquinas, Thomas, *Summa Theologica*. South Yarra, Australia: Leopold Classical Library, 2015.

Durkheim, Emile, *Sociology and Philosophy*, London: Cohen and West Ltd. Routledge Revivals, Taylor & Francis Group, 1953.

Fiddes, Paul S. *Participating in God. A Pastoral Doctrine of the Trinity*, Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 2000.

Gladden, Washington, *Tools and Man. Property and Industry under the Christian Law*, Eugene, Oregon: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2004.

Lederle, H. I. *Treasures Old and New: Interpretations of Spirit–Baptismin the Charismatic Renewal Movement*, Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1988.

More, Thomas, 1516, *Utopia*. http://history-world.org/Utopia_T.pdf (Accessed on November 12, 2017)

Plato, *Republic*, Indianapolis: Hackett Pub. Co., 2004.

Popescu Constantin and Stanciu Vasile Miltiade, 2015.'A Holistic vision of an econolomic society, www.nos.iem.ro (Accessed on November 12, 2017)

Rauschenbusch, Walter, *Christianity and Social Order*. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1907.

The Holistic Perspective of the Lutheran Chorale as an Integrating Factor of the Christian Faith

Cristian Caraman, PhD

'Timotheus' Brethren Theological Institute of Bucharest, Romania
Baptist Theological Institute, Bucharest, Romania
caramancm@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT: Music is the art which demonstrated that the rapprochement of people (in spite of religious differences from a dogmatic and cultic perspective), is necessary and feasible, as long as the superior idea of faith exists as a vital guiding principle that has the purpose of combating the essential evil. Music created a path through which a dialog was started between the main religious orientations—Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant. Humanity had been struggling to reach a superior level of affirmation of its ideals, and Christianity, of any form, had been helping in its efforts to overcome such struggles. For, of course, as music builds on the principle of universal harmony, our deeds follow suit. The beginnings of the Protestant music in the Europe of the 14th–16th centuries are related to the spiritual manifestations necessary for the shaping of the new religious and, first of all, to the great stature of Martin Luther and the other representatives of the Reformation. Over time, the shedding of values and routines had established certain hierarchies, but the creation of new musical genera during the Renaissance appears useful in building a Protestant music repertoire. The musical core is—and this argument is that the model resists the test of history— the Lutheran chorus, which will become more and more defined in its manifold manifesto. It is worth appreciating the details of the types of Choral, Anthem, Hymn, Cantata and Passion. The holistic perspective of the Lutheran chorus culminates with Bach, which in turn, makes the Lutheran spiritual model more clearly understood, but also has lasting consequences in classicism, romanticism, to the creation of 20th–century composers.
KEY WORDS: Lutheran Chorale, Protestant Music, Holistic, Christianity, Reformation

The role of the Lutheran chorale in music

The Lutheran Chorale created by Martin Luther and developed harmonically by the Wittenberg musicians during the Protestant Reformation, played a double role by stimulating the musical creativity and to encourage the worship of God by the congregation.

The spiritual significance of the chorale was established by Martin Luther, which wanted to encourage the congregation to develop a personal relationship with God. Luther also believed that the church music was responsible to bring people to church every Sunday, for the purpose of worship.

The most important accomplishment of Luther's reformation of the sixteenths century was the integration of congregational singing within the worship service of the Lutheran church. "After theology I give music the highest place and highest honor."[1] In order to encourage the participation of the believers within the liturgy, Martin Luther created the chorale which was very accessible to the congregation, but was able to transmit profound theological truths. The Lutheran Chorale has a simple melodic line and the text is in German. In order to encourage the understanding of theological texts and to make it easier for the people in the congregation, the text was always in German. Luther replaced the traditional liturgical language, which was Latin, with German. Through the chorale, Luther made his wish come true by allowing the German people to express their beliefs and worship in their native tongue. The German language, full of consonants, needed a particular musical style, in contrast with Latin, which is reach in vowels. The liturgical music, composed on Latin texts was characterized by long phrases, with free rhythms where the vowels were held for long periods of time. The German Chorale had a more syllabic style with less melisma's. In

the beginning, during the liturgy, the chorales were unaccompanied and were sung in a monodic style.

Also, in order for the chorales to by sung by untrained voices, due to its vocalic text, the melodies where characterized by very few interval jumps. The creation of the Lutheran Churches during the sixteenth century, lead to the need of new liturgical music to serve the Lutheran ideology. The purpose of such new music was to create and transmit the subtle and profound Lutheran theology. The Lutheran composers ten used old melodies in combination with new melodic lines. The Lutheran Chorale developed very rapidly in the sixteenth century, by using sacred and non–religious music. The early chorales from the Contrafact period, used well known texts, which were added to Gregorian melodies. The official Latin hymns, the religious songs of the Meistersinger and the folk German songs. A good example of the relation between the Gregorian Chant and the Lutheran Chorale is Luther's Chorale *All Ehr' und Lob soll Gottes sein* (All Glory, Laud, and Praise Be Given), which was based on the Gregorian melody *Gloria tempore paschali*.[2] Lutherans have often adopted folk German songs and modified them to religious texts. One such piece is *Gott der Vater whon uns bei* (God the Father with Us Be).[3] Most Lutherans used non–religious songs in their liturgy, by replacing the original text with a spiritual one. One such example is, *Ich komm aus fremden Landen her* (I come from foreign lands), with a new text which turned the song into the well–known chorale, *Vom Himmel kam der Engel Schar* (From Heaven the Angel Troop Came Near).[4]

On example of such chorale is *O Welt, ich muss dich lassen* („O World, I now must leave thee"), which is a contrafact of the famous secular sponge *Innsbruck, ich muss dich lassen* al lui Heinrich Isaac (Innsbruck, I Now Must Leave Thee).[5] Based on familiar ideas of the time, most Lutheran text had double meaning, which is lost to today's congregations. The fundamental tradition was the inspiration for Johann Sebastian Bach's compositions, where he used the juxtaposition of familiar melodies to religious texts. In spite of this method of music creation of the sixteenth century, a lot of Lutheran composers used original compositions and texts for their chorales. It is important to mention that the texts and melodies for new chorales were usually written by the same person. This method was used to create a homogenous symbiotic relationship between text and music. From the very beginning the Lutheran Chorale was a combination of music and theological concepts, which were impossible to separate.

The harmonized Chorales

The need for harmonized chorales in the Lutheran Church grew with time and by the end of the sixteenth century many chorales were already harmonized. The first harmonized chorales appeared in 1524, and were composed by the Lutheran composer Johann Walter. Johann Walter kept all the original rhythmical verse of the cantus firms, but placed the cants firms in the tenor voice, much like the majority of the Renaissance music. The untrained believers had a major problem when hearing the melody in the lower voice, hence the Lucas Osiander, moved the melody to the higher voice. This stylistic change allowed the congregation to learn the chorales a lot easier. Most harmonized chorales of the sixteenth century were modal, and in the beginning of the seventeenth century Hans Leo Hassler published chorale arrangements which were more tonal in their harmonic structure. Other composers, such as Michael Praetorius and Johann Balthasar Koenig, contributed with the introduction of instruments. J. S. Bach harmonized more than 400 Lutheran chorales, with the sole purpose of being used during the liturgy. He also incorporated various chorales in his cantatas, oratorios and passions. J.S. Bach's use of the chorale in his own compositions was related to his wish to bring the Lutheran theology and ideology to all.

Bach's ability to take Lutheran melodies and infuse them with new concepts by new harmonic structures brought the Chorale to the perfection it was originally imagined to be. Bach's knowledge of harmony allowed him to perfect this genre and give more musical meaning to his spiritual beliefs. One such example is the harmonization of *Ein' feste Burg ist unser Gott* (A Mighty Fortress Is Our God),[6] where Bach uses close harmonic intervals to create the feeling of a fortified wall, which cannot be penetrated, or demolished. Bach also uses the fermata to indicate the ending of textual phrases.

The motet chorale

The motet chorale is a composition „in a polyphonic style, in one or two parts, based on a German melody of a Chorale."[7] In the beginning, the motet chorale was interpreted a cappella, and later with various instruments, or the organ replaced one or more voices. One of these chorale motets is *Komm, Heiliger Geist, Herre Gott*, no. 108, written as a cannon by Arnold von Bruck. The *choral–motet*, developed with a four partial harmonization, initially modeled after the work of Dutch composers of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. This model of chorale–motet is characterized by rhythmic and melodic imitations, smooth cadenzas, polyphonic textures, canon techniques, and equality between voices. Johann Walter arranged some of those chorales in a motet stile before 1524, and his compositions used *cantus firmus* in the tenor voice. The other voices, supported the cantus firmus in a polyphonic style. Hans Leo Hassler introduced Venetian polyphonic elements. In his works, all the voices were changed in a mirror type dialogue. This writing style brought balance to all voices and essentially eliminated the cantus firmus line. Michael Praetorius also included fugal and madrigal elements in the choral–motet compositions to attain a better balance amongst the voices. He also made use of complex polyphonic parts and a freer melodic line. However, the most important contribution to the choral–motet was the introduction of accompaniment instruments. Up until J.S. Bach the typical motet made use of continuo instruments. The texts for all his works were based on biblical passages. Bach's ability to infuse his works with his genius is clearly seen in his polyphonic discourse of the Lutheran Chorales. *Fantasia super Ich ruf zu Dir, Herr Jesu Christ* by Samuel Scheidt and *Nun Komm, der Heiden Heiland* by J. S. Bch are very good examples of significant chorale–motets composed during his life. Even though he made use of the traditional form of the style, he infused his works with more contrast and very well established biblical texts. One of the most original of all his motets is, *Jesu, meine Freude.* In this work, Bach uses cantus firmus almost like a variation on themes. The melody of the chorale comes back eleven times throughout the work and every time is just slightly different. Bach is probably the first composer to incorporate this style of variations in a vocal polyphonic genre. Stylistic characteristic of Bach's motet–chorale includes short syllables, a small number of long notes, repetitions and many high notes. Also, he applies ornamental discourses and instruments for each voice.

Bach's contribution to the Lutheran Chorale

Bach's Lutheran faith began in his early childhood and developed during his school years, where the Bible, catechism and the religious hymns were the most important educational tools. His role of church organist and boy soprano allowed him to become very familiar with the chorale texts and its melodies.

During his school years, Bach learned about the spiritual importance of the chorale. He was a frequent attendee of his local Lutheran Church, where his father was the music director. Bach learned about the Bible, participated in congregational singing and learned the Lutheran doctrine. These formative years allowed him to develop a religious base, which he used later in life by writing music for worshiping God.

Bach wanted to create church music that was well organized and for the glory of God. He frequently used chorale texts, which were essential to the Lutheran church service. Even though, when composed, many melodies were composed in a matter that represented the clarity of the biblical message, he also included some of his smaller works within larger compositions. He always encouraged the congregational singing and the worship of God. In his instrumental works, he utilized the chorale, by exploiting the many ways of musical and literary expression.

The cantatas[8] and the passions[9] that he composed represent the sum of his entire artistic experience, showing his great talent. Also, his melodies could be found inserted in his instrumental works, or more frequently in cantatas and oratorios. The purpose of this intertwining was to allow the listener to worship God. In this musical representation, Bach presents the suffering of Christ and wanted to truly express the significance of Christ's sacrifice.

One example of such work is *Matthäus Passion*, which contains a melody in the soprano part, of which text expresses the prayer and the painful sound of a multitude of people worshiping God. It is very possible that Bach original thought was to have the congregation participate, by singing during the first movement of the Passion. This way, eve thought the music was very ornamented and complex, the listeners could easily listen and appreciate the message of the text. Due to the combinations full of significance of the texts and music, Bach's listeners ware inspires to worship and praise God. A common fact in Bach's cantatas is the use of instruments, especially for the various harmonies used, while the soloist interprets a biblical, or poetic text. It is very important to notice the way Bach combines the texts with the music, to create profound understanding of the Lutheran doctrine. The organ chorales are elaborated musical works, which necessitate virtuosic interpretation, but are appropriate for the church service as well. These works represent some of the most important works ever composed by Bach. These chorales use entire chorales, or parts of chorales, composed for the purpose of introducing the congregation to a new type of chorale. All of these works portray the textual and liturgical significance, while exploiting the virtuosic nature of playing the organ. Some of these works include the c*horale–motet*[10] form, *chorale–fantasia and chorale–fughetta*.

The fughetta style uses imitation in the motet style, without the use of the cantus firmus. Also, there are organ chorales which make extensive use of variations and preludes. The variations are in a Partita style, and Bach was fascinated by this for at the end of his career. These works are usually used as interludes, between various verses of the chorale. O*verture–chorale* has two versions, short and long. Some of the techniques used for these Overture–chorales, are putting the melody in the alto voice, creating a fantasy–chorale form, which ornamented the composition. The short overtures are found in the book *Orgel–Büchlein*. Long overtures include cantus firmus melodies, trios, and the ritornello form. In the *hymn–chorale* (contra punctum simplex), we find simple harmonization of four to five voices, where the chorale melody (cantus firmus*)* extends for the entire duration of the work, in one single voice. This is called the uninterrupted form.[11] Cantus firmus is usually found in the soprano

voice, while the lower voices don't mirror, or replicate each other. The lower voices support the main voice and borrow musical material from the cantus firmus. During his life, Bach was capable to express his musical genius and to bring up the mist important aspects of Lutheranism, through his compositions. He was also very successful in perfecting genres, other composers brought to light.

Conclusions

The Lutheran chorale flows seamlessly in the history of universal music, representing different styles and developing amazing artistic value to the Christian musical world. The Lutheran music calls for profound spiritual meditation and deals with the human spiritual condition. Protestant music, in general, has its well–defined place within the cultural and universal artistic expression. The Lutheran chorale, alongside the Cantata and Oratorio, represent the pillars of protestant music. The holistic perspective of the Lutheran chorale found its uses in philosophy, culture, history, sociology and last, but not least, in musicology.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

.____. DEXI—*Dicționar Explicativ Ilustrat al Limbii Române,* Chișinău: Editura ARC & GUNIVAS, 2007.

Blume, Friedrich, *Protestant Church Music a History*, Friedtich Blume in collaboration with Ludwig Finscher, Georg Feder, Adam Adrio, Walter Blankenburg, Torben Schousboe, Robert Stevenson, and Watkins Shaw, Foreword by Paul Henry Lang), New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1974.

Caraman, Cristian, *Genuri ale Muzicii Protestante*, Editura Universității Naționale de Muzică București, 2011.

Latham, Alison, *The Oxford Companion to Music* (edited by Alison Lathman), New York: Oxford University Press, 2002.

Leupold, Ulrich S*., Luther`s Works, vol. 53, Liturgy and Hymns* (in Luther's Works) in 55 volumes, General Editors: Jaroslav Pelikan, vols. 1–30, and Helmut T. Lehmann, vols. 31–35, Philadelphia: Concordia

Publishing House and Fortress Press/ Muhlenberg Press, 1965), 209.

Lathman, Alison, *The Oxford Companion to MUSIC*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2002.

Websites:

All Ehr und Lob soll Gottes sein - Hymnary.org, site: *https://hymnary.org/text/all_ehr_und_lob_soll_gottes_sein*, (Accessed February 2, 2018).

• *Gott der Vater wohn' uns bei - Lutheran Hymnal,* site: *www.lutheran-hymnal.com/german/tlh247g.htm*, (Accessed February 2, 2018).

• *Vom Himmel kam der Engel Schar – Wikipedia, site: https://de.wikipedia. org/.../Vom_Himmel_kam_der_Engel_S...,* (Accessed February 2, 2018).

• *O Welt, ich muß dich lassen,* site: *www.mab.jpn.org/musictex/score_lib/hi_owelt.pdf,* access 2. 10. 2018.

• *Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott – Wikipedia,* site: https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ein_feste_Burg_ist_unser_Gott, (Accessed February 2, 2018).

NOTES

[1] Friedrich Blume, *Protestant Church Music a History*, Friedtich Blume in collaboration with Ludwig Finscher, Georg Feder, Adam Adrio, Walter Blankenburg, Torben Schousboe, Robert Stevenson, and Watkins Shaw, Foreword by Paul Henry Lang (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1974), 10.

[2] Ulrich S. Leupold*, Luther`s Works, vol. 53, Liturgy and Hymns* (Philadelphia: Concordia Publishing House, 1965), 209. All Ehr und Lob soll Gottes sein - Hymnary.org, site: https://hymnary.org/text/all_ehr_und_lob_soll_gottes_sein, (Accessed February 2, 2018).

[3] Ibid., 208, 269; Blume, *Protestant Church Music a History*, 21; Gott der Vater wohn' uns bei - Lutheran Hymnal, site: www.lutheran-hymnal.com/german/tlh247g.htm, (Accessed February 2, 2018).

[4] Blume, 208; Vom Himmel kam der Engel Schar – Wikipedia, site: https://de.wikipedia.org/.../Vom_Himmel_kam_der_Engel_S..., (Accessed February 2, 2018).

[5] Blume, 33; *O Welt, ich muß dich lassen,* site: *www.mab.jpn.org/musictex/score_lib/hi_owelt.pdf,* (Accessed February 2, 2018).

[6] Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott – Wikipedia, site: https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ein_feste_Burg_ist_unser_Gott, (Accessed February 2, 2018).

[7] Cristian Caraman, *Genuri ale Muzicii Protestante* (Bucureşti: Editura Universităţii Naţionale de Muzică, 2011), 79.

[8] Cantata (Germ.: *Kantate*: Ital.; Fr. *Cantate*) is a vocal composition with an instrumental accompaniment, typically in several movements, often involving a choir. Ibid, 118; see also DEXI-*Dicţionar Explicativ Ilustrat al Limbii Române*, Chişinău: Editura ARC & GUNIVAS, 2007; Alison Lathman, *The Oxford Companion to MUSIC* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 202, 203.

[9] Passion (music) In Christian music a Passion is a setting of the Passion of Christ. Liturgically most Passions were intended to be performed as part of church services in the Holy Week. As a form, the Passion stands between biblical declamatory text and Oratorio. Passion was performed mostly în the German speaking countries after 1600. The theological base of the Protestant Passion was modeled after *Theologia Crucis* written by Martin Luther. Ibid., 140, 152; Latham, *The Oxford Companion to Music*, 933, 934; DEXI - *Dicţionar Explicativ Ilustrat al Limbii Române*, 2007.

[10] There are multiple forms of the protestant chorale, such as: chorale–cantata, chorale–concert, chorale–fantasy, chorale–fugue, chorale–ricercar, chorale–monody, chorale–motet, chorale for organ, chorale–prelude, chorale–psalm, chorale–variation, chorale–suite, chorale–symphony, chorale–lied, chorale–aria, chorale–hymn, trio–chorale, chorale–Mass. Caraman, *Genuri ale Muzicii Protestante,* 60–92.

[11] Ibid., 93.

Communication Ethics:
The Sacredness of Communication

Ştefan Florea, PhD
Faculty of Theology, University of Valahia, Târgovişte, Romania
pr_floreastefan@yahoo.com

Marian Puiescu, PhD
Faculty of Theology, University of Valahia, Târgovişte, Romania
marian.puiescu@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT: This article represents a religious approach for the improvement of communication in a new century (and a millennium) when 'communicating' is a deep relational and social necessity. Communication is a natural human act—ontologically necessary and practically fundamental—which represents not just the reaction to the immediate necessity, but, a phenomenon meant to impart something of its ontology. The novelty of the ethical aspect—which the Church wishes to engage—is that it regards holistic integration of communication as a sacred act, which affects deeply social communion and cohesion. The paper also engages the challenge of going deeply into some basic ethical principles in order to create an integrative vision of communication as a relational, social and sacred act.
KEY WORDS: ethic, sacrality, communication, communion

Introduction

Called to reveal "the signs of God's words,"[1] the Church considers communication as very important, the main sign of our life, which is the most important gift we received from God, that is why she:

"sees in man, in every man, the living image of God himself, image that finds and is called to search for a more profound understanding in Christ, the perfect image of God, God's man discoverer for humans and of man for himself."[2]

In the third millennium society we can see the special raising of communication, this way of human connection that shows the man as a rational human being.

The Church confesses that the man has been created by God after His image, for an endless resemblance with Him, and the rational ability to communicate is a part of what we call to be "*God's image*".

First, we must say that act of communication is a profoundly religious one, the Son of God Incarnated is also called Logos, reason, but the term also means communication and relational imparting.[3] The Church itself is also corpus, where communication is fundamental. In other words between communication and communion is a strong and inseparable connection.

All Church's life is the communication of the Trinity in the Holy Spirit, as the Holy Spirit is imparting the plenitude of the divine life of Father and Son. God himself acts, in the history of redemption, as a communicating reality, as a communion of Persons (The Holy Trinity), where communication is of perfect value.

The man, being mad after God's image–the Trinity is the profound need for communication, giving love and sacrifice.[4] That is why, communicating is also a human and divine act. The whole biblical universe is sacrifice, love and communicating. Everybody communicates and is communicated, consuming our self in the sacrifice of interpersonal imparting. Communication is a natural human act, that represents not just the reaction to the necessity of the immediate, but more that this a personal way of imparting something from the own ontology.

When it communicates, the human being is imparting something from its being, it lets out of the depths of the soul, a kind of the personal special energy, but sensible, than wears a personal sign. The relationship with the neighbor becomes a real "Jacob's ladder", if we don't see ourselves competing with our neighbor for

noting, but we stay close to each other, united if we become aware of the fact that we are a part of the same mystical body of Jesus Christ.[5]

The Sacred Shape of Communication

For the human being, communicating is as natural as eating, drinking, or resting, because the act of communicating is a feature of created beings, of course, as the person participates more and more in the relational act, communication becomes more profound, offering, in fact, a way of getting to knowledge, understanding and love.

The Church is a community based on communication that leads to communion, is a communicating event. Jesus Christ himself, the Incarnated Son of God "for us and our redemption", is called by Saint John, the apostle, as 'Logos' that is 'reason', 'word' (John 1:1–14).

Jesus Christ is considered to be "the perfect communicator,"[6] who, "through incarnation … He became one with those who should have received his message, expressed by words and by whole life… total communication is giving the whole of yourself under the impulse of love; but, Jesus communication is for real spirit and life."[7]

From his perspective, the Christian theology considers communication a sacred act, an act that puts together the human being with this neighbor, with the world and with God. Communication is also a way of expressing the human creativity of expressing the ability to show "God's image" in man. Every man communicates in a personal manner, because the act of communication is full of personal energies, full of that special, ontological and human sign. Communication must be an act of projecting man's dignity and not an humiliating act, because man's dignity is a part of the divine image.[8]

In the beginning of a new century and millennium we can notice the fact that the act of communication has got new forms and because of the human creativity, because of the technology, communication because a special mark of our time. The world where we live received a specific identity because of communication, because of the development of this act and of means of it.

Communication develops the relationships between people. This is why communication has to serve the communion, the

profound study of the common values of our world. This is what makes communication a means of imparting the treasure of wisdom, personal variety and knowledge of humanity. It was said, not just by chance, that "the first *areopag* of our time is the communication world, able to unite the world, making it a global village as they use to say.[9]

The relation between communication and communion comes out better from the etymology of word "communication" which means "becoming participant", "imparting", "that is transmitting a content which unites."[10]

Communication is exteriorizing through words something of the human being, an act that has a strong effect on our society and, this reality is based on words not only … the ontological perspective but also from the relational one.[11] Communicating means offering something of the human person, means giving a special part of what a man is.

This is all about those special created energies of a person, energy full of specific identity and guided by the creational difference of the personal *alterity*.

Communication by specific means can be effective for education and cultural enrichment, for commercial activity and political involvement, but also for dialogue and intercultural understanding.[12]

The World—*Topos* of Communication

We must specify the fact that the world itself is space, support and means of communication of man with his neighbor and with God. In all His creation God addresses to man, the world was made in order to wait for man's arrival; that is why man was created at the end, after everything was ready to support his existence. Through this world, God talks about Himself, through His works man is endowed with the ability to read, to see and to understand His message.

The world is rational, "suggestive reason", that is why the rational man can understand this rational world, a world that we must see as a certain language, the means by which man can understand the message that God sends to him, the world getting

meaning just as a mystery, as an instrument. "God gave to people . . . the possibility to think and speak because He—though about their reasons and He gave them to them, creating first a plastic covering for their level. In this everything finds its meaning."[13]

The world is, in this sense, a special language, by which God can be understood, it is the divine messenger who must be apprehended by humanity. Talking about world's rationality we must specify that when we say rationality we understand "the clear manner in which a person communicates to another person, for the accomplishment and the development of a communion between them."[14]

Because God is Trinity of Persons, is Love, is the space where dialogue takes place, the world, He is the space of love. The divine love created the world out of nothing and the same love shines in it and speaks to the man. Being god's gift to us, love shows itself to the world, it is a love word addressed by God to us and the climax of this love message is represented by Christ.

World's aim, as God's dialogue with us, is to get an answer. Thus, the world is also our means to communicate with God and nature mediates the answer we address to Him. God communicates with us by world's rational structure, and we, the readers, understand His message "working, as much as possible, in the material creation through which God communicates Himself."[15]

God's gift, His word to us, the world is transformed by man and becomes a sacrifice for gratitude to God, like an Eucharist. Through this we participate, in a certain way in the continuous process of world creation.[16]

Through the Holy Spirit, man can practice his role of creator by activating those "alternative virtualities multiple and passive."[17]

Man's role is also to understand nature's reason (*logoi*), as means of practicing his free will. By what the man creates, as created and creative being, the world is offered to God and becomes the substance of sacrifice.

Man receives the gift (the world) of God, acts on the world, impregnates it with his power, makes it human, keeps the love it has from God and offers this love to God, a love impregnated with humanity. But, also by the Holy Spirit, the world is the space of

inter–human dialogue. Because in this world, man does good or harms his neighbor, here he can grow or fall spiritually or moral.

At the same time, nature is a gift for all the people, not for one or some, and in order to accomplish his mission in this world man must act together with his neighbors, and not by himself. Then, God offers us his gifts as a tie of interpersonal love, as means of achieving human unity, He communicates with us through this world. The world offered to God must be given to Him by the human community by its right management and by creation within it. But, what matters, is that our gift to Him is well received if it better expresses us the more our world is humanized, but this depends on the direct relation with the level of spirituality of each man and on the profundity of human communion.

Communication, like other human actions and activities, must be guided by some rules that ensures its fidelity to truth, correctness, sincerity, social utility etc., in other words it is guided by a specific ethics. The Church developed and went deeply into the principles formulated by the society, giving them a religious perspective.

But, what can the Church and religion bring new here? The novelty of the ethic perspective of the Church talks, on one hand, about the holistic integration of communication and as a sacred act, in the process of going deeply into social cohesion and communion and, on the other hand, specifying and developing some ethic principles and creating an integrating vision of the communication act, as a social, relational and sacral act.

We can ask the question: what the human and divine space of communication needs as origin and finality, of ethic regulation? Firstly we must mention that man is a created being "good and beautiful" and with the aim of becoming perfect, but, in the course of history happened the sin accident, with its entire dark universe which defalcated the human existential itinerary towards many sense holocaust and labirinthical deviations from the beautiful and right way of perfection.

Thus, the sin sign and of the existential deviation from reality, it can also be discovered in the act of communication. And instead of becoming always a means of inter–personal communication it van

also become a means of spreading not good, beautiful and desirable things, but also of what is bad, dark and repulsive.

As from the man's heart come out good and bad things, the act of communication can also transmit moral values, or can communicate manifestations, acts or bad thoughts. To protect the human being from this negative informational attack, to save the beauty of the divine image in man, the good and the beauty, that exists and must be manifested, in every man, the Church proposes an ethic vision on communication. The same thing is taken into account by the human society, the state, aiming, at least, at the existence of a space in which at least, minimally, we can have a socially right and effective communication.

The Ethics of Communication

The human communication must submit to an ethical system that ensures the correctness of communication and its fidelity to its own aim; that is, the full manifestation of humanity, respecting its own values.

Communication is a sacred and an ethic act. Because man must communicate values, that is what enriched and enriches him and is useful to the progress of our society and to the common good, that is "the ensemble of social life conditions that allow groups and individuals reach perfection in a plenary and easier way."[18]

Human communication must serve justice, liberty and truth, contributing to the promotion of man's dignity and to his personal building up so that this sacred act also becomes a witness of the spiritual, cultural and social grounds of humanity. Communication supporting man's good, is an important help that man has nowadays, only if it is based on truth, built on justice, fed and animated by love and put to practice under the auspices of liberty.[19]

That is way supporting the communication ethics, the Church does nothing but protect the dignity of the human being, in an epoch in which globalization can be advantage, for man's good, it is used properly.

We need morality in the communication act in order not to alter the human being, his exteriorization and in order not to create false virtual and parallel worlds, that can offer to man a new and treacherous slavery.

Solidarity, co–operation, peace, harmony, virtual respect and love are the main values of communication, from ecclesiastic vision, that must be promoted, sustained and developed, so that communication could really be a binder of humanity and could help the spiritual, cultural and social progress. The danger of communication, far this times man, is that of submitting this field to the consumption era rules, to materialism, to libertinage, to aggressiveness and to violence, making of this space blessed by God a *topos* of darkness, of evil and of disunion. Communication is a key element of the world of our time can contribute to the good of our society, bringing relief, offering trust and truth.

The common good of our society can be promoted by a strict communication must firstly consider the fidelity towards truth, he must be aware of the fact that he is transmitting correctly what he has to transmit, without distorting, transforming, reducing or extending the information, so that it doesn't correspond to the transmitter intervention. Taking care of man's dignity, the communicator must pay attention that what he transmits is not immoral, aggressive or to wound the human rights, in other words communication must heave public and private utility. This doesn't mean that the private interest is over the public one in the informing act, but we must take into account, in every circumstance, the dignity of the human being.

Communication must have as main aim inter–human relation, the cultural edification, man's own perfection and social effectiveness, so that the mistaken use of communication places it in the immortality area.

The act of communication as a fundamental human act but, also, as means of divine expression is sacred act, this results from the unaffectedness of the phenomenon and from its aim, that is why is an impiety to use this mans, rationally and spiritually, in unjust and not proper to human vocation purposes.

Ethic rules are went to save the sacredness of communication, to protect the dignity of this human and divine act and, in the end

to save the dignity of man as a being created after God's image. Communication ethics aim to protect God's creation from falsity, lie, misrepresentation, or from any deficiency which can alter its value. In this way, persons have a huge responsibility, but media is, also, much more responsible because it can have a good or a bad influence upon an impressive number of people. That is why, the act of communication implies a great responsibility being a real Jacob leader or a way to humiliate the human.

The Church proposes, in the communication ethics field, the evangelistic ethics, the Christian morals, that has no other purpose than man's perfection, his salvation, so the Christian ethics of communication is nothing but a practice use of the evangelic spirit, of the Christian doctrine.

Christianity, as a religion based on Word, has a great respect for any word we transmit to the others, outside of us, and qualifies one way or another, that human personality. The ethic of communication is an ethic of connection, an ethic of the word, an instrument of saving a minimum of social and communal functionality. There is no communion without communication, and there is no society without communion, and as man is a political being,[20] communion being, communication fundamentally qualifies him, contributing to his placement related to God, the Creator.[21]

Conclusion

The informational society, to develop itself in an useful way to man and society, has to respect a certain ethic code, which can guarantee a minimum of effectiveness and morality. Communication is for Christianity a sacred act, both thanks to the fact that God is Trinity of Person and communication is the base and the promoter of communion and because the man created after God's image, has received communion and communication from the very act of creation, as a natural gift.

Man is a social being (*zoon politikon*), of communion and of interval, mediator between material and spiritual, that is why communicating is for him a natural act, and the salvation or the

damnation of man's human dignity stands on communication's fidelity to the truth. In the entire universe, communication ins fundamental, we could say that is in creation's nature to communicate that is why, both by creation, and by purpose, communication is a sacred act.

Man's redemption or perfection is also based on the quality of the communication act and here we can see the great importance of this natural, created act.

Society proposes a certain ethics, in order to protect the dignity of the human being and the quality of the communication act and the Church is promoting some specific ethic principles which represent a doctrinal exteriorization or a practice way of action for the evangelic principles.

The novelty of Church's vision on communication points to the fact that sees it as a real means of perfection , or redemption that man has and as a sacred act which deserves all our care and attention and implies not just an immediate responsibility, but especially an eshatologic one.

NOTES
1 Nifon Mihăiță, *Christian Mission* (Bucharest: ASA, 2001), 36.
2 .____. *Social Doctrine of the Church, Compedium*, vol 2 (Bucharest: EARCB, 2006), 70.
3 Oivier Clement, *Bartolomeu I, Truth and liberty* (Deisis: Sibiu, 1997), 61.
4 Vladimir Lossky, *Mystical Theology of the Oriental Church* (Bucharest: Anastasia, 1993), 144.
5 Theodor Baconski, *Jacob and the Angel*, Bucharest: Humanitas, 1997.
6 C. Chinez, *The Sacramentality of Social Communication* (Iaşi: Presa Bună, 2008), 15.
7 Pontifical Concile for Social Communication*, Communio et Pprogression* (Vatican: AAS, 1971), 1.
8 Irinee of Lyon, *Against of the Heresies* (Paris: Cerf, 1985), col. 382–383.
9 John Paul II, *Fast Development* (Iaşi: Presa bună, 2005), 4.
10 D. Iannota, *The Communication trough Symbol and Image* (Torino: Effata, Cantalupa, 2004), 15.
11 F. Cereti, *The Communication in Dialogue and Electronic Culture* (Torino: Elledici, 2000), 27.
12 Pontifical Concile for Social Communication, *The Etichs into Internet* (Vatican: AAS, 2002), 2.

13 M. Bielavski, *Father Dumitru Stăniloae. A Philocalic Vision about World* (Deisis: Sibiu, 1999), 285.

14 *Ibid.*, 351

15 John Zizioulas, "The Eucharistical Vision of the World and Contemporary Human Being," *Contacts* 57 (1967): 83.

16 Dumitru Stăniloae, *Orthodox Dogmatic Theology* vol. 2 (Bucharest: EIBMBOR, 1997), 359.

17 17ohn Breck, *Sacred Gift of the Life* (Cluj–Napoca: Patmos, 2001), 12.

18 .____. *The Vatican II Concile* (Bucharest: EARCB, 1999), 26.

19 .____. *The Enciclics* (Bucharest: EARCB, 2008), 167.

20 Breck, 269.

21 Christos Yannaras, *The Liberty of the Ethics* (Bucharest: Anastasia, 2002), 12.

Christian Morals
in Shakespeare's Tragedies

Andreea Puiescu
"Ion Heliade Rădulescu" College, Târgoviște, Romania
andreeapuiescu@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT: Shakespeare, the most significant author of theatrical plays, a real innovator of English language, a model for his followers and for the European theatrical culture then and now, is also a master of symbols and metaphors and a promoter of the values of Christian morals and ethics; as this paper attempts to demonstrate.
KEY WORDS: Shakespeare, Christian morals, religious values

Introduction

Sometimes hidden, sometimes obvious, the religious values of Shakespeare's world are based upon the Evangelic ethics, trying, in this way, to depict his world with all its light and all its darkness, a world where the fight between Good and Evil begins with each character, with each event and with each page.[1]

Shakespeare presents a world in which Good and Light are always triumphant, even if, apparently, some of his plays have no happy–ending. The moral doesn't come just with the words, but also with the events that happen in his plays. A very important thing for Shakespeare's plays is to be able to see behind appearance, to clear up the key in which they were written.[2]

Every step you take in this wood of symbols and metaphors you can discover a new hidden path that take you to another meaning

and to another moral. You can meet here his characters that hold, together with the author, the narrative thread unfolding it little by little and revealing us a world governed by Providence where Evil, in spite of its apparent triumph, is limited and repressed. This fight goes on even in readers' minds who learn that they must do good and avoid evil, that Evil destroy people and destinies. This pedagogy must teach us to run away from all Evil traps.

Christian Morals in Shakespeare's Tragedies

The richness of Christian symbols does not exclude the usage of Anglo–Saxon and Celtic symbols and myths. These are not the expression of a scars Christian feeling of the author, but a rich form of revealing soul–up–lifting truth and a huge cultural amplitude.[3]

The moral strain, which engulfs Shakespeare's characters involved in disastrous conflicts and passions, ends, after getting through purifying suffering. In this way, the darkness that falls down on people and the evil that feeds itself with their suffering, are only ment to stress that triumphal power of the light.[4]

All the great Shakespearean themes: love, power, wisdom are just means to make his plays talk about Good's victory on Evil, about the triumph of the spiritual world. Behind this Shakespearean world of human conflicts we can intuit another world which transforms every conflict, every human tension in echoes of a tremendous spiritual fight. It is a real apocalypse: the human plan is nothing but a reflection of the spiritual one. That is why, in plays like "*Hamlet*", "*Macbeth*", "*A Midsummer Night's Dream*", Shakespeare refers to the world of spirits.[5]

The role of this spiritual world in Shakespeare's plays is not either formal, or coloring, it is not trying to create a fairy tale atmosphere, but, on the contrary, this world is well anchored in reality emphasizing the tight relation between Man and Cosmos, between the spiritual and material world, better to say, a projection of spiritual conflicts on the material world. Shakespeare believes in the final victory of Good and Light, although, apparently, his characters are victims of human passions that pull them in the

middle of a tempest of conflicts. This thing becomes obvious if we notice that, in all Shakespearean works, Man is governed by superhuman powers.[6]

Shakespeare's heroes seem to be defeated by these extraordinary powers that dominate them, but this is just a part of his initiatory game: defeat or human decay emphasizes the fact that every man's victory on Evil is complete and ultimate only in a certain eschatological manner and only by divine power intervention.

> "Hamlet:
> and for mine own poor part,
> Look you, I'll go pray! [7]

Another proof of the spirituality that governs Shakespeare's plays is the fact that " *some characters retire in loneliness and meditation in order to rediscover Heaven's kindness (Jacques, The Duke from "Measure for Measure", Timon, Pericles), and other retire in temples (The mother in "The Comedy of Errors", Thaisa) or ask for the help of some friars (Silvia, Hero, Romeo and Juliet). In the same way we can find in his plays characters that embody spirituals like Cerimon or monarchs in "Much Ado about Nothing", "Romeo and Juliet", "Measure for Measure" or ask for the help of some pilgrimages ("All's Well That Ends Well) and of some oracles ("Winter's Tale"). And, of corse, our enumeration is not complete. Even some damned characters, like Othello, turn their faces to Heavens when their dying time has come.*"[8]

A careful reading of Shakespeare's works reveals us the fact that the sacrifice motif is dominant in his thinking. Not just once, the sacrifice of his characters remind us about the suffering motif that endows humans with holiness and redemption. The tragic Shakespearean characters sacrifice their lives to destroy the Evil's spiral and triumph and to secure a better celestial world.[9]

"*Hamlet: Not a whit, we defy augury: there's a special providence in the fall of a sparrow. If it be now, 'tis not to come; if it be not to come, it will be now; if it be not now, yet it will come: the readiness is all:*"[10]

The justice of some Shakespeare's characters is the divine justice and mercy, and the lesson that it teaches is that only forgiveness

can really bring peace, divine mercy, complete reconciliation and harmony.

The sacred that comes out of the human sacrifice in Shakespeare's world make us dream about a new world, a world of peace and reconciliation, a world of justice and love. Shakespeare uses metaphors and allegories in order to let us discover the world that pulsates behind the text of his works, that is, a spiritual world which emphasis the material one and, that is why, symbol is nothing else but a bridge that ties the two universes, a way to understand the world in which we are living and whose materiality is just a garment for the world's complexity.[11]

Evil influences the deeds of the Shakespearean characters not in an arbitrary, fatidic, and total manner, but only as a manifestation of a spiritual conflict in the material world.

> Aaron: Now climbeth Tamora Olympus' top,
> Safe out of fortune's shot; and sits aloft,
> Secure of thunder's crack or lightning flash;
> Advanced above pale envy's threatening reach.
> As when the golden sun salutes the morn,
> And, having gilt the ocean with his beams,
> Gallops the zodiac in his glistering coach,
> And overlooks the highest–peering hills;
> So Tamora."[12]

Not just once Shakespeare's characters succeed in changing Evil's temptations into Good's triumphs.

> "…behind these apocalyptical fights is not just a man, even a demonized one, are not the demons from another land, but, is the titanic force itself that dugs unceasingly, from the beginning, at the foundation of this divine creation."[13]

Like Dante's "*Divina Commedia*", every Shakespearean play is an initiatory journey from Hell to Heaven. We lost ourselves, together with the characters, in the forest of myths and symbols, descending and ascending the hill of sufferance, trying to solve soul's mysteries and searching eagerly for redemption, for peace, for God.

In "*Romeo and Juliet*" the hate between the two families throws the characters in Hell. As it was said in "*Hamlet*" we can say here too: "*something is rotten*" in Verona. The moral values are suffocated by the ardent wish of enrichment, the avidity sin being the main cause of all Evil that falls down on the Veronese society and leads the two lovers to the tragic end. "*The sin, the guilt is too at the level of daily existence*".[14]

"*Romeo and Juliet*" is not just the tragedy of an unfulfilled love, but is also the tragedy of the transforming and lost soul under the influence of one of the most vile desire: the desire of revenge. Under the guise of well intended actions and posing as the defender of the ethical principles, Romeo revenges his friend's death and throws into chaos his universe. The tumultuous human nature goes out of control when Christian ethics is nothing but a means to justify ones sinful acts and desires. Romeo, caught in the net of the tempestuous adolescent love for his beautiful Juliet, trespasses the borders of adoration going astray into insane veneration when he pictures his lover as a saint.

Extreme passions, lost temper, individualism and the moving off the real Christian values are depicted here by Shakespeare in a renaissance desire to build a pedagogy of spirit for those who have lost God's way and who became prisoners of their own ego. Leaving for a moment the noisy veronese streets with all their burning passions we enter Friar Lawrence's cell, the place where reason and Christian morals wait quietly for the right time to go outside and put an end to the Evil forces that possess people's minds and souls.

When the storm begins the friar tries, by advising the two lovers, to restore order, but he only prevents things from happening earlier. We can consider Romeo as the architect of his own tragic destiny; the other characters are just simple builders who work to complete his creation. God here is exiled by Romeo's tempestuous passion that dulls his mind and throws him into despair making him the prisoner of his own choices as in a lesson that the individualist and self–centered Renaissance man has to learn: He is nothing without God.[15] On the other hand, Romeo's exile is his salvation. There he will not just escape the death penalty, but he will meet God again and that exiled God will set his soul free from Evil, will

bring him back to real life. But, this is not Romeo's option, and he chooses to sacrifice his life for a supreme cause, that is, not just for his salvation, but for the salvation of all that rotten veronese society inflicted by Evil.

Conclusion

Living in a Christian culture and using a Christian symbolism, Shakespeare let us enter a world of morals that we can either intuit in the subtext of his work, or in the good or evil actions of his characters. Even if one may consider his work an eminently literary creation, it is also a (historic) fresco of his time and a mirror of the morals of the Christian people of his epoch. We discover in these Shakespearean plays ideas as: sin, mistake, guilt, destiny, sacrifice, forgiveness, revenge, all perfectly tied to the morals of the Christian Church.

Shakespeare's tragedies show us that, in a world that calls itself Christian, when religiosity is something superficial and doesn't guide people's lives from inside, nothing can avoid the ruin and the catastrophe of the human self.

Using this world of tragedies, Shakespeare put our modern society on guard like in an echo that trespasses time's borders, stating that a world without God brings death, loneliness, failure and darkness. Shakespeare's comedies reveals us the same thing, but not by using directly catastrophic images that terrifies the readers, but by using laughter, comedy which was considered by the author still capable of transforming morals ("*Castigat ridendo mores*").

Everywhere in Shakespeare's works we can see or intuit God's presence; in the images that he creates, in the ethics he presents and in the conclusions that he imposes to us readers. And that is because Shakespeare belongs to an era when religion was prevailing although it was little by little changed in a private business. The Shakespearean literary creation reveals its value not just in the images it creates, but also by communicating us a system of moral values, showing us what man can become without God, without solid moral principles, a dehumanized being.

NOTES

1 Dan Amedeo Lăzărescu, *Introducere* la W. SHAKESPEARE, *Hamlet. Prince of Denmark* (Târgovişte: Pandora, 2006), 23.

2 Ibid.

3 Dan Amedeo Lăzărescu, *Introducere* la W. SHAKESPEARE, *A Midsummer night's dream* (Târgovişte: Pandora, 2006), 10.

4 F. Mihăescu, *Shakespeare şi teatrul iniţiatic, Studii şi cercetări tradiţionale* (Bucureşti: Rosmarin, 1999), 268.

5 Dan Amedeo Lăzărescu, *Introducere* la W. SHAKESPEARE, *Romeo and Juliet* (Târgovişte: Pandora, 2002), 25.

6 William SHAKESPEARE, *A Midsummer night's dream* (Târgovişte: Pandora, 2003), II, 2.

7 Ibid., *Hamlet. Prince of Denmark*, I, 5.

8 Mihăescu, 9.

9 Ibid.

10 SHAKESPEARE, *Hamlet. Prince of Denmark*, V, 2.

11 F. Mihăescu, *Hamlet. Prinţul melancoliei* (Bucureşti: Rosmarin, 1997), 191.

12 William SHAKESPEARE, *Titus Andronicus* (Târgovişte: Pandora, 2002), II, 1.

13 F. Mihăescu, *Shakespeare şi teatrul iniţiatic*, 214.

14 F. Mihăescu, *Shakespeare şi tragediile iubirii* (Bucureşti: Rosmarin, 2000), 19.

15 Ibid.

Holistic Development in Society

Claudia Buda

"Mihai Eminescu" National College, Baia Mare, Romania
muza_claudia@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT: Atomists believe that any whole can be divided and analyzed into its component parts, as well as from the perspective of the relationships between its components. On the other hand, the holists say that the whole is in fact much more than a sum of its parts. The atomist divides things to know them better, the holist approaches things or systems as an aggregate. Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to understand more the nature and the essence of the systems as an aggregate.

KEY WORDS: holism, will, relations, whole, social, part

The holistic approach has grown in the 60–70s, where it leads to the emergence of more alternative systems in education, such as Montessori has replaced passive learning, based on memorizing with innovative learning and education methods. Montessori has proposed a specific, appropriate environment that contains useful materials that children are learning to learn at their own pace.

The Waldorf approach is based on the intuitive understanding of soul needs for each level of development. Qaker schools or neo–humanist education have adopted various concentration practices such as meditation, yoga, etc. The holistic term comes from the holistic meaning of the whole, and the medicine is the one that considers the being as whole. Co nduita therapeutic decided depending on a variety of issues that define the human being in a certain context.

Brian Fay asserted that holism has proven to be an arthritis for social science in two ways:

> a) Generally, science does not focus on individualism, but on classes of entities, especially on similarity;
> b) science does not want to describe than what he is studying, especially explaining and discovering causal forces

Belief in social holism can be seen as a product of tradition, having as authors Vico, Rousseau, Herder, but especially Hegel. The general principle of holism was expressed by Aristotle in Metaphysics, where the whole represents the sum of the parts right holistic conception, the integrity of beings can not be reduced to a mere sum of the constituent parts. This completeness it would be due to the action of an impenetrable, intangible force. The founder of holism was John Christean Smuts (1870–1950) through *Holism and Evolution*.

The notion of system is related to the structure (gestalt), where the psychological conception W. Kohler, K. Kaffka, K. Lerwin considers that psychic phenomena represent structures, integrated configurations, structures being primordial, irreducible realities, or partial processes subordinated to the whole. Gestalism is also called structuralism, configurationism, or form psychology. The structure designates how to create a system, an abstract model that expresses its functional scheme and the principles that underpin its internal cohesion.

The structuralist concept is used in the social field by CL Strauss, who explained the complex social structures through their dual, contractitor organization. As for the relationship between the party and the whole, holism has supported the primacy of the whole face. From the epistemological point of view, cultural studies aim at reconciling the two types of knowledge: cultural and objective. From this point of view, cultural studies are used by comparison as a means of revealing, by appealing to a holistic vision by observing and subduing the true nature.

For Aristotle, the first philosophy is in relation to philosophy in general, what arithmetic is in relation to mathematics. The first philosophy appears as part of the science of being as a finite. This

relationship between part and whole appears in the Aristotelian classification of contemplative sciences, where the first philosophy is seen as the second philosophy, namely physics.

Pierre Aubenque states that theology maintains with the other sciences a double relation of overlap and superiority; it is seen as a first philosophy, but different from the second philosophy. In the Heavenly Aristotle, Aristotle, after demonstrating the uniqueness of heaven with physical arguments, adds the same result that he could get arguments extracted from the first philosophy. In the Treatise on Animal Movement, Aristotle reminds that all inorganic bodies are moved by other bodies.

Some think that potency only exists when it manifests itself in act, and the innate innate is acquired through habit, such as flute singing. Aristotle states that the act of good is better and more worthy than potency and gives us the example of a man we can say he is healthy, but also the fact that he may be sick, that is why there are the opposite: health and illness, rest and movement etc.

If we admit that things in the sensitive world are numbers, like harmony of music, then there must be a unity between them. The entire Aristotelian tradition as well as the Greco–Latin neoplatonism provided an explanation for the different types of reporting of one to the multiple. The idea that the world is eternal appears in the texts of Tempier as follows:

(1) the nature of the species trains the eternity of the individual
(2) the form's eternity is correlated with the eternity of matter
(3) the world's eternity is consistent with the immutability of the divine will
(4) The created intellect gives the world eternity

In Boethius's *Treatise*, we meet seven reasons why it is worth asking the question of the eternity of the world:

(1) It is necessary to save the sentence of philosophy
(2) This sentence does not contradict the Christian one
(3) He supports the demonstrations, so he has the claims of a relative foundation
(4) Faith is based on miracles

(5) Conclusion of reason is science, different from faith
(6) Some arguments are false
(7) philosophy and faith are not contagious about the world's eternity

Alexander Baumgarten considers that there are several arguments from the perspective of the creature, some from the creator's perspective, but also the relationship between them.

(a) Arguments from the perspective of the creature address the problem of the infinite and temporal structure, but also of the act and potency
(b) the arguments from the creator's perspective lead to the following idea: although God is unchangeable, yet his creation is his own will
(c) The arguments from the perspective of the report bring the world's cohesion

Types of arguments disputed by Albert the Great, St. Thomas and Singer in Brabant:

(1) Arguments of the Substance—Concerning the Answer to the Question What is it? The problem of the first act, but also the uniqueness of the substantial form
(2) Hierarchy Arrays: The neoplatonic ontological hierarchy assumes that the intelligent One and Multiple Intermediate— the cosmological messiah has as intercessor between the world and God the sky
(3) Arguments of the intelligent—who diversifies our knowledge, there is a different representation, a different intelligible species
(4) The omnipotent argument of the theme of the divine lime—can God do a naval order?

If we compare these arguments, we obs is rvam the first three are limits Aristotelian paradigm, philosophical principles, where the most important principle is that all reality becomes itself by its own act. Singer of Brabant did not apply this principle, considering that the unique intellect is a reality that does not become private by its

activity. From these polemics of the unit of intellect, five conclusions result:

(1) Aristotel states that there are a number of explanatory systems; this category includes the idea of the pure potency of the intellect, the analogy between the soul and the sky, the analogy between the intellect and the whole nature
(2) The theme of the receptacol limit of reality, the theme approached by Albert the Great
(3) The problem of the intelligible sky—the theory of the unit of intellect and the thesis of the world
(4) For the aristotel the soul is eternal and individual
(5) philosophy invokes the theme of a given individuality

The concept of the philosophical paradigm designated the group of propositions that provided the arguments of authority that substantiated the disputes:

(1) Circularity of heaven provides eternity to the world
(2) Intelligent Heaven contains all universal species
(3) suflet is the cause of time
(4) suflet and nature know analogous principles
(5) the intellect is indeterminate

In the Platonic–Aristotelian tradition of the 13th century, the sky was working, that is, the idea that heaven is a sensible and intelligible reality with three fundamental properties:

(1) Subdued of sensitive things
(2) Analogous to the soul
(3) Intermediate between the world and the absolute transcendent

T. Herseni distinguishes three significant moments of the social structure of the will:

(1) Psychic Will—pushing individual will to social one takes place due to sympathy, friendship; (Herseni affirms that defense, escape, struggle, defense, in fact, instincts are gained

from an effort to adapt to the environment and maintain the organic link between the individual and the social psychic will.)
(2) The Will Structure—involves the functioning mechanisms of the will in order to obtain a goal;
(3) The Life in Society—the participation of man in social life, actually identifying man with his needs.

Holists say that the whole is in fact much more than a sum of its parts. The atomist divides things to know them better, the holist approaches things or systems as an aggregate, and that is why we try to understand more their nature in essence.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Aristotel, *Metaphysics*, Bucharest: Iri, 1996.

Aubenque, Pierre, *The problem of being at Aristotle*, Bucharest: Universitas, 1999.

Baumgarten, Alexander, *The Principle of Heaven*, Cluj–Napoca: Dacia, 2002.

Gilson, Etienne, *Philosophy in the Middle Ages*, Bucharest: Humanitas, 1995.

Gusti, Herseni T., *Guidelines for Sociological Monographs*, Bucharest: Institute of Social Sciences, 1940.

Le Goff, Jacques, *The intellectuals of the Middle Ages*, Bucharest: Meridiane, 1991.

Singer in Brabant, *Ecrrits de logique, de morale et de physique*, Paris: Louvain, 1974.

Mass Media: An Integral Component of Holistic Social Development

Emanuel Dobrin, PhD (cand.)
University of Bucharest, Romania
edobrin75@gmail.com

ABSTRACT: In the contemporary age, mass media—the solitary technical means for the delivery of information to the people—developed not only an exerting mobilizing power, but also impacted the development of human personality. In this day and age, dominated by the mass media, the human being is conditioned by the mass media and has become subject to the continuing pressures of the information propagated by it. In this context, invariably, the human personality is being affected (even redefined), as it develops new positive or negative impulses; depending on the information it is being exposed to.
KEY WORDS: media, information, human personality, technology, development, influence

In the present society, addicted to the information technology, the role of the mass media is more pronounced in almost all areas. Information has become an indispensable source within the educational, socio–economic process and the mass media the main way of propagating it. But, beyond the mere role of information, through mass media judgments are being issued, opinions are being outlined, ideas are born and maybe most importantly, the personality of the individual is being redefined.

The present paper, presents in short, mass media as part of the holistic social development. This aspect is being explained by highlighting of the three dimensions: the role of media in the society, the impact of mass media on the human being and its effects on human personality. Without claiming perfection, the paper is part of a necessary step in order to understand the way in which the human personality is redefined through mass media.

The contact between a human being and its environment is possible through the senses with which the human being is endowed, visual, auditory, olfactory, gustative and tactile. Of these, the visual sense is the gate through which, the most images and information enter the human receivers. In this whole process, the mass media is being imposed as a social intermediation function between the human being and the environmental conditions, facilitating the accumulation of information from the environment.

The relationship between the mass media and the human personality develops as a cause–effect dualism, generating global consequences, precise influences and predetermined attitudes. Therefore, the mass media has an informational role, but also an effect due to the fact that through the transmitted information the thinking and the behavior of the human being is being influenced.

The role of the mass media in society

Social remodeling through mass media has become a phenomenon which tends toward globalization, in spite of the barriers imposed by certain states in the East, Asia, or Africa.

In the attempt to understand, master and judge the surrounding world, more and more groups and collectivities depend on the mass media, or implement technological information systems. Thus a stream of messages is being created on the basis of which decisions and investments are being made and new ways of socio–economic development are being drawn.

This continuous flow of messages, observes Coman, envelopes almost entirely individuals and society, removing time for reflection, review and critical analysis of the offered versions.[1]

The ethical and moral extent, in which this flow of information will be governed, can provide a positive development of the society

and implicitly of the human being. The mass media mediates many relations between the state and the public and as Coman said, in the modern world, the mass media has become "the fourth power in the state," a sort of gravitational center in relation to which all other segments of the society position.[2]

Thus the mass media becomes a sort of an interface between the two extremes, the state and the public, offering both parties the opportunity of virtual interaction. The mass media has not only become a channel through which information is being transmitted, but also a source of information, through which it generates changes in the attitudes of the public, observes McQuail.[3]

Thus, from the perspective of forming of public opinion, the mass media complex is the main link, and in this social and economic perimeter this complex becomes increasingly important, the more since the Tech society proposes new dimensions of development. The issue of mass media, as a source of information, is given by the nature of the information which it propagates. But, also in this case things are divided between those who hold the information and those receiving the information, the holder of the information becoming a key element in this process of formatting the human structure.

The mass media, can provide the capture and broadcasting of information, and through this it can arouse a person's curiosity, it can generate new interests, it can help develop training systems, it can widen the knowledge horizon in a certain area, it can provide resources for social integration, it can help develop someone's taste for art or culture, it can shape an individual in lots of possible ways. On the other hand, all this remodeling conceived in a perverted way, may represent deception, degradation and compromise. The background problematic is not provided by the positive development or the compromise, which the mass media has on a person, but by the fact that the hidden purpose is to influence a group as large as possible, to create a new opinion, as stated by Dobrescu.[4]

In general, opinions change according to the information individuals or groups hold, and new information triggers a reorder process. Of course, each individual or group welcomes information in a certain manner, receives it in a specific way, evaluates and interprets

it differently, but the link between information and opinion is beyond any doubt a fact in which lies the overwhelming importance of the media in forming the orientation of the public opinion. About the information, one positive aspect can be highlighted related to the quality of information. When the information is precise, accurate and well formulated, automatically limits for its interpretation appear, and the answer can only be in terms of "yes" or "no". In this case, the information can be accepted or rejected, without being open to comments. When, on the contrary, the information transmitted is vague, insufficiently defined, the field of interpretation becomes extremely wide, and the interpretation itself is made in the sense of closeness to the attitude and the interests of the one who initiated the approach.

These are just a few ways through which mass media can contribute to a holistic development of a society, without forgetting however, that the implications of mass media are not limited to those listed.

The effects of mass media in society

In Romania, as in many other countries, mass media is a power, and from all mass media means, television has the highest impact. As a device, the TV is an invention of the human mind, which in itself is not harmful, but the way in which it is being used, especially in the last 15 years, has turned it into a veritable source of manipulation.

The national and cultural factors, as well as the social and economic stratification affect the consumption of the mass media messages, and the dependency on the social system in which a particular individual lives is huge. Sometimes people are constrained to choose what they are given, which goes over all the barriers of individual control.

The daily experiences, notes Dragan, prove the dependency on mass media messages.[5]

For example, people choose a certain way of dressing under the influence of the weather forecast, shop on the basis of an advertisement, go to a movie promoted by the television and redefine

pleasures depending on what the television shows as part of the alleged social development. All these aspects highlight a society strongly affected by the messages and information from the mass media and at disposal of its ordered compliance.

Even more than these personal views, Petcu observes, that even the political candidates and the political parties are constantly concerned in finding ways by which they can communicate virtually with the electorate, so that they would win votes.[6] From this fact results that the one that is the owner of the mass media, is also the owner of those who comply with the messages provided by the mass media.

The advertising agencies, observes Weiss, have developed an exceptional social marketing, through the knowledge of the habits, the desires and the needs, trying to create ads and messages that will bring bigger sales for a particular good.[7] To be sure of success, specialists have created different forums on which they can post information relating to a particular product and which ensures the sale of that product.

Mass media profoundly affects society and the individual, because it is a constant presence in his life, it has a universality that no other institution has. Because of this, the analysis of the way in which the mass media affect the society, in a deliberate manner, as a result of a planned strategy or in a random way, is still one of the major concerns of researchers.

The effects of mass media can be felt in different areas of the society: D. McQuail noted that the mass media can operate on individuals, groups, institutions, the entire society, and that it can affect human personality in the cognitive dimension by changing its world view, in the emotional dimension by modifying or creating feelings or attitudes and the behavioral dimension through changes in the way in which individuals act and by social mobilization phenomenon.[8]

From another perspective, mass media may have a short–term influence, or may need a longer period of time to become operational. Also, the effects of mass media can create the desired or less desired changes. They can be the result of a controlled process, such as the press campaigns, or part of other expected or unexpected events.

The impact of the mass media on the adult population and on the children

One characteristic of mass media is that it can form the character of an individual, often erroneously by the impact it has. If from the psychological standpoint there are few resources to change the character of an adult, mass media manages this with a high success rate. If we take television as an example, due to the fact that the individual spends an exaggerated amount of time in front of the TV, his mind may be imprinted by the ideas or opinions transmitted by the program being watched. This does not occur as a result of a mental effort done by the individual, but it simply takes place via the neuronal connections which are being redefined by the received information.

Mass media may be considered responsible for the structuring of the activities and the daily routine of human beings, notes O'Reagan.[9] The press informs daily or weekly the readers about the aggressions or abuse which occur. Of course, in many cases, the journalists pursue the sensational aspects, by publishing a series of information meant to satisfy through spicy details the taste of the public. The statistics for Romania are rather alarming.

A study titled, "Measuring the degree of violence present in the Romanian audiovisual programs" was conducted during October 13 through October 19 2008 by a team of researchers from the Center for Media Studies and New Communication Technology, and coordinated by professor Ioan Dragan, the head of the Center. The project focused on the weight, the duration and the frequency of the acts of violence broadcasted on the TV shows of 13 TV channels—TVR1, Antena 1, Antena 3, Acasa, PRO TV, Realitatea TV, Prima TV, B1 TV, OTV, Kanal D, Cartoon Network, Jetix, Minimax—that were broadcasted during news, entertainment, fictional, reality show, advertising and promo transmissions. The types of violence that were studied included: actual violence, fictional violence, as well as the verbal and physical violence, psychological, economic, sexual and social violence. The main conclusions reached by this study were that while the cartoon channels broadcast on average 20 acts of violence per one hour, mainstream and informative news broadcast an average of 14 acts of violence.

Ioan Dragan noticed that the perverse effect of these programs, although unintentional, may be the apologetic portrayal of crime and violence. Another effect was the establishment of a culture of violence, which can lead to a certain accommodation with media violence, and even with the accommodation of social violence in the life of the people. Television violence does not only affect through the dose in which it is injected into the viewer, but also through the manner in which it is understood, choreographed and interpreted.[10]

As a result, the children are exposed daily to some negative examples, from scenes of violence, to ads, to unhealthy products, or bad characters that come to kidnap them if they are not good. Studies show that the exposure to such messages influence the children in the first years of life, who have a tendency to imitate what they see.[11]

For the first time, in 2006, Itsy Bitsy FM, the first radio for children, pulled an alarm signal on this subject. Under the title "Protect your child's innocence," Itsy Bitsy launched an educational campaign, which urged the parents and grandparents to be aware of the messages arriving to their children, because "Children do what they see."[12]

If for adults, observes Weiss, an advertising campaign has to work very much at the level of the psychological shaft, in order to determine by intense motivation, to consume or to buy a certain product, for children this advertising campaign will only have to present the childhood universe through happy, fun and exciting messages and images, without motivating their desire towards wanting a product.[13] A joyful slogan, a fragment of a song, colorful images, cartoon heroes, fun and exciting actions are the means by which an advertisement draws the attention of a child and influences it.

Conclusions

Through its channels, mass media can be a "two–edged" sword. As a progress factor, its influence is reflected by raising the quality of the cultural and social life standards. As a mean of dominance and manipulation, it only provides a one–sided approach or it is reducing the public response to the great challenges of the day–to–day reality.

The perception of mass media is different from an individual to another due to the professional structure and the educational level, due to the existence and functionality of democratic institutions and the level of economic development. The greatest impact of mass media can be observed on the children, because they do not have the discernment to select the information and by this way to choose that what is best for them.

The mass media does not have a command power like the institution of the state have, but its impact on society is overwhelming, it informs by developing the critical spirit, it creates wildly held views; it launches trends and propels personalities. Used in a rational and ethical manner, mass media and the information will increase the knowledge and the development of the society, by offering major benefits. However used in a malicious manner, the mass media may constitute a destructive factor for the society.

NOTES

1 Mihai Coman, *Mass–media în România post–comunistă* (București: Ed. Polirom, 2003), 35.

2 Mihai Coman, *Introducere in sistemul mass–media* (Bucuresti: Editura Polirom, 1999), 8.

3 Denis McQuail, Sven Windhal, *Modele ale comunicării pentru studiul comunicării de masă* (București Editura Școala Națională de Studii Politice și Administrative, 2001), 35.

4 Paul Dobrescu, Alina Bârgăoanu, *Mass–media și societatea* (București: Editura Comunicare.Ro, 2003), 114.

5 Ioan Drăgan, *Paradigme ale comunicării de masă* (București: Editura Șansa, 1996), 166.

6 Marian Petcu, *Sociologia mass-media* (Cluj–Napoca: Editura Dacia, 2002), 142.

7 Brigitte Weiss, *Efectele publicității: Comunicarea de piață de succes: instrumente, reguli și exemple* (București: Editura IAA, 2007), 34.

8 McQuail, 53.

9 Tom O'Reagan, *Australian Television Culture* (St. Leonards: Allen & Unwin, 1993), 65.

10 http://economie.hotnews.ro/stiri-media_publicitate-5351205-studiu-cna-desenele-animate-sunt-cele-mai-violente-emisiuni.htm, 10 jan. 2018.

[11] http://www.buzzle.com/articles/negative-influences-of-media.html (Accessed January 20, 2018).

[12] http://www.wall-street.ro/articol/Marketing-PR/22226/Copiii-fac-ce-vad.html (Accessed February 5, 2018).

[13] Weiss, 75.

The Becoming of the Society: Perspectives from Aristotle and J. J. Rousseau

Ioana–Anca Gherasim
Technical College "C. D. Nenițescu", Baia Mare, Romania
anca.ioana_pop@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT: In the contemporary parlance, in our references to the social life, to our social competences or to our social priorities, it is important to realize that the society as we know it today is the result of many years of interactions, regardless if such interactions were peaceful or violent. The society is still changing and becoming something else every day. We are responsible for that, and we know it. Nevertheless, we are unable to curtail change because social movement is infinite. Therefore, this paper surveys several basic perspectives offered by the ancient Greek philosopher Aristotle, and by the French philosopher, J. J. Rousseau.
KEY WORDS: society**,** culture, law, equality, natural, social, state, liberty, savage, social structure, civic life.

(1) What Does Society Mean?

The concept of society is a very intense disputed topic in the entire world, between scientists or non scientists, between common or specialists, in each domain, in all activity sectors, in a more or less scientific way. Anyhow, each debate is concentrated around the idea that society is an integral piece of each human being. Its importance is justified by the opinion that it is the most important part of our life. What is a person without society? What does he/she believe he/she can have without it? What is good

and what is wrong in his life? All these questions can lead us to the deepest level of understanding the meaning of a society.

The identity of a person is given by the place, the space, the culture and the medium that he/she inherited and where he/she develops each day. The sum of these types of factors gives birth to the society in a very general meaning. Society is our home, society is our space and our time and everyone's reason to be.

It's impossible to define society without talking about the concept of culture. Even if in our daily conversations, when we talk about culture, we refer mostly to a higher level of education, culture is rather the way a group of people are living. This includes the way they dress, the culinary tastes, the customs, the traditions and so on. Without culture we couldn't be humans and we couldn't have our own identity which is, after all, the group identity.

But how can we define society? There are a few main characteristics that we refer to when we try to determine the specificity of society.

First of all there is a specific delimited space, the territory, the natural habitat that houses the people. It represents the nucleus of the social interactions, the physical or the material aspect of a group.

Secondly, we can refer to the ability of keeping an intense and constant interaction between its members, interaction sustained by something that all the people have in common, such as similar values. The French sociologist Emilé Durkheim was saying that the most important characteristic of society is the presence of the *collective conscience* (Durkheim 2002). This can chase away selfishness and let the people be a homogeneous group. With the constant interaction of members arises stability. Stability guarantees the continuous presence of a collective behavior which promotes continuous acceptance. Because of this, the number of members is growing very fast and the effect is the emergence of the social structure.

The Romanian sociologists Cătălin Zamfir and Lazăr Vlăsceanu define the social structure as "the ensemble of the relationships which are quite stable and which characterize the social system of a society made of communities, collectivities, classes, categories and social groups that have their own existence at a time" (Org .Ro) (Zamfir, Vlăsceanu 1993). The social structure includes the relations

between different type of human cohabitation and from human activity inside the society. From this point of view, the society can be divided into two categories: the holistic society where the social has the precedence over the individual, and the individualistic society, where the individual precedes the social. Most of the contemporary societies are built like individualistic societies.

Thirdly, society should be able to have the autonomy to function by its own rules. Here are included the institutions, organizations, the rules and the standards created inside the society. The most important thing is that it has self control and its autonomy is based on the lack of exterior constraints.

Nevertheless, society should have a great ability to integrate the new members because the dynamic and the mobility of the population is continuously changing and that's why it's important to be prepared for what is new, with new rules and new institutions if necessary. There are two assumptions referring to the appearance of society. The first one starts from the idea that through their nature, people are social beings and they have a social instinct which leads them towards the others, thus creating the cooperation with those of their kind.

According to the second hypothesis, the people don't have a social instinct because, in nature, far away from the social conventions, they have absolute freedom. Anyway, because at some time they couldn't manage their life and the conflicts, they were forced to adopt a contract and to let themselves guided by rules. This was the main reason for which the people left their natural way of life and became members of a society.

Anyway, the main idea is that society appears as a result of its members' interaction, as a system built on some specific rules, on very particular standards and it is continuously concerned about conservation.

(2) Aristotle and the civic life

Aristotle is well known by its remarkable expression "the human is a social animal" and this remark seemed to explain in a simple way

the fundamentals of any anthropology. He starts from the idea that no person can live alone, isolated, far away from the others. We can live only together, in pairs and communities to fulfill our instinctive calling: to practice the well and to share it with the others.

The first community is the family. The man and the woman look for each other lead by a natural instinct to leave behind a descendant, an inheritor. Each of those two spouses has specific attributions, one of them has to lead and the other one has to be lead. "Those who can foresee with their mind should be in a natural way the masters and the leaders and those who can realize with their bodies what is foreseen, they should be the obedient in a natural way." (Aristotle 2001, 35) Also, few families compose the village, more villages constitute a colony and more colonies give birth to the city. And this is the way society is formed. The society is a beneficial institution which existed before the humans and that's why it is considered like a pole of attraction for all the people. The society is the salvation of the human race.

According to Aristotle, each society should be characterized by unity, but we are not talking about the Socratic unity where everybody is equal with his/her fellows. We are talking about the *proportional unity*. This new concept refers especially to the differences between people and, most of all it refers to the ethnic differences. In his opinion, the number of different ethnic people should be the same.

Another topic that refers to society is the idea of using collectively all the things, including women and children. He disagrees with the idea of common usage of the goods. If something belongs to someone, then it doesn't belong to anyone because no one takes the responsibility of the personal property over that thing and in this case no one would take care of it.

Besides that, a society which doesn't have a private property is an unhappy one. The people want to feel that they have something of their own, something that they can count, change, sell or give as inheritance. In this case we have to talk about equality. But this new concept of equality is not an abstract one or a theoretical one. Aristotle considered that the equality should be made in fortune and in education. Each person should have the right to have enough

money, or he/she should be rich if he deserves it and works for that. It's almost the same about education. A person, who has the necessary abilities and wants to get an appropriate education, should get it more than another one who is not that gifted with such abilities.

The identity of a city[1] is given by the persistence of the same nation not of its walls. The people have a constitution that they respect and this is enough to protect them. Besides that, each person has a specific virtue which is useful for respecting the constitution. Each person has its own virtue correlated with his/her activity. For example, the leader is educated in a certain way; the common citizen is educated in another way. Each of these two people has an own virtue but their virtues have nothing in common. The leader has the virtue to lead well, while the common citizen has the virtue to be obedient. Anyway, Aristotle is talking about that person who is educated to lead right and who is following the right constitution. He makes the difference between the right constitutions and the deviant constitutions. Those who are right are the monarchy, the aristocracy and the constitutional system. The deviant constitutions would be the tyranny, democracy and the oligarchy.

Other important questions are: who should be the leader for the good of the city? Should it be a rich person or a poor one? Should it be one leader or should there be many of them? The error that appears in those questions, says Aristotle, is the fact that the power is given to humans. The human beings are weak and are tempted to control the others and not to lead them. That is why the power should be in the hands of the law. Before making a law, the legislator should search some things: the constitution that is valid in an absolute way, the best constitution of those who exist, the existent constitution, the constitution that is applicable to a certain society, the differences between constitutions. If he takes into account these aspects, he can formulate right and useful laws for all the citizens.

Aristotle thinks that the most important thing in any constitution or in any city is the *mediation[2]* which is the middle way between extremes. And this idea is available also in what concerns the goods or the spiritual things. "And the happy life, even if it is made of joys or virtues or both, is due to those who have a good balance between excess of character and intelligence, but who keeps

a measure over the exterior goods, rather than to those who have those goods but they lack the others." (Aristotle 2001, 373)

In conclusion, Aristotle sees the society like a very strict organization of the people where each member knows what is his/her duty is and which are his/her virtues. So, each person uses his/her own virtue and is doing what he/she knows best and this is the reason why everything is going well. They are organized like a holistic community whose main principle is keeping the middle way in everything and this seems to bring them happiness.

(3) J. J.Rousseau and the Natural Status

If Aristotle is talking about society comparing it with a life boat for humans, J. J. Rousseau is not that delighted about this. He thinks that the society is the result of the evolution process but not in a beneficial way. According to Rousseau, the society is responsible for perverting the human soul and making them very unhappy.

He describes the savage people, absolutely free and happy, living like animals and behaving like it. "I see an animal less powerful and less agile than the others but anyway better organized than all the animals. I see it quenching its hunger under an oak and its thirst in the first met stream, finding a place to sleep under the tree that feeds it—so there you have its necessities satisfied." (Rousseau 2001, 29, 30)

The savage imitates animals' gestures and he learns from them how to hunt, how to fight, how to survive. That's why the animals consider him one of their kind and, more than that, some of them are afraid of him and don't fight with him. The savage has a robust body, strong and tough to diseases and accustomed to unfavorable circumstances. He isn't afraid of anything except the childhood, the old age and the disease. All these are the signs of weakness and he doesn't like to be weak. His only concern is his own conservation. This is why he can be untroubled and happy.

But, even so, his great quality which became his biggest disadvantage is his ability to improve his self every day. After all, this is also the main difference between him and other animals.

Because of this, the humans evolved that much and became how we know them today. "What else could deprave him that much if not the changing that appeared in his structure, the progresses that he had made and the knowledge that he had acquired? We can admire the society as much as we like—it won't be less true that it pushes the people to hate each other when they have common interests, to offer apparent favors to each other, but in fact to cause each other all the bad that we can imagine." (Rousseau 2001, 98)

This description of social human reveals the idea that the savage didn't have virtues or vices. He had only love and care for his own person, while the social human has *love of self* which is equal to selfishness. And Rousseau continues the idea of differences between those types of love like that: "The humans wouldn't be anything else but some monsters if nature wouldn't give them the compassion sustained by reason . . . to want for someone to be unhurt is not the same thing like to want for him to be happy?" (Rousseau 2001, 49)

As I was saying before, the society is the result of human evolution. The first step in their evolution is the language. At the beginning, the savage was using some gestures but, in time, he started to make some noises and after a while he could say words and even sentences. This was a crucial point in human's evolution.

After that, the human realized that he is superior to the other animals and this made him proud and determined him to use his mental abilities, rather than his physical skills. He observed that it is easier to hunt like that and to get his food this way. After a while he realized that it is better to live in common with the others because they can protect each other and they are stronger like that. This way the feeling of marital life and the kindness arose in his soul. With time, families had more and more interactions; they started to share the lands and this way private property appeared. "The first man who enclosed a land daring to say 'this is mine' and succeeded to find enough naive people to believe him, that was the true founder of the civil society." (Rousseau 2001, 58) So this is the way that the civil society was born.

So far nothing seems to be wrong with society. In fact, we could say it is even better than before. But, along with the intellectual development of the human, the physical power became weaker and

weaker each day. Also, because of the new way of living, this new man learned how to cook and how to work the land, to cultivate plants and use them in the kitchen. It didn't take long until his body started to feel the weaknesses and also the diseases. He needed to be cured and to recover. Now he needs the others more than any other time. He created his dependence of them.

On the other hand, some of the new people became rich and started to enslave the others. Because life was chaotic and most of the people couldn't be able to protect themselves they were forced to make laws. But the law didn't help them so much because most of the legislators made abusive laws thus the tyranny appeared. So this is the way that the savage man became a slave for those of his own kind.

If we compare the savage and the social human, we can say that the savage is living within his self, peaceful and happy, while the social man lives outside him through the others, working hard and struggling every day, dependant of others' opinions and beliefs. This is the result of his progress, that "happy" life he was dreaming of. Sometimes, says Rousseau, I have the impression that reason is a malefic mood: "I almost dare to say that the thinking condition is an unnatural one and the man who thinks is a degenerated animal." (Rousseau 2001, 33)

According to Rousseau, the natural status was the best one for the people, the normal way of life for mankind. But, even so, the progress was unavoidable because, as Rousseau is forced to admit, the most important characteristic of the human being is his capacity to improve his self every day. So, as a sad but true conclusion, Rousseau seems to end his pleading with these words: "the human was born free but he is always in chains." (Rousseau 2003, 6)

Even if we refer to the Aristotle's assumption about society, or to Rousseau's pleading for natural life, one thing seems to be obvious: society is created by its members' interaction and evolution, by their good and bad decisions, by their truth and by their untruth, by their efforts and errors. The society is the sum of all positive and negative things that the human being can produce. Or, in Terentiu's words, we could say, "I am a human being and thus nothing human is strange for me."

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Aristotel, *Politica,* Bucureşti: Editura Iri, 2001.

Banu, Ion, *Aristotel*, Bucureşti: Editura Ştiinţifică, 1996.

Barns, Jonathan, *Aristotel*, trad. Ioan–Lucian Muntean, Bucureşti: Editura Humanitas, 1996.

Baumgarten, Alexander, *7 idei înrâuritoare ale lui Aristotel*, Bucureşti: Editura Humanitas, 2012.

Chelcea, Septimiu, *Metodologia cercetării sociologice*, Bucureşti: Editura Economică, 2007.

Zamfir, Cătălin, Lazăr Vlăsceanu, eds., *Dicţionar de sociologie*, Bucureşti: Editura Babel, 1993.

Durkheim, Emile, *Regulile metodei sociologice*, Iaşi: Editura Polirom, 2002.

Giddens, Anthony, *Sociologie*, Bucureşti: Editura All, 2000.

Herseni, Traian, *Sociologie. Teoria general a vieţii sociale*, Bucureşti: Editura Ştiinţifică şi Enciclopedică, 1982.

Ionescu, I.I, *Sociologii constructiviste*, Iaşi: Editura Polirom, 1998.

Isac, Dumitru, *Aristotel*, Bucureşti: Editura Tineretului, 1959.

Mihăilescu, I, *Sociologie generală*, Iaşi: Editura Polirom, 2003.

Rousseau, J. J., *Contractul social*, Filipeştii de Târg, Prahova: Editura Antet, 2003.

Rousseau, J. J., *Discurs asupra originii şi fundamentelor inegalităţii dintre oameni*, Bucureşti: Editura Best Publishing, 2001.

Spencer, Herbert, *Individul împotriva statului*, Bucureşti: Editura Incitatus, 2002.

Weber, Max, *Teorie şi metodă în ştiinţele culturii*, Iaşi: Editura Polirom, 2001.

NOTES

[1] The original name of the *city* in Aristotle's writings is *fortress* and every time he refers to what we call *city* today, he means *fortress*.

[2] The most appropriate word would be *mediaty*.

The Holistic Approach of the Literary Symbol in Dimitrie Anghel's Poetry

Cosmina Andreea Roşu, PhD (cand.)
University of Piteşti, Romania
racosmina@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT: For the first time, Aristotle synthesised, in his *Metaphysics*, the holistic principle, in a specific way, sustaining the idea that a system's properties cannot be determined or explained individually by each of its parts, but the system, as a whole, determines how its parts would act. The holistic approach of literary symbols implies the change of the attitude in order to facilitate the comprehension, and to discover things in a more optimistic process, holding back the pessimistic view of things. The human being in relation with itself, with the society and the universe, has a unique manner of exhibition recorded in modern cognitive psychology, and sometimes manifested in literature. C. G. Jung's concept of "collective unconscious" implied a bond between the individual and humanity as a whole; the representation of an idea that becomes a symbol of a universal acceptance.
KEY WORDS: literature, consciousness, ideas, poem, symbol

For the first time, Aristotle synthesised in his Metaphysics the holistic principle in a specific way: "An entire is more than the sum of its parts." It sustains the idea that a system's properties cannot be determined or explained individually by each of its parts, but the system, as a whole, determines how its parts would act.

The holistic approach implies achieving an emotional goal: the change of the attitude in order to facilitate the comprehension and

to discover things in a more optimistic process, holding back the pessimistic view of things.

The human being in relation with itself, with the society and the universe, has a unique manner of exhibition recorded in modern cognitive psychology, and sometimes manifested in literature. Jung tried to understand the human psychic in its whole according to its relationships with others. Thus, its concept of collective unconscious implied a bond between the individual and humanity as a whole. So, the representation of an idea becomes a symbol of a universal acceptance.

Most of the time incursions into diverse areas as ethnography, philosophy, psychoanalysis, linguistics, rhetoric, aesthetics and poetics are taken in order to understand the connection literature–symbol given that literature seems inextricably linked to the idea of a symbol. But the problem is that the literary symbol has not been sufficiently or satisfactorily yet theorised despite multidisciplinary character of researches in the field of poetry.

Originally, the symbol represents the sign of an ontological, analogical or conventional connection. Furthermore, the evolution of language, the symbolic relations have become increasingly complex. The symbol offers to the sensitivity, sensitive or intelligible realities so that the submitted idea—cannot be accounted for in a different way—it remains eternally active.

Together with the devoted symbols (now conventional) it also appears the contingent symbols (according to the name given by Henri Morier) created by the writer who gives a symbolic value to the object, being or circumstance. This function of the poetic language is programmatic used by symbolism/the symbolist poets for which the poetic symbol becomes a substitute for the absolute truth.

Besides the advent of psychoanalysis, symbolic interpretation of oneiric experiences has been used, the symbol appearing subconsciously. In Sigmund Freud's conception, any symbol is a representation of a repressed experience, censored by super–ego, which could not have in this way a form of direct expression, but only ciphered.

Frequently, we encounter in Dimitrie Anghel's poetic work numerous symbols, enciphers of inner states, most revolving around

the concept of "flower" (although not always mentioned this word), especially in the targeted volume, "In the garden"/"In gradina." There are mentioned here many kinds of flowers, from the "noble" ones as the rose, the lily to the common ones and considered by other writers insignificant—the marjoram, the goldenseal, the basil—totalling 40 different names of flowers encountered by their colour in its system of representations. The poet cultivates the artificial nature environment, humanised by the gardens and the process of synaesthesia. He is a contemplative person, a dreamer who brings the theme of travels in poetry, the theme of evasion, bohemian motif and images of the marine landscape. The symbolism in his poetry is combined with romantic notes.

Starting from the poem that opens the homonymous volume the symbol of garden has been detached (symbol of its system of correspondence and images) in different meanings: the garden—the legendary park, the garden—the temple (The garden is a grape sweet—"Melancholy"), the garden—a place of mystery in which sweet spells are included ("flowers"). In the garden, stories and legends are taken place in the centre of which they are either plant through the flowers carefully chosen, or nymphs, vestals, deities and legendary figures as rolled down from Olympus (Elysium fields, Elseneur, Hamlet, Oleander, Hera, Ofelia)—exotic elements carried out from aboriginal. In Dimitrie Anghel's poetry the garden is a miniature world, the cosmos, the heavenly earth and it is populated by a wide range of plants.

The man exercising his power over tamed nature and in the centre of the garden is THE FLOWER that returns frequently as a literary motif in various forms. The flower embodies the spiritual perfection bringing together the virtues of the soul, the edenic state obtained through love and harmony. The flowers are divided into *feeble, mallow lily–of–the–valley, autumn, shadow, true, field flowers*; sometimes *they die melted by dreaming* or *they are sad*—the favourite personified epithet of the poet.

The poet does not seem to have any preference for a particular type of flower, but THE ROSE with *its leaves of wax* is remarkable or the one with *white diaphanous*[1] *petals falling down,* totalling the inner feelings, love, self–awareness and, at the same time, the

regeneration and the initiation into the mysteries, rarely extinction by wilting—*rose dying*.[2]

The passionate and steadfast love, safety is symbolised by THE BASIL—a plant that has been ignored by other poets. This also symbolizes the solar spell of the Romanian village in the sense of folk belief, purification that has to do with the holy water of baptism with a strong ancestral anchor, as the powerful olfactory inflections such as the lily, embalming the whole space of the garden where *the flowers are fighting* and *the only winner until now reigns the basil*.[3] The olfactory is concerned by fierce competition—*many of them compete to win or die in battle*[4] being involved *the naive wrath of flowers* and lily and the jasmine, *the proud verbena*s, *a broken mallow* under the seal of the night *suddenly it smells of love and death*.[5]

The noble, predominantly white LILY symbolises pure and innocent love, wearing *a royal mantle*,[6] it is the flower of glory and also the flower of death, likened with the sacred chalice, encompassing the bliss that leads to oblivion under its narcotic power—after the rain *the lilies wake up in the shade*, *shedding their profane breeze*.[7] In the same register *as by a charm*, its power is overwhelming: *And under the sign made by the lily* (...) *each of them/a leave is shaken in the wind—and the wind has left the garden*,[8] in this way managing the freedom of the other flowers under the tyranny of winter. The lily once symbolised the light and the masculine principle.

The light in Anghel's poems is WHITE and strong. The mallow flowers are also white or *white flowers of lily–of–the–valley* next to *a light face* and *a ghostly white hand* dominated by the light with *silver butterflies*[9] mirrored under the tutelage of jasmine perfume—and this being a pure white. White is also represented by *snowflakes*,[10] *canvas as white as the snow*.[11] White is not attributed only to the flowers but also to the mists, the oxymoron: *white mists* personified—they were *sleeping piles of defeated sleep; of the white mist bands*, with *their white wings* that they *were lost the silent night*[12] (in a regal of personifications and metaphors in ample visual images).

The SUN is associated with white and light as a multi–faceted entity, it is also the manifestation of divinity. It is the source of light, heat and of life and immortality. Although *grieved* is a *good sweet brother*, offering *the last kiss*. It is the life force of the universe, it

represents the good and it is metaphorically surprised *the golden nest* and *the sweet yellow's glow*.[13] The ubiquitous symbol, the garden, comes under the protective sun.

THE TWILIGHT brings into existence the atmosphere of dusk creating the image before carrying out the achievement of a miracle, it announces the great journey and it introduces the death with the feelings of melancholy and nostalgia, it is a trigger of reveries and nostalgic beauty of the exterior and also the interior, inner decline.

The only spot of colour seen in the poem "In the Garden" is provided by the appearance of *leaf wax* roses and of the carnation that remains stuck to the soul *like a drop of blood*,[14] the organic interpenetration of an *animus* with an *anima*. From the poem's opening volume thus, the unprecedented comparison introduces, the ardour and the beauty, symbolism of *red* rosy played by an impressive force in *a world enriched by roses*.[15] The same colour is reproduced indirectly by the appearance of the precious stone which is compared with the flower—*a goldenseal like a ruby*[16] or *rose* with its superabundant petals . . . like *blood splatter*,[17] *the pale woodbine is bloody*,[18] emphasising the idea of lust and passion.

The entire chromatic first volume of poems is concentrated on the expressive power of the RAINBOW that meets an overwhelming frequency: *lights of rainbows are thrown from the sky*,[19] *Sun rainbows*[20] with its contribution to the musicality through its symbolism: the seven colours are identified with the seven musical notes, the contrast of its composition and the adverse colours warns about the human being inherent dualism. The rainbow animates the materiality of the world and raises awareness.

THE SUNFLOWER is associated with THE LIGHT whom the sun *sent its thoughts on the last kiss.* The lack of light suggests extinction—*How difficult must be the sleep in the dust of hillocks*.[21] So the sleep motif induces the idea of crossing the timelessness and the dissolving of any states of suffering leading to a spiritual inertia.

The death of flowers is frequently: marjorams' death—*and now they fade away*,[22] *the autumn flowers*[23] *fade away, too, grieved flowers fade away, a rose was fading away*,[24] *the life of faded away queens*,[25] *life would have died defeated by melancholy*.[26] The sleep also refers to extinction, the death being the daughter of the night and the sister

of the sleep. This is achieved by *hovering the darkness of the night sweet and full of mysteries*.[27] Olfactory images are interwoven with the visual ones in the harmony of an ineffable atmosphere. Under the power of the night there are manifested the doubt, the uncertainty and the yearning for transcendence of the human being with all its intricacies who does not reveal itself, keeping the mystery.

In the garden associated with the hermitage, the death triumphs generating a disarming hypothesis: *life would have died defeated by melancholy*[28] like a rosa at Elseneur which passed away peacefully. It can be defied with *the fire of your mouth to revive the stream of dead waters*, but the feeling is desolated *because the death is everywhere and the death is forever silent*.[29]

In the garden of Luxembourg, *ancient and precious* STATUES appear as a representation of steadiness feelings by petrifying of the happy moment to be enjoyed: *dearest you and me* in contrast to the transience of human being that surprises the missing queens *astonished in the cold stone by a poor perishable hand*.[30] The first material of the statues suggests the steadfastness of feelings the dismayed poet has been aspiring surprised by the contrast of oxymoron: *the eternal romance elapsed,/born from a kiss and dead after ten days.* But the intensity of inner feeling makes all the effort to be rated or any other subsequent suffering: *who wouldn't want to live again those moments?* The inexorable transience focuses in a remarkable structure: *the time was bewildered flowing*[31] all that can be kept is the memory—*years and years have passed away. . . .*[32] *Eternal in this world are only wreathes of laurel leaves.*[33] The laurel is a plant of immortality and emblem of glory, evergreen; it is a symbol of soul immortality.

The calm and friendly atmosphere is caught, most of the times at night when the fairy is accentuated at the highest levels: *A sweet night chased away from a seraglio, by an odalisque*[34] in suggestive text from its title—"A night charm"/"Farmec de noapte"—where the novelty of the metaphor induces the mystery state: *shaded flower* in the *enchanted night* where the beats of the wings *let their flight in depths*.[35]

THE BIRD with its flight determines the relationship between earthly and celestial elements, but at the same time the means

by which the soul is escaping from the body, even the instability or failure of acquiring certainties—*huge birds sleeping with wide wings*[36] under *the pale sky, in the silent night.*[37] The dove, symbol of peace, takes care of flora: *it seemed that the entire garden is given to them to be guarded.*[38]

The contrast night/dark is frequently met—the light with its potentiating role of oneiric.

The night is the mystery far from the manifestation of demonic; the longing for transcendence located in the depths of human concealment places. The night is associated with black—peer of whites and its opposite, it has been sending to a permanent loss of hope, to the anguish and to the collapse into nothingness, to the original chaos that seems to identify human being at one time. It expects the passivity which is sometimes wanted to be sweetened by reducing, in a unique combination with white (*white mists*).

Often THE EYE which comprises the light and sees towards emphasising the idea of sincere feeling, it is the ability of spiritual perception and it is associated with gods. There are *eyes that cry in the night,*[39] *the most carried away– eyes by dreams.*[40]

THE DREAM encodes the ideals and individualises, being also means of transcendence. Associated to *sleep* it is a technique of escaping from routine, a projection of unspoken desires, it is the work of the spirit to a new realm of complete freedom and it requires the privacy of the consciousness, especially in "A Night Charm"/"Farmec de noapte."

THE WIND is looming as a disturbing factor that brings inconsistency and triggers uncontrolled energies *the song frozen by high wind*. It is *an icy high wind*[41] violent and blind that destabilises the thoughts of the human being. It could also be gentle and regulator of cosmic balance and moral as in "Swap of news"/"Schimb de veşti" when spring brings, sometimes its sifts *dust of flowers* and it relaxes the atmosphere—*and nevertheless the garden is cheerful.*[42] The wind is a manifestation of the divine; it is the spirit or the spiritual influx.

Additionally, the changing/the reinstalling of the season brings GREEN prevailing in any flower throughout the garden. It introduces the hope because the death turns out not to be for good, but it

refers to the possibility of resurrection, rebirth; sacrifice and love, optimism and eternal love.

Rarely, the precious RAIN is seen in the garden: *the tear of rain, like a diamond lit by a ray*[43] like the intellectual fertility likened to a gift from the gods.

THE WATER itself is the origin of life and a way of the purification, a centre of regeneration, fertility but also wisdom and virtue. Traditionally it is the origin of creation, the generator of life and death. We retrieve it in *the tear* (it is a testimony of pain and intercession, an uninterrupted flow of the water of soul, identified as lily–of–the–valley), in the rain, in the spring, into the fountain and into the pool—eye water of the garden. Oleander blooms near the pool where *the water refreshes for a moment; it has been renewing its mirror in the moon.*[44] THE FOUNTAIN embodies the eternal youth, life, immortality or perpetual rejuvenation, regeneration and purification, learning.

The reflection is the MOON, the seclusion space of happy souls; it is the feminine principle which transforms reality. It identifies itself to the essential element of the cosmos, the eye of the universe, a gate to the inner world, to experience artistic feeling, rhythmically repeating life—*it is the holy Moon, a travelling wheel*[45] invoked in "The curse of the mother"/"Blestem de mamă."

The mystery is supported by the presence of the Virgin that has not been revealed. There are mentioned mythological figures such as Ariadne, Hera, Ofelia, Narcissus, Elseneur, to the Vestals or courtesans related to their symbolism, along with personification of flowers in the whole Dimitrie Anghel's lyric.

The olfactory is filled by the presence of jasmine, basil, lily, lily–of–the–valley (and form Lily–of–the–valley), rose—*sorrowful smell of roses*—images charged stylistically.

The visual is crowned by rainbows.

The musical instruments are added to the symbols complementing the sonority of lyrics. We meet the brass bands and the drumming in the Parisian context, and the lyre is mentioned in the garden where silence reigns and *where peace grows funereally* then *the silent wind/Like a slumbering hand on the broken string of a lyre.*[46] The silence is disturbed by the noise of fanfares *sounding*

a horrid long noise over plane trees; in the desert of the garden the night is announced by *a drum–distant* that sounded *like after battle.*[47]

The reflecting of the two worlds (human and vegetable) one in the other one is performed using the omniscient MIRROR: *Near the tired mirrors, a shaky and pale girl/turns flowers in the pots, as pious as a vestal./. . . If it had a mouth to speak, the mirror would say many*[48]. This reveals as a small universe in which the poet finds peace, harmony and balance referring to his own childhood, the utopian parallel universe. It symbolises a replica of reality where the ego can watch its true essence or may geminate itself. It involves the self–knowledge, wisdom and prudence.

The theme of these texts is based on the fairy created by fine smells of flowers and it represents an echo of the mallarmean symbol by Samain.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Anghel, Dimitrie, *Versuri şi proză*, Bucureşti: Editura Albatros, 1989.

Anghel, Dimitrie, *Poezii şi proză*, Bucureşti: Editura Andreas Print, 2010.

Anghel, Dimitrie, Şt. Octavian Iosif, *Cometa*, Bucureşti: Editura Librăriei SOCEC, 1908.

Boldea, I., *De la modernism la postmodernism*, Târgu–Mureş: Editura Universităţii „Petru Maior", 2011.

Boldea, I., *Teme şi variaţiuni*, Ed. EuroPress, 2012, Digital Edition.

Bote Marino, L., *Simbolismul românesc*, Bucureşti: Editura pentru Literatură, 1966.

Călinescu, George, *Curs de poezie (principii de estetică)*, Bucureşti: Ed. Universal Dalsi, 1998.

Călinescu, George, *Istoria literaturii române*, Bucureşti: Editura Semne, 2003.

Cioculescu, Şerban, *Dimitrie Anghel*, Bucureşti: Editura Publicom, 1945.

Dorcescu, E., *Poetica non–imanenţei*, Semănătorul Bucureşti: Editura on–line, 2008.

Evseev, I. *Dicţionarde simboluri şi arhetipuri culturale*, Timişoara: Amarcord, 1994.

Golopenţia–Eretescu, Sanda, M. Mancaş, *Studii de istoria limbii române literare*. Bucureşti: Editura pentru Literatură, 1969.

Iosif, Şt. Ooctavian, Dimitrie Anghel, *Legenda funigeilor*, Bucureşti: Editura Librăriei UNIVERSALA Alcalay & Co., 1920.

Micu, D., *Literatura română în secolul al XX–lea*, Bucureşti: Editura Fundaţiei Culturale Române, 2000.

Moşandrei, M., „Dimitrie Anghel, poet al florilor," *Universul literar*, Anul XLVII, Nr. 44, 17 Decembrie 1938.

Tatomirescu, Pachia I., *Dicţionar estetico–literar, lingvistic, religios, de teoria comunicaţiei*, Timişoara: Editura Aethicus, 2003.

Pillat, Ion, *Opere*, Bucureşti: Editura DU Style, 2003.

Sasu, A., *Dicţionarul biografic al literaturii române*, vol. I, Piteşti: Editura Paralela 45, 2006.

Streinu, V., *Versificaţia modernă*, Bucureşti: Editura pentru Literatură, 1966.

Vianu, Tudor, *Arta prozatorilor români*, Bucureşti: Editura 100+1 Gramar, 2002.

Zamfirescu, M., *Poemul românesc în proză*, Bucureşti: Editura Minerva, 1984.

NOTES

1 1 Dimitrie Anghel, *Poezii şi proză*. (Bucureşti: Editura Andreas Print, 2010), 18.

2 Ibid, 25.

3 Ibid, 11.

4 Ibid, 12.

5 Ibid.

6 Ibid, 7.

7 Ibid, 12.

8 Ibid, 25.

9 Ibid, 6.

10 Ibid, 24.

11 Ibid, 17.

12 Ibid, 21.

13 Ibid, 10.

14 Ibid, 6.

15 Ibid, 7.

16 Ibid, 8.

17 Ibid, 25.

18 Ibid, 9.

19 Ibid, 8.

20 Ibid, 14.

21 Ibid.

[22] Ibid, 8.

[23] Ibid, 10.

[24] Ibid, 12.

[25] Ibid, 16.

[26] Ibid, 18.

[27] Ibid, 11.

[28] Ibid, 19.

[29] Ibid, 23.

[30] Ibid, 16.

[31] Ibid, 17.

[32] Ibid, 14.

[33] Ibid, 27.

[34] Ibid.

[35] Ibid, 18.

[36] Ibid, 21.

[37] Ibid, 19.

[38] Ibid, 16.

[39] Ibid, 15.

[40] Ibid, 17.

[41] Ibid, 23.

[42] Ibid, 15.

[43] Ibid, 16.

[44] Ibid, 20.

[45] Ibid, 28.

[46] Ibid, 19.

[47] Ibid. 17.

[48] E. Dorcescu, (*Poetica non–imanenţei.* Semănătorul Bucureşti: Editura on–line, 2008), 10.

Strategies for Holistic Social Development

Grigore Nicu, PhD (cand.)
Bucharest University, Romania
grigorenicu@gmail.com

ABSTRACT: This paper aims to emphasize the significance of holistic social development for the contemporary society. A context in which understanding and dealing with such a complex subject requires that there are a number of areas that determine a holistic social development. These include: how technology is used, the integration of technology in the learning process, which leads to the development of students, the promotion of science and culture as factors generating personal, community and social development. These areas lead to developing ways in which people communicate with each other, both within the narrow school context, for example, as well as within the broader context of society, with implications for the relationship between individuals, their involvement in society and, implicitly, the design of strategies for holistic social development. KEY WORDS: Holistic social development; sustainability; technology; students; science; culture; strategies

We are living in a growing society, in a broad process of development and adaptation, which inevitably implies a learning process. Thus, we also look at the holistic development of society by referring to strategies that help us achieve these goals. Therefore, we do not consider it, as some people might think, just an educational development, given that it is a learning process, but also an economic, financial and social one of an individual. We are talking about a holistic development, an integrated one combining several aspects and elements. We have several factors that together lead to specific strategies that need customized approaches.

Starting from the above–mentioned aspects, this research aims to emphasize the importance that the subject, the theme of holistic social development has for contemporary society. A context in which understanding and dealing with such a complex subject requires that there are a number of areas that determine a holistic social development. These include how technology is used, the integration of technology in the learning process, which leads to the development of students, the promotion of science and culture as factors generating personal, community and social development.

These areas lead to developing ways in which people communicate with each other, both within the narrow school context, for example, as well as within the broader context of society, with implications for the relationship between individuals, their involvement in society and, implicitly, the design of strategies for holistic social development.

Thus, a number of essential aspects are achieved, which play a crucial role in the holistic development of society, starting from the basic cell of the society that is the family, continuing through the educational institutions, whether we are talking about the gymnasium, high school or university level and reaching the community. In all these segments, a crucial role is played by science, culture and the development of communication. We come back to the aspect of communication that becomes a key element in the discussion of holistic social development strategies.

The mentioned aspects are highlighted in the everyday life of Romania through those Roma communities living on the poverty line who do not have access to social protection systems, specialized medical assistance or the possibility to follow a classical educational system.

It follows that a holistic development strategy of society must also take into account such situations, and such communities. As a consequence, their socio–economic situation constitutes a barrier to their social holistic development. It is necessary to design programs that aim at reducing social gaps and a holistic development at the community level.

The concept of holistic development is a relatively new one, which is why it is necessary to present some information about it.

We thus speak of an integral and integrated development of skills, knowledge, abilities, and values. This term of holistic development is understood as a complex but integrated development in terms of the person, the human being and the society. We come to the fact that the skills and knowledge necessary for sustainable development are acquired over the coming decades, so that people and society as a whole co–operate towards this holistic development of society. In this way, we have an integration, but also an interpenetration of several key elements that lead, as we have already mentioned, to sustainable development in the future as a society, to personal development if we refer to individuals or small groups. At country level, one of the purposes of this development is to ensure prosperity.

In order for this concept of holistic social development to work, we must understand the mechanisms that govern it. Thus, we talk about the specific capacities that children naturally accumulate in their first years of childhood. We are talking about a similarity to what has happened over time with ancient cultures and civilizations. Some of the most powerful were the Egyptian, Greek and Roman civilizations. At a careful analysis we observe a hierarchy of society that implies a common, unitary development, which also implies that the members of society have specific roles and duties. Involvement in society was also different. Some were learning as disciples, others were learning the meaning of philosophy, others were philosophers who were passing on the knowledge they had gained. What is interesting in this context is the model of Greece where we have the concept of democracy, a word that is made up of a demo that refers to the people and kratos that refers to power. By joining these two words, the meaning of democracy refers to the leadership of the people, to direct leadership directly exercised by the people in this case, a direct democracy because the people exercise their will directly. A similarity from this point of view is also found in the Church as an institution that can be compared to a certain extent with a society. We have people with different capacities and gifts, at different levels of knowledge, working together for development and achieving a common good.

When we refer to holistic concept as integrating the whole person, we mean integrating the environment and the emotional,

psychological, physiological, ethical and familial aspect. The above–mentioned aspects refer to both contemporary and person's history, which has happened over a longer time frame. But not only that, but when we talk about this concept of holistic development with application to the social development of a human being, we are considering its development in an integral person, one that integrates in its evolution capacities from a multitude of domains, of which we enunciate:

(1) temperament, personality and self–views;
(2) cognition;
(3) emotions;
(4) volition;
(5) physical;
(6) social/interpersonal;
(7) moral character; and
(8) citizenship.

These are all areas of great importance for a unitary, holistic development of a person in society. What is really interesting is that we are talking about a combination of areas from different spheres, namely from moral, religious, even physical, mental and social development such as citizenship. We have a progressive development that starts from the temperament, personality and the opinions of man, goes through the emotional and moral part, reaching the unitary development from a physical point of view, as well as the integration of the person thus formed into the society as a citizen. Citizenship is the element that shows man's dependence on society, interaction between the human sphere and the social sphere.

Evolution, the development of the human person does not happen at once, but it is a learning process that begins in childhood, continues in adolescence and reaches maturity with the man who better understands society, those around him. The success of this development requires a personalized and customized educational program for each individual situation. Although maturity does not ask what society does for you, but what you do for it, however, for a person to provide what is best, the society must have previously invested in its development from an educational point of view,

but also moral. We draw attention to the fact that today it tends more and more to a society without genuine values. We are talking about a relativism of moral ideas, of truths in a certain sphere of knowledge. Falseness is noticed in the fact that although stupidity is proclaimed emphatically, it tends to suppress only the fundamental truth revealed by the Bible. Although some people assert that the truth is universal, it does not take account of the same measure in the field of exact sciences. We are rhetorically asking why they are fighting only for a new man without self–conscience and faith in God, and do not apply the same measure in other areas of existence.

Belief in God should have its role in holistic social development just as education has. Thus, in order for today's young people to become tomorrow's trained people capable of supporting the holistic development of society, they need to invest in education. The same thing is also required for society, to support education in the conditions in which during the youth, people accumulate not only information, but also skills. To be able to thrive as adults, children and young people need a good environment to provide them with the appropriate learning experiences.

We have several models that show us the steps towards achieving the holistic social development process. A first step would be to identify those capacities that can be developed, some of which can be directed through a guided learning process. The follow–up step aims at conducting a inquiry on the research available to continue examining the contexts in which people as individuals will use their capabilities.

We have a holistic development of society, and within it we have a holistic development of youth, one that, although it also contemplates contemporary aspects, nevertheless does not depart from classical values. We do not want to create a new framework, but creating over the existing one that allows young people to acquire new knowledge, to thrive. We have an object, a long–term development that must be matched with values. If youth prosper only from the material point of view, it is only through the accumulation of perennial values and does not thrive spiritually by acquiring eternal values. That is why it is important in this article to move from assumptions to objectives. Through objectives in connection with the holistic development of youth, we have in mind both the human

and the social component. Within the human component we are considering a physical, psychological, but also a spiritual component. Thus we refer to the physical integrity of young people, to the fact that they are whole people recognized as such by the people around them. Moreover, we consider here not only a physical development, but also an educational one, as they acquire certain values through education. Education that correlates with the spiritual principles extracted from the Bible leads to ethical behavior and the person also shows psychological integrity. Taking into account the above–mentioned issues, it is necessary that the holistic development approaches of youth should have a specific form. That is why we need to have a holistic development strategy for both young people and society.

Holistic Development Strategies

Holistic social development needs a strategy because we have principles to be respected, services to be implemented and these cover various areas such as education, which we have already mentioned, personal development, therapeutic intervention, cultural aspects highlighted by different activities which can be related to entrepreneurial development. Although it is a new field, it is important in the strategy of holistic development of a society, as is sport and reintegration into society. Reasons for reintegration of a person into society can be multiple, but the process itself is quite important. Another aspect that we bring to the fore when speaking of holistic development is the spiritual one. There can't be a complex development without an anchoring of faith in the values stated in the Book of Books. Therefore, a number of services need to be developed to achieve the proposed objectives.

(1) Developmental in Nature

Developmental in nature refers to a normal development of a person from a physical, emotional and spiritual point of view. People should be helped to broaden their knowledge horizons, develop and grow by acquiring knowledge and developing skills. One of the procedures

by which this goal can be achieved is the accumulation of knowledge through education. We have a process that takes into account progressive learning through experience, learning from successes and failures. In this process, people, especially young people, must be supported and encouraged, they must be excited about what they are doing, have positive thinking and trust that they will be able to complete what they have started, what they intended to do.

(2) Restorative and Rehabilitative

The restoration and rehabilitation of a person implies an active involvement, but also a great deal of tactfulness in the successful accomplishment of this objective. We are talking about people who have been in conflict with state laws, have violated them, and for this they have been punished. Once the punishment has been reached, the persons in question must be reintegrated into society, and moreover they must acquire the correct values. The fact that they paid for their mistake does not mean they are rehabilitated. The stigma of condemnation, the suspicion and the need for them to prove that they have understood their mistake, have taken the consequences and want to be part of the society by accepting its rules remain.

Involvement can also be beneficial for society by the fact that these people are integrated they are no longer marginalized or no longer withdraw from society, from the attributions and responsibilities of a citizen to get involved again in illegal things. There are several ONGs involved in this sphere to support these people. The Church can and must also get involved. A truly new man, a changed person is just the one transformed by the Christian message. That's why some Christians are putting into practice, sometimes even at the risk of their lives, the command to love their neighbor.

(3) Effective Communication

Communication is an area that is increasingly important in contemporary society. Man has this important feature received

from the divinity to communicate. He communicates in the family, at school, at work, in society. That is why it is important for him to learn to communicate and at the same time to relate.

People have communicated in various ways since ancient times and we remain astonished today by the richness of the forms of communication. It is imperative that a person knows how to communicate their feelings, thoughts, opinions and at the same time be able to support them regardless of gender, ethnicity, race or level of education. It is worth mentioning that what we have outlined above are criteria and issues that often remain at the stage of desideratum because it is clear that, unless a person is natively equipped with very good communication ability, the level of education has a very important role in the communication process. On the other hand, communication is not a one–sided process, that is, only one person transmits information but is a complex system involving two or more people, one of which is a transmitter and the other or at least one of them is a receiver. Effective communication also involves the transmission of a clear message, which requires understanding of the message and ensuring that it is transmitted and received by the person or institution to which it is intended without suffering disturbance.

At the individual level, education is also considered, because it has the role of helping to form a way of understanding and analyzing information. It can happen that someone is communicating something and the receiver does not understand the message or decode it properly. When talking about communication, we mean both verbal and non–verbal communication, each of these two ways being important.

(4) Multi–Disciplinary Approch to Programs

From effective communication, a field that has a primarily personal applicability, we move to the multidisciplinary approach of programs. This type of approach, like the other ones we have referred to proves its importance when it comes to the holistic development of society. We are talking about a custom multidisciplinary approach on a case

by case basis. It is something similar to what is being attempted today in the pre–university education system, a student–centered education, but here we are referring to the child as an individual, as a member of society, we are considering a person who needs a social orientation. We are talking about a multidisciplinary approach that can take into account several stages, several areas to choose from. Starting from the main purpose of ensuring a complex, unitary, holistic development of the individual and society, we will develop programs to support those who need it.

We will seek to identify the opportunities that are appropriate for the counselor, but moreover, an interdisciplinary approach can be provided by offering spiritual help, choosing the educational, professional, and if necessary even psychological support.

We live today in a constantly changing world and the rapidity of these transformations and transitions from one system to another, from a set of values to another set of values or even non–moral and ethical value can bully the individual, and the ultimate goal of ensuring holistic development, as a whole of society, must be to provide support.

That is why a specialized and specific approach to programs, educational levels is recommended with the ultimate goal of meeting the individual, the citizen and the person by offering school or professional orientation programs.

People need to be offered alternatives, which also provide them with a higher degree of security. It is also a real help in holistic development as an individual and in the holistic development of society. That's why people need to be integrated into society at the micro or macro level, but also encouraged to express themselves. They have to become a group, without losing the individuality of any of those who organize themselves like this.

The focus of holistic development is on integration, interconnection, collaboration and not on marginalization, on offering viable and sustainable programs.

Another element to be remembered is the cultural one. Culture in turn is an element, but also a factor contributing to the objectives. In turn, communication integrates with education, sometimes it can even be confused, but also with technology or management. The

management term has long passed from the purely technical sphere and has even reached the class of students that can be organized taking into account a specific management.

Conclusion

The holistic development of society is a simple appearance, but in reality it covers a multitude of other areas and issues. We have gone through the integration of education, culture, management, and all this to provide a consistent organizational support to meet the needs of a society in the process of change. The ultimate goal is to build a holistic, durable and sustainable society that provides a child–friendly, youth–friendly development environment to provide them with options as well as security. Beyond all this, the most important aspect is that of eternal hope and security that can only be assured by one person, unique in His being, referring in this case to the Creator of the Universe.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

.____. *Building Human Capacities in Least Developed Countries to Promote Poverty Eradication and Sustainable Development*, UNESCO, 2011.

.____. *Educaţie pentru o societate a cunoaşterii: Cadrul de referinţă al noului Curriculum naţional. Studii de politici educaţionale*, Chişinău: Institutul de Politici Publice, 2015.

Al–Dahir A, Kang HJ, Bisley N., *A Holistic Approach to Sustainable Community Development in the Developing World*, Blekinge Institute of Technology: Karlskrona, Sweden, 2009.

Noe R, Hollenbeck J, Gerhart B, Wright P., *Human Resource Management: Gaining A Competitive Advantage*, Boston: McGraw–Hill, 2006.

Craig R, Bittel L., *Training and Development Handbook*, New York: McGraw–Hill, 1967.

Kearsley G., *Training and technology: A Handbook for HRD Professionals.* Wesley, MA: Addison–Wesley Publishing Company Inc., 1984.

Mondy R, Noe R., *Personnel: The Management of Human Resources*, Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1981.

The Use of Movies in Youth Ministry: A Different Approach to the Image–Driven Culture

Teodor–Ioan Colda, PhD
Baptist Theological Institute, Bucharest, Romania
teocolda@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT: The purpose of this paper is to once again explore the use of movies in a church context youth ministry, with an accent on the diverse benefits which can be achieved. The author will do so by integrating adjacent aspects, relevant to the topic, as: pop culture, image–driven culture, generational research. Finally he argues for a different way of integrating movies as a resource for youth ministry, by using them in the counseling process of ministering to troubled youth.

KEY WORDS: movies, youth ministry, teenagers, pop culture, troubled youth

In the past decades theologians have manifested an interest in studying the relationship between theology and film[1] or religion and film.[2] This interest also made its way in youth ministry (our area of interest for this paper), but in a more practical manner. Different youth ministry theoreticians were preoccupied with the use of movies in youth ministry[3] (or preaching and teaching ministry in general).[4] A brief observation made by Barsotti and Johnston seems accurate enough to be worth mentioning here: "Theology is being portrayed in and will be retained from the movies we see each week at the cineplex. Though late to recognize this fact, the church is now awakening to the idea that Hollywood is providing an important

resource for its teaching, preaching, youth ministry, and outreach activities."[5] This observation brings forth one of the causes of the use of movies in ministry in general and in youth ministry in particular. The other cause is a cultural one. It seems that at certain points a Christian leader, preacher or youth worker can hardly avoid using movies in ministry at least for the sake of relevancy.

Youth Culture: as Image–Driven

The culture of the Millennials and Post-Millennials[6] is an image–driven culture[7] (or media–driven culture)[8] "where story and metaphor are at the heart of spirituality"[9]—as stated by J. Roberto. And movies always present stories and metaphors that appeal to the public. In this context it is important to bear in mind, as Van Gelder points out, that "movies are a powerful tool for shaping people's perceptions of reality in our image–driven culture."[10]

This characteristic of today's culture, image–driven,[11] is approached differently by Christians in relation to young people. For the Catholics it seems there is a need and also an opportunity to emphasize the sacraments as means of grace by using their outward signs.[12] For Protestants and also for Evangelicals things seemed to take the form of a challenge, as Todd E. Johnson observes: "Though we are becoming an image–driven culture [the observation was made back in 2002], Protestant Christianity remains image poor in its worship. Protestants have developed a cottage industry of material objects of faith outside the worship context (from fish logos on the back of automobiles to WWJD bracelets for children). Perhaps these are an attempted compensation for the absence of visual images in our worship."[13] Probably the reluctance manifested by Protestants and Evangelicals toward images in worship is so powerful that in some parts of the World (for example Romania) is unheard of to use clips or movies in regular worship services (especially in a traditional or conservative Evangelical setting). This is not the case anymore at least during youth meetings. Now, as already stated, a youth worker can hardly avoid using movies

in youth ministry even in a traditional or conservative Romanian Evangelical church.

Movies: tools for youth ministry

Sometimes a talk or a sermon could not be appealing for the adolescents for various reasons. At times the church youth can have the feeling that they are overwhelmed with sermons. It is a good opportunity for the youth leader to take a break from preaching and choose alternative ways to share the message which is needed. An alternative way is watching a movie with the youth group in the youth meeting setting. Probably choosing a blockbuster is not the best idea, because there is a major probability that the youth might have already seen the movie in cinemas. Also, blockbusters tend to be highly entertaining, especially action movies, and lack to offer something more besides that. Often lower budget movies prove to be more instructive than blockbusters. To give just an example: *Bang Bang You're Dead*, released in 2002; a movie about bulling and peer pressure in the high school environment, tells the story of a male teenager who overcomes his anger and bitterness achieved after he experienced bulling as a high school student. Also, slightly older movies can be more inspiring than newer ones, because they show a quite different world than the world Millennials and Post-Millenialls live in, though they can still relate to the life situations presented in those movies. For example: *Dead Poets Society*, released in 1989 (but the action is set in 1959); a movie about the complex life of teenagers, including aspects as: friendship, trust and betrayal, inspiring models or mentors, conflict between generations, dreams, love and death.

When using movies in youth ministry—and I argue in favor of watching the entire movie not just the trailer or a selected video[14]—is important to prepare in advance. M. Theisen offers important advice on how to prepare:[15] "The key to the success of this strategy is to choose the correct movie. If the young people think the movie is beneath them, they may be bored by it and miss the point. If they think the movie is above them, they may be disappointed and it will lose its impact."[16] Even more important is to "Select a video

based on the age of the intended audience members and the types of relationships and issues that they would identify with. It should have rich and meaningful relationships, and it should be free of objectionable sex scenes, extreme violence, and constant offensive language that would make it unsuitable to show to a group of young people."[17] Previewing a movie is very important, because it is the starting point of the preparation. Watch the movie diligently and take notes (focus on characters and their relationships; poignant lines and descriptions of symbolic scenes; find a halfway point that seems to be a natural split of the film and use the halfway point for a break). Review notes and develop sets of information and questions for discussions. It is important to have information and questions to present before the youth group watches the movie. As Theisen suggests: "Develop one or two questions to plant in the young people's minds before they view the video so that they can be attentive to people and issues you wish to discuss."[18] Also prepare questions to present at the halfway mark of the movie and questions to present at the end.[19]

From personal experience, in general, movies can be a tool in youth ministry in three directions: for the benefit of the youth leader, for the benefit of the relationship between the youth leader and the youth group (at an individual level or at a collective level), and for the benefit of the members of the group (individually or collectively).

1) Watching movies and the benefits of the youth leader

Knowing the specific movies teenagers like (and not just movies, but also music, books, places etc.),[20] can help the leader to build closer relationships with them. In this way the movies can become a means of getting to better know the (pop) culture of the teenagers in general, but also the culture of the group in particular.[21] Often being involved in ministry brings a certain level of isolation. At some point it is going to be difficult to understand the culture of the adolescence. Watching a good movie which presents relevant traces of their ethos could bring important insight for the youth leader and could inform his understanding regarding the struggles, the habits and other aspects of life regarding the church youth. Also

through movies the youth leader can be informed about different problems that teenagers or young people may be facing in different life contexts as: school, family, friends and relationships.[22]

I was personally informed in the matter of identifying problems that teenagers can face in school or family environment, problems that need to be addressed at least through counseling, by diligently watching a series that presented all sorts of juvenile social cases: *Judging Amy*, a six season series aired between 1999 and 2005. The series is focused on three major plans: the personal life of a juvenile court judge, Amy Gray (interpreted by Amy Brenneman), who, together with her pre–adolescent daughter, after a divorce still lives with her mother, Maxine Gray (interpreted by Karle Warren), who is a very skilled social worker; then there is the consuming professional life of Judge Gray who is daily confronted with sometimes shocking cases of child neglect and child abuse or juvenile delinquency; and then there is also the not less consuming professional life of Maxine who tries to baldly solve difficult social cases, sometimes over passing the professional barriers.[23]

2) Watching movies and the benefits in the relationship between the youth leader and the youth group

Movies can be a tool used to involve the teenagers in the personal life of the youth leader. By taking some of them along with his family to the movies, for example, the youth leader can find this quite helpful in developing stronger relationships with the youth, but also trust and genuineness.[24] This approach can also be a tool in discipleship and mentoring the future leaders of the youth group. The youth leader can also be taught by movies on how to approach the younger generation in order to gain trust and develop a more efficient youth ministry.

A classic movie which I recommend for every youth leader, regarding the importance of relationship between the leader and the group in terms of trust and genuineness, is *Sleepers* (starring Jason Patric, Brad Pitt, Robert De Niro, Dustin Hoffman, Vittorio Gassmann and Kevin Bacon), released in 1996 and based on *New York Times* bestselling Lorenzo Carcaterra's 1995 novel of the same

name;[25] an American legal crime drama movie which tells the story of four childhood friends that face the consequences of a gone wrong prank, being sentenced to detention in a state facility for boys. The abuse suffered during the detention period changed their lives and friendship forever. After 14 years the friends have the chance to take revenge on the guards that systematically abused them. For the final strike, in court, they need the help of Father Robert Carillo, a local priest in the neighborhood in which the friends grew up in, who remained a father figure to the boys. The priest is ready to bend his principles and is willing to give false testimony in court so that the boys can have their vengeance.

3) Watching movies and the benefits of the members of the group

Faith or moral topics can easily be taught by using movies. Movies can be "a starting point for a discussion about Christian values that may or may not be present in the movies."[26] The advice of C. J. Semmel is to: "Take advantage of youth's interest in movies to provide them with a few observations and reflections on the themes of current popular movies."[27] It could be said that, in a sense, movies can substitute a lesson or a sermon, if the message of the movie is clear enough and if the movie itself appeals to the youth.

Watching a movie together as a group is quite different from watching it individually, because the adolescents can relate together to the same story, as homogenous group. Watching a movie at home is a highly individualistic and subjective activity. So are the conclusions which one draws after watching it alone. But watching a movie together with other friends can help relate to the multiple stories which are told in the movie and relate to those different stories which other members of the group identified with.

To give an example from *Bang Bang You're Dead*. After watching the movie alone the adolescent who others make fun of or who is bullied at school can easily identify himself with the main character of the story, Trevor Adams (interpreted by Ben Foster), who from the best student of the school becomes the black sheep of the school after he was trashed by the football team in the high school cafeteria while the entire crowd was laughing. In the same time if one who

bullies other students at school is watching the movie alone may or may not identify himself with one of the bullies depicted in the movie. Because he is the bully and not the bullied; the issue is not important for him. There is a scene in the movie where the bullies, mainly the school's football team, and the bullied, Trevor, watch in the principal's office a video tape depicting cases of bulling which took place in the school on an everyday basis. All of them are confronted with the same story. Just after both parties are exposed together to the same reality which now they can share as spectators, some of the bullies understand the gravity of their acts and show remorse. Because of the drama he suffered, Trevor became bitter and tried to fabricate a tough image for himself, going so far as to make a false bomb threat on his high school. As an outcast his only support came from one of his teacher, Val Duncan (interpreted by Tom Cavanagh), who noticed that something happened with Trevor and tried to reach him. He does that by asking Trevor to take the main part in a play called *Bang Bang You're Dead*, depicting a teenager consumed by rage who is haunted by his parents and some school colleagues who he had shot dead. In this way Trevor is challenged to find his true self and to be saved from his anger and bitterness. On a personal note, I used this movie a couple of years ago while trying to solve a problem which occurred in my church youth group. A member of the group was always made fun of by the others. Any interventions from my behalf as a youth leader to straighten up this faulty behavioral attitude of some members of the group seemed to be failing. After watching the movie together with the entire group the problem was solved.

A somewhat different approach: the use of movies in ministering to troubled youth

The movies which I used as examples share in a sense a common aspect depicted in different ways: suffering. This is a recurrent theme in many movies because it is one of the most common realities of life. C. Detweiler makes an interesting observation that explains the affinity for movies of today's generation in relation to suffering:

We turn to pop culture when we can't quite name our dilemmas. We may go to the movies as a way to buy time. It holds our demons at bay for a couple of hours. It offers some distance or perspective, a chance to worry about somebody else's quandaries. The best films and television series offer a vicarious experience where we can enter into the suffering of another and perhaps gain control or mastery over our own struggles. Surely Jesus offers the most vicarious example of taking on our suffering, entering in our world and our pain. Pop culture invites us to identify with a character. It is an opportunity to see ourselves in someone else's story.[28]

In other words, movies become a means of reflection; a way of stepping back from our own suffering so that we could somehow understand it and better cope with it. They are a short refuge, a break from our sorrows, while contemplating someone else's problems. This should not be surprising. Suffering is often the means which drives the plot of a story. A brief explanation from literary theory may be useful at this point, an explanation from the way in which Aristotle viewed the link between plot and suffering. D. B. Morris explains: "Plot, for Aristotle is the soul of tragedy. While he insists that tragedies must include *pathos*, suffering alone does not create tragedy. It is the action, or plot, that creates a structure within which the *pathos* makes sense. Plot, then, for Aristotle, is what imparts to suffering its tragic status. . . . Plot, we might say, is somehow crucial to the generic framework within which both novels and tragedies place human suffering."[29] Suffering lays also at the heart of the Christian meta–narrative. Sin and suffering represent the plot of the human history, beginning with Adam and Eve. The coming of Christ into the world directly linked with the problem of sin and suffering. This is the reason why from all the actions present in a movie we probably best relate to suffering. In the words of D. B. Morris, "Suffering is an action. It is the outcome of a series of preceding acts. Indeed, this plot–centered view holds the promise of cognitive clarifications that may lead to the possibility of personal and social change. Although the protagonist of a tragedy or novel may be inextricably trapped within a structure of action too intricate or complex to reverse, the

reader or audience occupies a position in which the detachment… offers a crucial vantage point for securing knowledge and directing relief."[30] Van Gelder's observation shades even more light into the matter: "Needless to say, in a subjective image–driven, postmodern culture, the powerful character of film as a medium to present a more holistic version of reality tends to bias interpretation toward the viewer regardless of the intent of the director or author."[31] Or again, in Detweiler's words: "Our pop culture habits reflect our passions, interests, and needs. Our favorite shows offer something we need—from surrogate friends and family to a laugh or a cry."[32]

Based on the observations that "postmodern culture… tends to bias interpretation towards the viewer," that in pop culture "shows offer something we need," and that through movies "we can enter into the suffering of another and perhaps gain control or mastery over our own struggles," I dared to use movies in one on one ministering to troubled youth. The movie *Good Will Hunting*, released in 1997, starring Ben Affleck, Matt Damon, Stellan Skarsgård, Robin Williams, proved to be useful in this respect. Its use in youth ministry has been suggested by other authors.[33] I will make use of someone else's summary[34] to remind about the movie:

For those unfamiliar with the film, *Good Will Hunting* is the story of a troubled young South Boston man who works as a janitor at MIT. A working class genius with a photographic memory who has mastered art, literature, history, and philosophy but whose special gift is mathematics, Will comes upon a problem a professor had left for his students to puzzle over and quickly but anonymously solves it. The professor, Gerald Lambeau, once a prodigy himself, discovers Will's identity and takes him under his wing, rescues him from being sentenced to jail for barroom brawling, and makes him a member of his mathematical team. To deal with his antisocial behavior, the professor enlists as Will's therapist a community college psychology instructor Sean McGuire (Played by Robin Williams), who is also the MIT professor's Harvard roommate. The two vie for Will.[35]

I thought the movie might be helpful in the counseling process (which is not totally unheard of)[36] of a troubled male teenager, member of the church youth group. I believed this could be possible because my expectations were that the teenager could easily draw some parallels between Will's story and his own. Like Will, he was raised without his parents who got divorced while he was very young. He was also a very intelligent young man, though his grades did not reflect that. He did not trust adults in a similar way in which Will (was diagnosed with reactive attachment disorder)[37] did not trust adults, so it was sometimes difficult for me to reach to him as it was for Sean McGuire, Will's therapist.[38] My hope was that the teenager could relate not just with Will's struggles, bitterness and pain, but also with Will's story positive outcome and with the hope which emerges at the end of the movie when all things seem to have worked out happily for Will. After viewing the movie, the teenager came quite relieved to the next pastoral counseling session (or probably a pedagogy session).[39] He admitted that he could identify himself with Will and his story (which, again, is not unheard of).[40]

I do not to suggest that a movie could solve a teenager's problem or cure a person.[41] But using the movie in ministering to a troubled teenager got me some time to figure out what should be done next in order to give him the best care I was able to give. Also the movie proved to be an encouragement for the teenager and helped him to overcome the depressive episode he was dealing with. After a couple of more meetings with the teenager I decided to send him to a professional Christian psychotherapist.

Though movies might have a multiple use in youth ministry, I find that movies can be used quite successfully in the area of ministering to troubled youth. A movie or a series can make a youth leader more aware of the problems the members of the church youth group might be facing, and more diligently look for signs of distress in the lives of teenagers. A movie can definitely be a break or a refuge from the bitter reality that teenagers may experience on a daily basis because of different life situations. But a movie can also offer encouragement and hope. In order to achieve this is very important to choose a movie with a positive ending and with heroes that manage to find their way through life.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Barsotti, Catherine M. and Robert K. Johnston. *Finding God in the Movies: 33 Films of Real Faith* . Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2004.

Belknap, Bryan. *Group's Blockbuster Movie Illustrations.* Winona, MN: Saint Mary's Press, 2002.

_____.*Group's Blockbuster Movie Illustrations: The Return.* Loveland, CO: Group Publishing, Inc., 2006.

_____. *Group's Blockbuster Movie Illustrations: The Sequel.* Winona, MN: Saint Mary's Press, 2006.

Blizek, William L., editor. *The Continuum Companion to Religion and Film.* London, New York: Continuum, 2009.

Bonnemaison, Joël, edited by Chantal-Blanc-Pamard, Maud Lasseur and Christel Thibault, translated by Josée Pénot-Demetry. *Culture and Space: Conceiving a New Cultural Geography.* London, New York: I. B. Tauris, 2005.

Carcaterra, Lorenzo. *Sleepers.* New York, Toronto: Ballantine Books, 1995.

Cardwell, Mike and Cara Flanagan. *Psychology AS: The Complete Companion.* Cheltenham, UK: Nelson Thomas Ltd, 2005.

Dean, Kenda Kreasy, editor. *OMG: A Youth Ministry Handbook.* Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2010.

Detweiler, Craig. "Screen Time: A Window into Teens' Dreams." In *Adoptive Youth Ministry: Integrating Emerging Generations into the Family of Faith*, edited by Chap Clark. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2016.

Dowd, James J. "Understanding Social Mobility Through the Movies." In *Cinematic Sociology: Social Life in Film*, edited by Jean-Anne Sutherland and Kathryn Feltey. Los Angeles, London, New Delhi, Singapore, Washington DC: Sage, 2013.

Esquith, Rafe. *Teach Like Your Hair's On Fire: The Methods and madness Inside Room 56.* New York: Penguin Books, 2007.

Fields, Doug and Eddie James, *Videos That Teach.* Youth Specialties; Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1999.

_____. *Videos That Teach 2.* Youth Specialties; Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002.

_____. *Videos That Teach 3.* Youth Specialties; Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2004.

_____. *Videos That Teach 4.* Youth Specialties; Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2005.

Gabbard, Glen O. and Krin Gabbard. *Psychiatry and the Cinema.* Washington, DC / London: American Psychiatric Press, Inc., 1999.

Gottdiener, Mark. *Postmodern Semiotics: Material Culture and the Forms of Postmodern Life*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 1995.

Halstead, Jeremy. *B. R. M. (Bathroom Reading Material) for Youth Workers.* Eugene, Oregon: Resource Publications, Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2014.

Hurley, Neil P. *Theology through Film*. New York: Harper & Row, 1970.

James, Eddie and Tommy Woodard. *TV Shows That Teach: 100 TV moments to Get Teenagers Talking*. Youth Specialties; Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2008.

Johnston, Robert K. "Visual Christianity." In *The Conviction of Things Not Seen: Worship and Ministry in the 21st Century*, edited by Todd E. Johnson (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2002.

_____. *Reframing Theology and Film*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Publishing Group, 2007.

Klarke, Anthony J. and Paul S. Fiddes. *Flickering Images: Theology and Film in Dialogue*. Oxford: Regents Park College, 2005.

Kellner, Douglas. *Media Culture: Cultural studies, Identity and Politics between the Modern and the Postmodern*. London, New York: Routledge, 1995.

Keroes, Jo. "Picturing Institutions: Intellectual Work as Gift and Commodity in *Good Will Hunting*." In *Imagining the Academy: Higher Education and Popular Culture*, edited by Susan Edgerton, Gunilla Holm, Toby Daspit, and Paul Farber. New York, London: RoutledgeFalmer, 2005.

Kielbasa, Marilyn. *Total Youth Ministry: Ministry Resources for Pastoral Care*. Winona, MN: Saint Mary's Press, 2004.

Larson, Craig Brian and Andrew Zahn. *Movie-Based Illustrations for Preaching and Teaching: 101 Clips to Show or Tell*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2003.

Larson, Craig Brian and Lori Quicke. *More Movie-Based Illustrations for Preaching and Teaching: 101 Clips to Show or Tell*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2004.

Lyden, John, editor. *The Routledge Companion to Religion and Film*. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2009.

Marsh, Clive. *Theology Goes to the Movies. An Introduction to Critical Christian Thinking*. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2007.

Mayward, Joel. *Jesus Goes to the Movies: The Youth Ministry Film Guide*, San Diego: The Youth Cartel 2015.

Menconi, Al. "Helping Youth Handle the Influence of Entertainment." In *Josh McDowell's Youth Ministry Handbook*, compiled by Sean McDowell & Ray Willey. Nashville, TN: Word Publishing, 2000.

Michener, Ronald T. *Engaging Deconstructive Theology*. London, New York: Routledge, 2007.

Mitchell, Jolyon and Sophia Marriage. *Mediating Religion: Conversations in Media, Religion and Culture*. London/New York: T&T Clark Continuum, 2006.

Morris, David B. "About Suffering: Voice, Genre, and Moral Community." In *Social Suffering*, edited by Arthur Kleinman, Veena Das, and Margaret Lock. Berkeley & Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 1997.

Newman, Michael. "From Beats to Arcs: Towards a Poetics of Television Narrative." In *Literary Theory: An Anthology*, edited by Julie Rivkin & Michael Ryan. Oxford: Wiley Blackwell, 2017).

Ng, Eddy S. and Emma Parry. "Multigenerational Research in Human Resource Management," In *Research in Personnel and Human Resources Management*, edited by M. Ronald Buckley, Jonathan R. B. Halbesleben, Anthony R. Wheeler, 1-10. Research in Personnel and Human Resources Management, 34; Bingley, UK: Emerald, 2016).

Olson, Ginny, Diane Elliot and Mike Work. *Youth Ministry Management Tools: Everything You Need to Successful Manage and Administrate Your Youth Ministry*. Youth Specialties; Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 2001.

Roberto, John. *Becoming a Church of Lifelong Learners*. New London, CT: Twenty-Third Publications, 2006.

Rotaru, Ioan-Gheorghe. "Modalități de educare a copiilor în familie (I)" In *Argeşul ortodox*, X, No. 516, (Curtea de Argeş: Romania, 2011).

Sellars, Jeff, editor. *Light Shining in a Dark Place: Discovering Theology through Film*. Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2012.

Semmel, Christina J. *No Meeting Required: Strategies for Nongathered Ministry with Young People*. Winona, MN: Saint Mary's Press, 2007.

Spirou, Penny. "O Captain, My Captain! Robin Williams and Transformative Learning in *Dead Poets Society*, *Good Will Hunting* and *Patch Adams*." In *Teaching and Learning on Screen: Mediated Pedagogies*, edited by Mark Readman. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016.

Theisen, Michael. *Youth Ministry Strategies: Creative Activities to Complement the Horizons Curriculum*. Horizons: A Senior Parish Religion Program; Winona, MN: Saint Mary's Press, 1998.

Van Gelder, Craig. "Reading Postmodern Culture through the Medium of Movies." In *Confident Witness-Changing World: rediscovering the Gospel in North America*, edited by Craig Van Gelder. Grand Rapids, MI / Cambridge, UK: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1999).

Wright. Melanie J. *Religion and Film: An Introduction*. London, New York: I. B. Tauris, 2007.

NOTES

1 Cf. Neil P. Hurley, *Theology Through Film*, New York: Harper & Row, 1970; Catherine M. Barsotti & Robert K. Johnston, *Finding God in the Movies: 33 Films of Real Faith*, Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2004; Anthony J. Klarke & Paul S. Fiddes, *Flickering Images: Theology and Film in Dialogue*, Oxford: Regents Park College, 2005; Clive Marsh, *Theology Goes to the Movies. An Introduction to Critical Christian Thinking*, Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2007; Robert K. Johnson, *Reframing Theology and Film*, Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Publishing Group, 2007; Jeff Sellars, ed., *Light Shining in a Dark Place: Discovering Theology through Film*, Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2012.

2 Cf. Jolyon Mitchell & Sophia Marriage, *Mediating Religion: Conversations in Media, Religion and Culture*, London/New York: T&T Clark Continuum, 2006; Melanie J. Wright, *Religion and Film: An Introduction*, London, New York: I. B. Tauris, 2007; John Lyden, ed., *The Routledge Companion to Religion and Film*, Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2009; William L. Blizek, ed., *The Continuum Companion to Religion and Film*, London, New York: Continuum, 2009.

3 Cf. Doug Fields & Eddie James, *Videos That Teach* (Youth Specialties), Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1999; Doug Fields & Eddie James, *Videos That Teach 2* (Youth Specialties), Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002; Doug Fields & Eddie James, *Videos That Teach 3* (Youth Specialties), Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2004; Doug Fields & Eddie James, *Videos That Teach 4* (Youth Specialties) Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2005; Bryan Belknap, *Group's Blockbuster Movie Illustrations*, Winona, MN: Saint Mary's Press, 2002; Bryan Belknap, *Group's Blockbuster Movie Illustrations: The Return*, Loveland, CO: Group Publishing, Inc., 2006; Bryan Belknap, *Group's Blockbuster Movie Illustrations: The Sequel*, Winona, MN: Saint Mary's Press, 2006; Eddie James & Tommy Woodard, *TV Shows That Teach: 100 TV moments to Get Teenagers Talking* (Youth Specialties), Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2008; Joel Mayward, *Jesus Goes to the Movies: The Youth Ministry Film Guide*, San Diego: The Youth Cartel 2015.

4 Cf. Craig Brian Larson & Andrew Zahn, *Movie-Based Illustrations for Preaching and Teaching: 101 Clips to Show or Tell*, Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2003; Craig Brian Larson & Lori Quicke, *More Movie-Based Illustrations for*

Preaching and Teaching: 101 Clips to Show or Tell, Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2004.

5 Barsotti, Catherine M. and Robert K. Johnston, *Finding God in the Movies: 33 Films of Real Faith* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2004), 12.

6 A useful summary on the research done on these generations and on the different names given for each generation was produced by Eddy S. Ng & Emma Parry, "Multigenerational Research in Human Resource Management" in *Research in Personnel and Human Resources Management*, edited by M. Ronald Buckley, Jonathan R. B. Halbesleben, Anthony R. Wheeler, (Bingley, UK: Emerald, 2016), 1–10; 34.

7 An important research was done by Douglas Kellner, *Media Culture: Cultural studies, Identity and Politics between the Modern and the Postmodern*, London, New York: Routledge, 1995. Also see: Mark Gottdiener, *Postmodern Semiotics: Material Culture and the Forms of Postmodern Life*, Oxford: Wiley–Blackwell, 1995.

8 "As is well known, a culture is transmitted through various media but, more importantly, the media themselves transform culture. We then speak of a media–driven culture, or culture as spectacle, which at times takes the place of culture as such—an evolution that is rarely synonymous with enrichment or achievement in the Greek sense of the term." Joël Bonnemaison, edited by Chantal–Blanc–Pamard, Maud Lasseur & Christel Thibault, translated by Josée Pénot–Demetry, *Culture and Space: Conceiving a New Cultural Geography* (London, New York: I. B. Tauris, 2005), 69.

9 "We used to live in a word based print culture. We now live in a world where story and metaphor are at the heart of spirituality." John Roberto, *Becoming a Church of Lifelong Learners* (New London, CT: Twenty–Third Publications, 2006), 8.

10 Craig Van Gelder, "Reading Postmodern Culture through the Medium of Movies" in *Confident Witness–Changing World: rediscovering the Gospel in North America*, edited by Craig Van Gelder (Grand Rapids, MI / Cambridge, UK: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1999), 2, 39–66.

11 It is important to note that postmodern culture was also described as *media driven* or *web driven*. See for example Ronald T. Michener, *Engaging Deconstructive Theology* (London, New York: Routledge, 2007), 5–6.

12 "For young people accustomed to a participatory, image–driven culture, the power of outward signs—active tangible, and personal—is significant." Kenda Kreasy Dean, editor, *OMG: A Youth Ministry Handbook* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2010), 75.

13 Robert K. Johnston, "Visual Christianity" in *The Conviction of Things Not Seen: Worship and Ministry in the 21st Century*, edited by Todd E. Johnson (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2002), 179.

14 This way of watching movies is supported by some school teachers that use movies as additional materials in their teaching. Rafe Esquith, *Teach Like Your*

Hair's On Fire: The Methods and madness Inside Room 56 (New York: Penguin Books, 2007), 89–92.

15 Theisen speaks about videos, referring to clips from movies. I am referring to the entire movies. Michael Theisen, *Youth Ministry Strategies: Creative Activities to Complement the Horizons Curriculum* (Horizons: A Senior Parish Religion Program; Winona, MN: Saint Mary's Press, 1998), E:48.

16 Theisen, E:48.

17 Theisen adds "in a church setting," but this last observation seems unnecessary and may reflect a subjective thinking towards the relationship between sanctuary, worship, youth ministry and life outside church walls or church programs. Theisen also adds: "If the video you select is rated R, parents should be informed as to the reason for the rating and invited to attend the video viewing and discussion." Theisen, E:48.

18 Theisen, E:48.

19 See Theisen, E:48–49.

20 "It is critical that we stay informed about the types of entertainment that are having such an impact on the lives of young people. Not knowing about our kids' movies, TV, or music [and I would add the internet and the social media] sends a message loud and clear: *We don't care!* If we are not informed, we communicate that we are not concerned about their lives." Al Menconi, "Helping Youth Handle the Influence of Entertainment" in *Josh McDowell's Youth Ministry Handbook*, compiled by Sean McDowell & Ray Willey (Nashville, TN: Word Publishing, 2000).

21 In other words: "Build a reminder file to help you keep up with their favorite things—foods, music, books, places and movies." Ginny Olson, Diane Elliot & Mike Work, *Youth Ministry Management Tools: Everything You Need to Successful Manage and Administrate Your Youth Ministry* (Youth Specialties; Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 2001), 35.

22 Ioan-Gheorghe Rotaru, "Modalități de educare a copiilor în familie (I)" in *Argeșul Ortodox*, X, No. 516, (Curtea de Argeș, Romania, 2011), 5.

23 In other words: "In a typical *Judging Amy* episode Judge Amy Gray's juvenile court case *and* her mother, Maxine's social work case *and* the various family story lines are all tied up in the same set of thematic concerns, with interventions and variations running up against one another." Michael Newman, "From Beats to Arcs: Towards a Poetics of Television Narrative," in *Literary Theory: An Anthology*, edited by Julie Rivkin & Michael Ryan (Oxford: Wiley Blackwell, 2017), 256.

24 Jeremy Halstead says: "My wife, Rhonda, includes girls when cooking and baking, shopping, scrap booking, crafting, and attending plays and movies." Jeremy Halstead, *B. R. M. (Bathroom Reading Material) for Youth Workers* (Eugene, Oregon: Resource Publications, Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2014), 83.

25 Lorenzo Carcaterra, *Sleepers*, New York, Toronto: Ballantine Books, 1995.

26 Marilyn Kielbasa, *Total Youth Ministry: Ministry Resources for Pastoral Care* (Winona, MN: Saint Mary's Press, 2004), 147.

27 A way of doing it would be: "Instead of having the young people come together to watch a movie and discuss it afterward, simply send out study guides for two to three movies per month and encourage young people to watch the movies and think about how the topics are covered." Christina J. Semmel, *No Meeting Required: Strategies for Nongathered Ministry with Young People*, Winona, MN: Saint Mary's Press, 2007.

28 Craig Detweiler, "Screen Time: A Window into Teens' Dreams" in *Adoptive Youth Ministry: Integrating Emerging Generations into the Family of Faith*, edited by Chap Clark (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2016), 71–72.

29 David B. Morris, "About Suffering: Voice, Genre, and Moral Community" in *Social Suffering*, edited by Arthur Kleinman, Veena Das, & Margaret Lock (Berkeley & Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 1997), 37.

30 Morris, 37.

31 Van Gelder, 53.

32 Detweiler, 71.

33 It was suggested in relation to different topics (Action, Knowledge, Love, Obedience) and different Bible passages (Luke 6:46–49, James 1:22, 2:14–16). Fields, 1: 9, 11, 12, 16, 17.

34 See also James J. Dowd, "Understanding Social Mobility Through the Movies" in *Cinematic Sociology: Social Life in Film*, edited by Jean-Anne Sutherland & Kathryn Feltey (Los Angeles, London, New Delhi, Singapore, Washington DC: Sage, 2013), 65–67.

35 Jo Keroes, "Picturing Institutions: Intellectual Work as Gift and Commodity in *Good Will Hunting*" in *Imagining the Academy: Higher Education and Popular Culture*, edited by Susan Edgerton, Gunilla Holm, Toby Daspit, and Paul Farber (New York, London: RoutledgeFalmer, 2005), 42.

36 "The power of cinema is especially in evidence when a patient in treatment reports feeling 'cured' by a film depicting psychotherapy. Some members of the audience identify so powerfully with the characters in the film that they may experience the therapy as if it were happening to them." Glen O. Gabbard & Krin Gabbard, *Psychiatry and the Cinema* (Washington, DC / London: American Psychiatric Press, Inc., 1999), 181.

37 "This condition was made popular by the movie *Good Will Hunting*. Children with reactive attachment disorder have learned that the world is unsafe, and have learned not to depend on adult caregivers. They develop a protective emotional 'shell', which isolates them from the pain of their attachment failure. These shells become very difficult to remove, as children depend on them as their sole means of coping with the world. Anyone who tries to remove this shell is seen as a threat and so they turn against the very people who want to help them the most, the caregivers." Mike Cardwell & Cara Flanagan, *Psychology AS: The Complete Companion* (Cheltenham, UK: Nelson Thomas Ltd, 2005), 67.

38 "Probably no film since *Ordinary People*, which appeared seventeen years earlier, has portrayed psychotherapy in such a positive light. Matt Damon portrays Will Hunting, a young man with impulse control problems who is ordered by the

court to see a therapist. He also happens to be a mathematical genius working as a janitor at MIT. A mathematics professor who recognizes his potential arranges for him to see a therapist played by Robin Williams. Much of the narrative hinges on the psychotherapeutic relationship between William's therapist and Damon's bad boy, who is far from a cooperative patient. Even though the movie suggests that psychotherapy is helpful, if not curative, for Will the treatment depicted is pure Hollywood fiction. In the first session, for example, when Will indirectly casts aspersions on his therapist's deceased wife, the therapist grabs him by the throat, pushes him against the wall, and threatens him." Gabbard, 144.

39 An interesting observation: "In *Good Will Hunting*, therapy is a form of pedagogy, where the individual (Will, in this case), undergoes a reorientation of perspective." Penny Spirou, "O Captain, My Captain! Robin Williams and Transformative Learning in *Dead Poets Society*, *Good Will Hunting* and *Patch Adams*" in *Teaching and Learning on Screen: Mediated Pedagogies*, edited by Mark Readman (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 36.

40 There was the case of a twenty–three–year–old graduate student in humanities who went to psychotherapy for chronic feelings of depression identified himself with the character portrayed by Matt Damon. "After about three months of psychotherapy, the young man saw the film *Good Will Hunting*, and he came to his session the next day and asked his therapist if she had seen the film as well. She told him she had not. The patient then started crying and said through his tears, 'It was me.' The therapist asked him to elaborate. He clarified that just like Will Hunting, he had always blamed his abusive past on himself and he also said that the therapist played by Robin Williams reminded him a great deal of his mentor in graduate school. He said he was deeply moved when the therapist repeated over and over again, "It's not your fault, it's not your fault, it's not your fault." Gabbard, 181.

41 Regarding the twenty–three–year–old graduate student in humanities who went to psychotherapy is important to note that even though "he announced himself 'cured' by the movie of any deeply rooted issue," at the end "As one would expect, the 'cure' lasted only about a month and served as a resistance to more painful explorations of the past with all their ramifications in the patient's current life." Gabbard, 181–182.