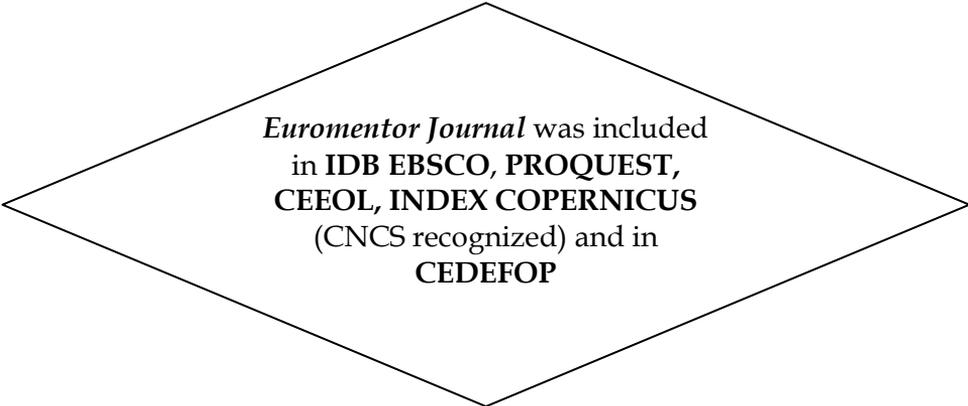


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THE MORALITY OF *HOMO ŒCONOMICUS* - BETWEEN SYMPATHY AND ENVY (II)

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Abstract: *The humanization of competition and of the profit/success dispute, the socialization of egotisms and egoism, the taming of the daily interhuman relationships and the emotional - sentimental assimilation of the outcome of labor can only be achieved through an intelligent compatibility between the economic and the moral order. Nonetheless, this does not rule out the tensions and, beyond any genuine moral intentions, the practicing of a normative and value-bound conventionalism is used - as an image amplifier and a justifier of hidden interests. The most transparent moral gestures can encapsulate rebellious instinct-ridden energies, temperamental inclinations being resignified from the perspective of virtuous meanings. The moral radiography of sympathy/compassion and of envy, respectively, can be enlightening in this line.*

Keywords: *homo Œconomicus, moral philosophy, sympathy, compassion, envy, resentment, responsibility.*

R. Descartes notices that „there are few people so righteous and generous not to feel hate for the people who overpassed them in acquiring a good which may no longer be shared by many people and which they desired to have for themselves, even if they who aquired it deserve it as much or even more than the others.”¹

At the opposite side of pity/compassion, envy is almost always subject to an intransigent moral qualification; at least in public reactions, it is systematically disavowed. The verdict is devoid of any nuances/hesitations; the common opinion, the ethics treaty, the educational programmes are hastily dismissive of it, without justifying their rejection on well-balanced deliberations, thoughtful and unbiased examinations. The denial to make its moral radiography is intuitively

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¹ René Descartes - *Les passions de l'âme*, Mozambook (online edition) 2001, p. 99.

based, most likely, on the complexity of contents, whereas the emphasis on nuances would hamper the diagnosis; to these possible motives one should add a discreet conformism under the guise of a responsible sociability; tacit conventions push someone to express one's unconditionnal approval for those manifestations which, by virtue of cultural judgments and biases, are perceived as being positive, welcome, desirable (for instance, pity), along with obstinacy, resentment, contempt for attitudes seen to be, in principile, incarnations of the evil and perversity (such as envy). Even he who, secretly, envies the envy, in public life, – to show off or just not to attract on him unpleasant labels or consequences – will firmly stigmatize it. These unwritten rules of the social life can hide so much dissimulation. The lucid analysis, with no *a priori* valorisations, of such moral „qualities” and „defects” points out that, as we are not honoured by whatever feelings of pity we may express, in the same way, we should not reject all the facets of envy we may experience.

The word „envy”² has a semantic lability and a valoric proteism that are hard to be listed. Since the phenomenon of envy encompasses wide registers of non-homogeneous experiences, at variance in point of intention and results, the moral sanction gathers consistency only to the extent it refers to distinct, non-equivalent, and in specific contexts, irreducible hypostases. This pre-requisite is also indispensable for another reason: envy is one of the most intensely personalized human reactions.

Envy is, in the first place, a predisposition for the affective reception of the others, an emotional state stimulated from the outside – by facts, individuals, successes, a.o., – and intensified inside against the backdrop of a propensity to covet and a tendency to compare. Against this referential system, envy is neither vicious, nor virtuos, just an affect³ –

² Cf. William Barclay, *Analiza semantică a unor termeni din Noul Testament* (The Semantic Analysis of New Testament Words), The Romanian Missionary Society, Wheaton, Illinois, U.S.A., 1992, pp. 49–54 (*zelos* – competition, jealousy, rivalry; *phthonos* – envy, spite).

³ Cf. Aristotele's *Nicomachean Ethics*, Translated, with an interpretative essay, Notes, and Glossary by Robert C. Bartlett and Susan D. Collins, The University of Chicago Press, Ltd., London, 2011:

“I mean by *passions* the following: desire, anger, fear, confidence, envy, joy, friendly affection, hatred, yearning, emulation, pity – in general, those things that pleasure or pain accompany.” (p. 32).

“We are not said to be serious or base in reference to the passions but in reference to the virtues and vices”; “we are angry and afraid in the absence of choice, but the virtues

alongside with joy, pity, fear, a.o. – which distinguishes itself by the fact that, under the pressure of the self-preservation instinct, it predisposes for alterophobia (minimalisation, replacement, isolation a.o. of one's fellow being). Depending on concrete tendencies and contents, it takes the form of categories of uneasiness and sadness – which can be sources of moral aggression – or of malicious joy. This spiritual bias cannot be inoculated by education; it belongs to the individual's temperamental legacy; it can be redirected, appeased, tamed and integrated into the configuration of personality traits in a benefic way; still, if someone has it, it cannot be suppressed. Envy can be a reservoir of human energies and tensions, so that, what matters, eventually, is the way it rallies around moral significancies through straightforward behaviours. It is really dangerous only when its affective-emotional contents are raised up to the rank of moral standards, mobiles, cornerstones and gestures. In suchlike situations, it defines a way of being, a lifestyle, the prevalence which gathers around skills and mentalities that build up and assert one's own individuality, assuming an entire vision on man's purpose in the world.

Within an operational framework, envy can be understood as a capacity to be sad for someone else's joy, pleasure, happiness or to be glad for the same person's sorrow, pain or unhappiness. The latter hypostasis is immoral and, therefore, it is to be blamed for all its facets: it implies cold-blooded reasoning, stalking and insensitivity, so that it is, purely and simply, disagreeable.⁴ The first species of envy is made up of spiritual and

are certain choices or not without choice." (pp/32-33).

The affect (*páthos*) is a movement of the soul (emotion, passion, feeling, a.o.) triggered by external stimuli; namely: „a disposition that can be changed”, modified, altered under the action of certain causes; „this word can also mean great misfortunes and sufferings”, Aristoteles, *Metafizica* (The Metaphysics), Academiei Publishing House, Bucharest, 1965, p. 195; we underline that this refers not only to what happens to the soul, but also to the body.

From a psychological point of view, the affects are „forms of time-bounded activities by the psychic body, which, under the pressure of a conscious or unconscious necessity, are expressed by a sudden discharge and, like the traits of character, are directed toward a goal” (Alfred Adler, *Cunoașterea omului*, (Understanding Human nature), The Scientific Publishing House, 1991, pp. 195-196).

⁴ René Descartes – *Les passions de l'âme*, ed.cit, 2001, p. 39 – considers that „the joy that comes from good (someone else's good – the author's note) is serious, whereas the one coming from bad is accompanied by laughter and derision”.

Spinoza – *Ethics*, Translation by W.H. White, revised by A.H. Stirling, With an Introduction by Don Garrett, Wordsworth Editions Limited, 2001 – writes that, because of self-love, the individuals are by their very nature envious, the obvious proof thereon

appreciative reactions toward an individual who has something we want for ourselves; that state of mind is seen to be unacceptable, hence it is a reason for distress, suffering, disgust, aversion, irritation, sadness, hatred, jealousy, resentment, regret and bitterness for not having one's own chance, the awakened sense of rivalry a.o.. There are still many such feelings that cover different degrees and trends of envy, so that even admiration may hide, sometimes, a degree of envy that fortifies ambition.

Usually, envy pulls human individuality out of its own boundaries, confronting it with the others and with a reality whose symbols/values are expressed, however, in distorted formulas. What people envy are the positions, successes, opportunities, accomplishments, ranks, honours, social standings held by someone they know; in some variants, at stake are the exceptional endowments (spiritual, emotional, physical), not for themselves, but because, thanks to them, that individual holds the very social status he who envies him - motivated by a strong desire - also aspires for. Of course, it is also likely to have a good, disinterested, stimulative reaction of envy, expressed by a sadness that overshadows joyfulness, without superseding it yet; the diffuse entwining of opposite feelings comes from a two-fold affective fixation; on the other's accomplishments and on one's own aspirations, respectively, so that the outcome triggers mobilizing effects, competition appetite, recalibrated efforts toward certain goals (the other person has already reached), it inculcates and clears up the feeling of an obligation toward one's own self, at the same time endorsing rigors - related to work and life - that are put in relation with an example. In suchlike situations, envy is more a state of spiritual discomfort, of vague sadness and dissatisfaction against the background of prevailing attitudes coming from within human dignity, without hampering good faith and honest valorization. That is why, perhaps, in everyday life, it raises no interest, the attention being, in exchange, directed toward the pathological forms of envy, because the moral impact is placed on a different level.

The above-mentioned affective states can instill features of personality that modify the adaptive equation: the fact that something good happens to the other - and exactly that „good“ which is coveted, rightfully or not

being that they enjoy the weaknesses of their fellow beings and, contrarywise, they are saddened by the strength and successes of the same persons [cf. pp.123, 124, 139].

Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, ed. cit. p. 35 - argues that, "the joy for someone else's misfortune" is among the habits that are „bad by themselves and not for the excess or insufficiency it may express“, since it indicates, by its very name, „baseness“.

by ourselves – can act in a negative way toward that feeling – from admiration and indisposition to hatred, from sorrow to suffering – and corresponding conducts; the moral tone is of whimsically motivated rejection. Let us try to systematize the rationales of this process. In the first place, there is that envy which is triggered by the fact that the other does not truly deserve what he has; he has arrived there where (and to what) he has arrived owing to some favourable circumstances, following hidden routes, resorting to facilities that are not available to anyone, adroitly exploiting certain conjunctures to his own benefit, handling the others's reactions, pretending to be what he should to be and so on and so forth, but, essentially, he does not demonstrate the qualities, aptitudes, results that may legitimize him, holding a place he is not worthy of; since he benefits from something he does not deserve, he can bring about or he even brings about a lot of harm: because either he does not rise – as a human being – to the level of his new social role, or he is open – since he is incapable – to any compromise and any backstage arrangements in order to keep his privileges. If, indeed, this is the way things are, this special type of envy is justified⁵, it can be morally motivated; its intimate motives must be understood in all their nuances, even if, eventually, they are not accepted. The unrighteousness, the instances when „justice is walking among us with a broken head“, the spectacle of upstairness, the failure of morality in socio-human environments which proliferate the means of negative selection and stratification a.o., all these stir up envy – be it predominantly ascertive, or violent. Nonetheless, two distinct variants are possible: the individual who adheres to the luring meanings of corruption is capable of a despicable envy, concerned to reach self-achievement within the frames of evil; this envy gives its accord to vice; on the contrary, he who values justice will show a morally excusable envy, because – aside the bitter nostalgia he feels for the way in which he is refused the life he dreams of and the sense that his energies are drained in vain, whereas the others, less capable, get the same things with no effort whatsoever – there prevails a robust feeling of justice expressed in behaviours whose effects can be advantageous to the community. The latter envy takes shape, in fact, as a virtual way out of certain situations of frustration and, of course, it is preferable to apathy, since, even if it does

⁵ Descartes distinguishes simple envy –, a vice coming from a perversity of nature” – from „envy-passion which is not always vicious” [René Descartes – *Les passions de l'âme*, ed.cit, p. 98].

not follow the royal advice of virtue, it proves to be efficacious and, furthermore, we should be at peace with the thought that the moral act entails, besides ideal intentions, unavoidable passions and subjective sufferings. Ultimately, the consideration given to the concrete way in which these subjective components get involved into the structure of the moral gestures defines the space of moral tolerance toward envy, hence its tacit acceptance, without making it recommendable. This envy – the pardonable one – stands, most often, next to other forms in which the emotional pact of the envious person with its own self carries an increased weight, is altered and artificially groomed, ending up in moral shortsightedness. That is why – in the second place –, emerging is the profile of an envy coming from psychological irritation: the envied person is seen as hampering the rise to the top of the aspiring person; since he has what the other wants, the selection gets entangled, the access becomes more difficult, the obstacles multiply, the efforts must be doubled, and the competition is structured on unequal chances. Therefore, envied is he who is inconvenient for what he has, what he does and what he is. That is why – in the third place – the opinion can easily find its nest – loosely argued and opaque to whatever it might contradict it – that the envied person is, in principle, an impostor; there is no longer any concern to see why he does not deserve it, it is just believed, for different affective reasons, that he does not deserve it. This envy comes by emotional decree.

The briefly outlined modulations of envy shed light on its direct or hidden attraction for the territories of vice. The theoretical distinctions we have worked with are fragile; their meaning is to prevent us from the sufficiency of global labellings; nonetheless, the effective life of envy cannot be controlled by explicative straps; it suffices to imagine infinitesimal shifts of accent, weight, motives and intentions in the psychological and value configuration of any type of envy and the outcome would be the passage to other hypostases, to whom another moral treatment is applied; or, from this standpoint, the ingenuity of life, the polychromy and proteism of feelings are inexhaustible. „Good” envy, justifiable (still not desirable) envy because someone does not deserve something, malicious envy (based on the strictly psychological fact that someone is not worthy of something or it is thought that someone is not worthy of something) belongs to an approximative categorization: any shift in affective intensity engenders attitudinal ambiguities, the coexistence of opposite intentions, the grafting of behavioural vectors on blurred mobiles. Nonetheless, in most cases it is about „a hostile feeling”,

„a resentment”, „a hidden anger obscurely pervading the soul” and „feeding with its blood all the possible hostile intentions”, „the impulse of revenge” being accompanied by „a feeling of helplessness”; the concursal conduct means just „to repress the oppressive feeling of „being less”, and to strive „to be more, to value more in a likely comparison with the others”⁶.

Therefore, the envy-affect (emotion, sentiment), unless it is bounded and subjected to morally valid intentions and habits, it slides towards/onto value prolixity. Its role seems to be to compensate the vacuum of inner energy, the deficitary practical completion of desires; envy shortens up or easily cancels altogether the distance- we feel it, although we are seldom aware of it – between what a man aspires to be and what he really is, substituting for the judgment per se an unhealthy interest in „the other”, who – with higher or equal merits, rightfully or not – has already succeeded. As long as it does not alter the respect for values, envy is tolerable and even admissible. This *dezideratum* is, still, seldom accomplished.

In most cases, envy distorts valorization; it overlaps the genuine relation with an imaginary, parasitical one. He who envies overestimates his qualities, has a great opinion of what life should give him as compared to his fellow beings, credits himself with illusory merits and unproved rights; conceited, he tries to justify his own failures; the blame is, as a rule, put on those who are against him, etc.; in order to show off his alleged personality, he either imagines or even believes to embody, he underestimates the person he envies, he belittles the other’s skills, effort and results accomplished. The real envy is an attempt at value-based presence; its contents and manifestations are vertebrated on the idea that, by an anomaly of destiny, „the other” has illegitimately an asset (a rank, a distinction, a situation a.o.) by which he stands out and has power within the community hierarchy; the significance of that asset is over-valued, it fascinates, it is a coveted object; what has a negative effect and calls for denial is only the fact that „the other’ enjoys those privileges. He who envies does not want a real comparison, instead he wants a comparison to his advantage; therefore, he uses his good opinion about himself as a value standard; he instinctively avoids the path toward a genuine self-knowledge: it would be to his disadvantage; he suspects of fraud the

⁶ Max Scheler, *Omul resentimentului*, (Resentiment), translation from German by Radu Gabriel Pârnu, Humanitas Publishing House, 2007, pp. 10-15, 29.

other's success, since, if it is accidental, the implication is that he is more entitled to certain rights; his appreciations are not related to the object, because he feels, he reckons a difference – between himself and the other – which is to his disadvantage; he indulges in a sterile revolt, which distorts evaluation and, implicitly, compromises the very sentiment of value. This envy is an aggressive vice.

When, at the sight of the desired asset – which the other already has it-, someone feels it to be missing, he regrets and suffers discreetly because he does not have it (yet), this is a mild envy, which is stimulative to the soul, useful to the mind, and even indispensable to competition.⁷ By a gradual intensification, by a shift in accent and direction, the feelings clog together into other formulas of envy – partially honourable, still confused –, climaxing with the hypostasis of the obvious vice: embitterment, spite, resentment, rancor for the others' prosperity⁸; and anger and desire for revenge, the urge to harm and make the other suffer, the readiness to stoop to nothing to prevent the other to have that asset or enjoy it a.o. In this variant, envy does not stir nobleness, but baseness; it does not kindle aspiration, it unleashes resentment. In fact, a sluggish, narrow-minded, rudimentary person feels offended and prays for „his neighbour's goat to fall dead too”.

“If we offer as a supreme moral imperative that old cry «be a man!», it is terrible to think of many of the ways in which it could be taken literally”⁹ – underlines Bernard Williams. Therefore, assuming risks is part of any quest for one's moral self. These are in motion not only in the moral reflexes of a psychological tendency, but also in the intensely spiritualized forms, with a clear gratuity of the moral gesture: either by falling into affective ritualization or by being unable to convincingly stand against the expansion of a vice or the latent generalization of pragmatic mentality. In-between the unmediated adaptative pressures and the imperative of moral nobleness widens up a disequilibrium unfavourable to the human being within the human being. As a value synthesis, which tolerates and

⁷ About the interference of the concurential spirit with spite in the Greek world, see Friedrich Nietzsche – *Noi, filologii*, (We Philologists), Dacia Publishing House, Cluj-Napoca, 1994, pp. 43–51.

⁸ Suggestive for these pathological hypostases of envy are the distinctions made by William Barclay – *Analiza semantică a unor termeni din Noul Testament*, (The Semantic Analysis of New testament Words), ed.cit., pp. 51–54.

⁹ Bernard Williams, *Introducere în etică*, (Introduction to Ethics), translation by Valentin Mureșan, Alternative Publishing House, 1993, p. 67.

sanctions plurality, mankind considerably exceeds the realm of morality, being a psycho-cultural strategy meant to check up and bring closer the human configuration in its integrity. Suffering, which prowls on man from the upper layers („the sacred”, the great symbols and values) and from the lower ones (instinctual energies) is sublimated, resignified, lyrically transfigured into a kind of humility and through an awareness of fragility.

Following in the footsteps of Schopenhauer, we have to accept a psycho-socio-cultural proof: most people are moral by conformism, by fear of consequences/sanctions, by interest or because they aspire for a certain prestige and carefully build up their own public image; essentially, the quality of being a man means to assume a risk singlehandedly, while the true morality is an inner experience, strictly personal, and few people practice a morality of convictions beyond the respect toward conventions inoculated through education; this state of things is confirmed during troubled/revolutionary historical periods, when legal and moral codes are made obsolete and hidden/repressed energies, complexes and frustrations burst out, showing the true identity of individuals. Notwithstanding this, we consider that the diversity and richness of the human being should not be judged in keeping with these simplified and pre-established moral scenarios, since predispositions și tendencies are unpredictable sources of existential energization and, ultimately, morality does not cancel, instead it just resignifies, corrects and enobles another evidence: the relations among people are and will remain structurally relations of power, of competition, pluridimensional by nature because diversity proposes and imposes the practice of tolerance și individualization. That is why, beyond the festivist formulas, unmediated moral reality is structured around the principle of the minimum exigency suggested by Schopenhauer: what matters in life is not to do harm willingly, deliberately, but, instead, to do/practice good to your best capacity, without publicly proclaimed efforts. I believe this non-spectacular imperative meets the taste and interests of the economic man.

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CONSONANTIST PSYCHOLOGY AND CYBERNETICS. FROM ȘT.O DOBLEJA TO N:WIENER

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"We do not see with our eyes, but with our mind.

If the mind is empty, our eyes look without seeing".

Șt.Odobleja

Abstract: *The idea of our article comes to clarify the paternity of one of the most influential sciences of the 20th century - cybernetics, whose genesis was claimed by two famous scholars – the American mathematician N. Wiener and the Romanian scientist Șt. Odobleja. Our research work is based on the confessions of the Romanian scientist inserted into authentic texts, in less known talks and inedited publications about the similarity of concepts in consonantist psychology, whose author he is, and cybernetics.*

Keywords: *consonantist psychology, cybernetics, system, resonance, the law of reversibility, feed-back.*

Who is Ștefan Odobleja?

Founder of consonantism and generalized cybernetics, Stephen Odobleja was born in a modest peasant family in the Blahnița Plain on the 13th of October 1902, in Izvorul Aneștilor village, Mehedinți county, and died on the 4th of October in Drobeta-Turnu Severin. He was a military

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doctor, scientist, post-mortem member of the Romanian Academy (1990)¹. A brilliant pupil in the primary school, in his native village, he attended secondary school and the high school "Traian" in Turnu Severin. For the last years of high school he attended extramural classes, but "borrowing 30 books at a time from the school library, which he used to devour in the patriarchal peace and quiet of his native village". After graduating from high school and working for one year as a substitute teacher in the village Puținței and on the island of Ada Kaleh, in 1922, he won a scholarship at the Military Institute of Forensic Medicine, and he thus managed to attend the Faculty of Medicine in Bucharest. A very hard working student, with a real calling for reading to improve his knowledge, he had imposed himself, even since he was in high school, a personal method of studying and learning foreign languages, and managed to go through an immense bibliography, suitable for becoming an "uomo universal."

As a student, he made inquiries in the clinics of Bucharest, being first concerned with the principle of sound propagation in the living organisms. In 1928 he earned the title of PhD. in medicine and surgery with the thesis '*Car Accidents*' and thereafter he performed his military service in different garrisons in the country, (Brăila, Lipcani, Turda, Turnu Severin, Dorohoi, Dej, Tâgoviște, Lugoj, Cernavoda) looking for peace and quiet for his study.

His first research works appeared in specialized journals and, in 1935, he published, in Paris, his work, '*La phonoscopie, nouvelle méthode d'exploration clinique*' for which he received the Romanian Academy Award 'General Dr. Al. Papiu'. In 1937, participating in the International Congress of Military Medicine held in Bucharest, he announced his monumental '*Psychologie consonantiste*', a systemic and visionary work that was published in two volumes in Lugoj (1938-1939), with the copyright of distribution by '*Librairie Maloine*' from Paris. But the war interrupted the reception of this work in the milieu of his time, although there were two ample works, published in French, where the author laid the basis *avant la lettre* of the principles of the 20th century science, cybernetics.

Having returned from the war with the rank of lieutenant colonel, Dr. Ștefan Odobleja fell victim of the communist regime. He was forbidden to

¹ Information concerning Ștefan Odobleja's life, work and personality were selected from the *Personal Archive*, "Dr. Ștefan Odobleja" within the Romanian National Archives, SJAN Mehedinți, 1978.

practise his profession and withdrew to his native village. He was also forced to withdraw his works (over 1,000 copies having remained remaining undistributed after the war), as in the 2nd volume the author demonstrated in a few pages the aberrations and failure of the communist system. However, institutions and scientists from the country and abroad received the two volumes, which had curiously remained unreceived for over 30 years. The two references on *'The Consonantist Psychology'* which had appeared in the journals *'Modern Military Spirit'* (1939, Romania) and the *'Psychological Abstracts'* (1941, USA) did not echo properly, the paradigmatic scientific value of Odojeja's work being received only much later, more precisely, after the emergence of the 20th century science, cybernetics.

In the 1970s, the creator of consonantism discovered, in his turn, his ideas, mainly the law of reversibility or the reverse connection, in Norbert Wiener's feed-back of cybernetics (the Nobel Prize). Encouraged by several writers and by the press, still in full creative power, he came into the attention of scientists, the priority of his work being recognized first in the country, then abroad, and he was called "father of cybernetics" because his work had appeared 10 years before N. Wiener's *'Cybernetics'*. This recognition took time, almost a decade (1970-1978), and even posthumously, and, on the other hand, the Romanian science remained deprived of another work of the Romanian scholar *'The Logic of Resonance'*. This work was interrupted in the 70s, when the author was forced to write *'The Consonantist Psychology and Cybernetics'*, a polemical volume appeared posthumously (1978). Later, in 1982, the Romanian translation of *'The Consonantist Psychology'* appeared. From *'The Logic of Resonance'* only the *'Introduction'* was published (1984), while the rest of his work remained scattered on thousands sheets of manuscripts.

In the summer of 1978, although seriously suffering from cirrhosis, the scientist prepared a communication for the Congress of specialists in cybernetics which was held in Amsterdam in August. He came with original proposals as to applications of generalized cybernetics starting from universal laws (which today bears his name), systematized in the *'Consonantiste Psychology'*. The next day after the news of his successful communication in Amsterdam, he left this world, leaving here, on earth, a legacy which has started to become increasingly precious in our millennium. In our appreciations we rely on everything that followed posthumously - a recourse to consonantist pan psychologism, in the Romanian scientist's work being found the paradigms that explain the

phenomena of nature, the binary nature of biological and psychological processes with the help of the reverse connection, a concept (a universal law launched by the author) involving the law of reaction and the law of reversibility in all the other creative, spiritual and material realities. *'The Consonantist Psychology'*, more famous and percussive in posterity, is much alike the author's destiny, as vice versa. It is the work of a great visionary, which, before reaching its destination (the receiver), resurrected on the way.

What does consonantist psychology mean?

St. Odobleja developed a new outlook on psychology in his work entitled *'The Consonantist Psychology'* published in French in Lugoj, in two volumes, in the 1938s-1939s and distributed by *'Librairie Maloine'* from Paris, but which, because of World War II was confronted with over 35 years of oblivion. It was reviewed only in a Romanian publication in 1939² and in an American journal in 1941³.

After the reviews of the years 1939-1941, mentioned above, the first comeback of Odobleja's work in the public eye was due to I. Oancea-Stroe, a friend of the author of *'The Consonantist Psychology'* and to V. Pîrvănescu, who published a note in the newspaper of Mehedinți county.⁴ Then Dr. Olaru presented a paper on Consonantist Psychology in 1973⁵ followed by a series of articles in *Tribuna (Cluj)* and *Flacăra* magazines. In parallel with the discussions in the press, the first debates took place and the first studies on St. Odobleja's work started to be published. About 120 copies of his work were offered to academic and medical libraries in the most important cultural centres - Rome, Naples, Bologna, Lisbon, Madrid, Copenhagen, London, Stockholm, Athens, Brussels, The Hague, Amsterdam, Cairo, Calcutta, Bombay, Tokyo, Peking, Shanghai, Rio de Janeiro, Buenos Aires, Mexico, Boston, New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, etc.

In the country, *'The Consonantist Psychology'* benefited from the good appreciation of some personalities of the time, among whom C.Parhon,

² C. Atanasiu, review, in *The Modern Military Spirit*, Januarie- February 1939, p.60.

³ S.M. Strong, abstract in *Psychological Abstracts*, 1941, January, p.59-60.

⁴ I. Oancea-Stroe, V. Pîrvănescu, *Small Encyclopedia of Severin*, Viitorul (The Future), Mehedinți, 12 Mai 1972, p.1.

⁵ Al. Olaru, *The Consonantist Psychology*, communication at the Conference for the history of Medicine, Bucharest, 30 April, 1973, apud. Mihai Drăgănescu and Pantelimon Golu in *Introduction to The Consonantist Psychology*, Bucharest, The Scientific and Encyclopaedic Publishing House, 1982, p.6.

C.Rădulescu-Motru, D.Bagdasar, Lothar Rădăceanu I.Balif, N.Bagdasar, M.Ghilerdea, Gh. Zapan, C.Atanasiu, I.Raianu and others.

The legacy that St. Odobleja left us in the field of psychological creation imposes itself by its intrinsic quality and value rather than by its quantitative dimensions. Besides, as it can be easily inferred even from skimming Odobleja's texts, the author was reluctant to verbosity, endless descriptions, sophisticated sentences full of words but not of scientific content.

At the end of the second tome of the French edition of the '*The Consonantist Psychology*', we find a self-characterization that could not be more appropriated for Șt. Odobleja's way of thinking and writing about the psychic, the psychical phenomena and other phenomena related to them – "By its external concision, says the author, by its abbreviations, by the limited number of concrete examples, by the synoptic tables, this book is rather a table of contents, a directory or a dictionary of psychology, a general plan for a large '*Treaty of Psychology*' which should contain 20-30 toms (660)"

His work really looks like a huge dictionary, showing all terms of a modern treaty of psychology, in a condensed manner, with schematic trends, searching everywhere a unifying principle of logic with psychology, the basis of logicizing psychology and, further on, the universal principle of harmony and synthesis. "*For what is consonance, if not a kind of harmony? What is the consonantist psychology, if not a kind of logical harmony?*"⁶

Consonance, as Șt.Odobleja understood it, is an interaction with regulatory character, on the one hand, between the various subassemblies inside one and the same system and, on the other hand, between the system as a whole and the environment. In this context, it is sheer cybernetic (in the contemporary meaning of the term) the emphasis of the author of the '*The Consonantist Psychology*' that both the maintenance of a state of optimum balance and adjustment assume that the system make up an internal model (an image) suitable for its external environment. This implies logically the process of communication, the energetic and informational exchange between the system and the environment. In the interpretation of systems, the consonantist psychology rejects the unilateral-absolutist treatments, the so-called "robot type" models and

⁶ Șt. Odobleja, *The Consonantist Psychology and Cybernetics*, Craiova, Scrisul românesc (The Romanian Writing), Publishing House, 1978, p. 126.

asserts for the first time the logical scheme of the interactional type model, which is central in cybernetics.

Thus, the system behavior is analyzed by correlating the two main links – the input link and the output link. The "input" expresses the necessary dependence of the system considered by the external environment, which can be either only an energetic-informational dependence, such as the one for technical and artificial systems, or an energetic-informational and substantial one, such as the one for biological systems. The "output" expresses the system self-delimitation of the system in relation to the environment and the assertion of an own scope of the system. Between the two links, Șt. Odobleja postulates a circular type relationship; a direct connection from the "input" to the "output" and a reverse one, from the "output" to the "input".⁷ The author gave this relation the name of the law of reversibility. "Reversibility is a vicious circle (here, vicious circle is not taken in the sense of the classical logic, but in the sense of feedback, n.n.) between cause and effect. It is an association between two conditions that determine each other alternatively"⁸

*Is not this just the logical scheme of the control and communication process of self-adjustment?*⁹

Consonance arises, in Odobleja's conception, as he himself confesses, from the interdisciplinary approach to sciences, the author making the indisputable proof of a systemic outlook on human knowledge of the universe, implicitly on the human psyche, but a physicist and, at the same, mechanistic outlook on psychology and, respectively, on psychic phenomena, especially on thinking.

We support these appreciations by the author's own arguments: "The *Consonantist Psychology* - a work of synthesis - resulted from research in the field of classical, settled sciences. I did not achieve it through research in 'border areas', on virgin lands or no one' territories. The interdisciplinary sciences, multiplied today in excess, did not exist in 1938 or were rather scarce, sporadic, accidental. They resulted from the "marriage" - binary match - of two of the scientists from the known ones, from each marriage resulting two daughters of mixed composition <psychology + techniques - > technical psychology + psychological technique. So, the two 'parents' gave birth to 'two daughters sisters'."

⁷ Șt.Odobleja, *The Consonantist Psychology*, Maloine, Paris, 1938, 1st vol., p.144, 188.

⁸ Ibidem, p.429.

⁹ Mihai Golu, *Forward to Șt. Odobleja, The Consonantist Psychology and Cybernetics*, cited works, p. 12.

The consonantist psychology – to be read: cybernetics – is an interdisciplinary science, we could even say several times interdisciplinary, which was created through interdisciplinary multiple marriages, binary but also successive ones. It is not the first emerging interdisciplinary science but, unlike others, it understood its formation mechanism, analyzed it and established it as a method. It joined very distant sciences –concrete evidence that the combinations generating interdisciplinary sciences are not conditioned by neighborhood and contiguity. By the way it conceived knowledge, the consonantist psychology contributed to the emergence of interdisciplinary sciences. It contributed directly, without the need of mediation and interpretations of those who took over, with considerable deformation, this idea¹⁰.

Establishing the consonant relationships between sciences, multiple consonance (spatial, physical, logical and psychological), Odobleja postulates the possibility of mechanizing thinking, conceived as a creative act. Everything relies on the consonance of the psychological processes with the physical ones, on the possibility of materialization and mechanization of these processes. In other words, by a geometrical, physical and mechanical moulding of thought. Instead of a thinking "instilled in us by someone else (a Deus ex machinna) I saw a thinking accomplished by itself – through natural determinism. Thinking is not a barrel organ that a person can spin, even if it is an inner person or even if it is called 'consciousness', but thinking is a physiological activity, as the other automatic functions of the body"¹¹. Odobleja speaks about the mechanization of sensory processes, the materialization of memory by storing information; the mechanization of driving forces by means of various machines, the substituting of organic secretions with prefabricated products. He believes that computing machines represent a start in this respect. But he foresees this for the future. Actual, creative thinking machines, machines for philosophizing and, according to his classical logical conception, machines defining, to dividing, to classifying. He also enumerates the advantages of mechanization of the creative act, of thinking and imagination; a great intellectual economization, a great progress in the cerebral hygiene of intellectual workers, a considerable increase in the yield of thought.

¹⁰ Ibidem, p.129.

¹¹ Ibidem, p.123.

This is, obviously, a consequence of technico-cybernetic type of the logical and psychological substantiation of sciences, a consequence of the fundamentalist theory of consonantist type. It is considered to be a "generalized cybernetic vision". The discussions about its appreciation and capitalization still continue. Naturally, the similarities between the "current cybernetic vision and the generalized one" are taken into account. The similarities refer, certainly, only to this consequence, the current cybernetic, no matter the variant in which we accept it, cannot constitute a theory underlying sciences.¹².

From the consonantist psychology to cybernetics

Șt. Odobleja's main work, '*The Consonantist Psychology*', appeared about 10 years before the '*Cybernetics*'¹³ of the American Norbert Wiener¹⁴, about which Odobleja would find out later, both due to the war events and, subsequently (after his disbandment), due to his long isolation in his native village from Mehedinti, the former village Izvorul Aneștilor (*that now bears his name*), deprived of the possibility of keeping abreast of the news from the scientific world.

The more detailed explanation of the exceptional value and significance of '*The Consonantist Psychology*', as well as the demonstration and argumentation of its priority in the birth of cybernetics were the reasons that led him, in the last years of his life, to write the book '*The Consonantist Psychology and Cybernetics*' (published at Scrisul Românesc Publishing House from Craiova), which he managed to see only in the final form for printing (but not printed) due to the rapid worsening of his disease, and death. In the context of our argumentation we intend to present some assessments, explanations and the most significant motivations invoked by Stephen Odobleja in the above mentioned volume, perhaps less known even by those interested, because of the relatively modest and quickly exhausted edition at the date of publication, in 1978. The author is particularly explicit in the Introduction he signs, considering that "establishing equivalence between cybernetics and consonantist psychology, we indicate the latter as the originary

¹² Al. Surdu, *Introductory Study la Șt.Odobleja, Introduction to the Logic of Resonance*, Forward by Constantin Noica, Craiova, Scrisul Românesc Publishing House, 1984, p.13.

¹³ N.Wiener, *Cybernetics or Control and Communication in the Animal and the Machine*, translated by Al. Giuculescu, Bucharest, The Scientific Publishing House, 1966.

¹⁴ Norbert Wiener (1894-1964), Prof. of Mathematics at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, USA, considered to the founder of cybernetics.

cybernetics – the first fundamental theoretical cybernetics. Supported on ample evidence, we prove that cybernetics was born between 1925 and 1938 in Romania and that it is contained, under all its aspects, in *The Consonantist Psychology*, which has a categorical priority on the subsequent cybernetics, whose long series began only in 1948, when even the practical applications of the initial cybernetics had already begun to appear, with the first machines designed by it”¹⁵. As for four decades no one thought to highlight the cyberneticism of his psychology and the psychologism of cybernetics, the author himself intended to address this shortcoming, as he knew best his own ideas, being the most appropriate person to eliminate the confusion with the ideas of others and the undifferentiated mixture between the ideas of his precursors and successors.

For a fair and honest understanding of the problem analyzed, we would like to show, based on genuine arguments, that Ștefan Odobleja recognized the exceptional performances recorded by the American researchers in the fields of technical and private cybernetics, which cannot, however, eclipse the “general cybernetics” that generated them”, previously, having Romanian origin. ‘Cybernetics’ - he continued, will be cybernetics, as Norbert Wiener called it, just as America will be America, after the name of its vulgarizer. Still, it's good to know who discovered America, actually, and who established and developed, in fact, cybernetics”¹⁶. It is essential to prove paternity of cybernetics and “not the midwives who did the midwifery, the godparents who baptized it or the nannies who breasted it, after its birth, as a fully constituted science, general and complete, ever since 1938”¹⁷. It is necessary to achieve a categorical discrimination between the cybernetics fully constituted of the year 1938 and its precursors - between the integral, totalized cybernetics, on the one hand, and its components on the other hand. *The Consonantist Psychology* emerged in 1938 as a complete general cybernetics – the first cybernetics established, that detached itself significantly from the compact group of its precursors. This was, in fact, the year when the string of precursors ended and the string of specialists in cybernetics emerged, and the *Consonantist Psychology* thus inaugurated *Cybernetics*. “As a theoretician - Odobleja stated, developing a theory that proved to be accurate and effective, I think I have fulfilled my mission. It was the

¹⁵ Șt.Odobleja, *The Consonantist Psychology and Cybernetics*, cited works, p.17.

¹⁶ Ibidem, p.18.

¹⁷ Ibidem, p.19.

others' job to check it experimentally. And the fact that the theory verification was accomplished by others, it is an additional guarantee of the objectivity and validity of this verification"¹⁸.

The Consonantist Psychology was preceded by many valuable works, but the author's remark "none showed so many cybernetic type trends and at such a high level, none offered a synthesis so typically cybernetic, none joined together so many defining attributes of it - psychological mechanization with the mechanization of thought, with binary and dichotomy, with the cyclic process, with the cybernetic methodology, etc. None presented, analyzed, summarized and generalized them at the cybernetic level, which was also the level of consonantist psychology."¹⁹

As to its successors, by comparison, Norbert Wiener's '*Cybernetics*' (rich in information but with less genuine material, few cybernetic ideas and questionable rigor, clarity in approach) can represent only as denomination the moment of its birth, of achieving the new science, only announcing and drawing attention to it, the moment of continuing it and treating it from a certain perspective ... And this is because "not the novelty of its denomination - emphasizes Odobleja - is that which gives cybernetics its value of originality, but the novelty of the content of ideas"²⁰.

But what is cybernetics? Analyzing and synthesizing the opinions, the viewpoints, the different and numerous definitions after 1948 (incomplete, but partially true, completing each other) we can draw some meaningful conclusions, each one of them envisaging certain important, essential elements of that term.²¹ Therefore, cybernetics is both a theory of tuning, of dynamic systems with self-regulation, of a unified and generalized adjustment, based on reverse action (cyclic process, feedback), both a technique of artificial thinking and of robots (whose ideas lie at the basis of modern computers) and a method of analogies, models and modeling, of links and proximity between sciences / it is the method of multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary approaches, generalizations, unifications and syntheses, of common laws, a psychology with multiple and varied meanings, science of management (natural and artificial management) or ordering. It is not only a mere discipline, confined to a

¹⁸ Ibidem, p.20.

¹⁹ Ibidem, 260.

²⁰ Ibidem, 262.

²¹ www.observatorul.com/articles_main.asp?action...ID 8852, mai1, 2010.

narrow and strictly delimited field – states Odobleja, but a complex of disciplines born from psychology and focused around it, emerging from it like the branches of a tree from its stem. It is a staged synthesis, a string of multiple modelings, often mutual, syntheses and modelings in which prevail, both as a priority and special significance, the modeling of psychology on technique and then modeling of technique on psychology ... Cybernetics is an intellectual symphony, a symphony of ideas and sciences²².

Conclusions

There are many viewpoints on Odobleja's work ²³, his vision gaining sustainability along with the contemporary trend of interpreting cybernetics, more specifically the psychology of cybernetics facing difficulties in explaining fully the psychological area. It is known that after the publication of Norbert Wiener's '*Cybernetics*' in 1948, which had the strongest impact on the whole scientific and philosophical thinking in the second half of the 20th century, cybernetics was applied in technique, biology, economics and sociology. The years '50s and '60s of 20th century were periods of emergence of biocybernetics, neurocybernetics, economic cybernetics and a cybernetic vision of society, along with the continuous development of technical cybernetics. In the '70s and even before, the cybernetic psychology developed. Is Odobleja only a precursor or founder of cyber psychology, given the title of his work '*The Consonantist Psychology*'?

We also ask ourselves: was cybernetics born twice, in two different places, through the independent and absolutely isolated efforts of two authors?

We appreciate that cybernetics was not born twice, but only once.

Ștefan Odobleja cannot be considered the founder of cybernetics, this is undoubtedly the merit of the American mathematician Norbert Wiener who considers that cybernetics was born in Princeton in late winter 1943-1944, on the occasion of a meeting initiated there by himself and by the mathematician Dr. Joseph Neumann "I consider this conference as the birthplace of a new science - cybernetics, or the theory of order and communication in machines and living organism. The American scientist assumes that "feed-back was born at Princeton, cybernetics was born at

²² Ibidem, 210-260

²³ M. Drăgănescu, *Romanian Precursors of Cybernetics*, Contemporanul, 16 June, 1978, p.8.

Princeton", which is not reducible only to feed-back, fact which was further demonstrated by his research at MIT.

Ștefan Odobleja remains indisputably in the history of cybernetics not only as a precursor of cybernetics, but also because he has the world priority of the idea of a generalized cybernetics, being the first thinker who considers the phenomenon of closed loop with reverse connection as a universal law. No one before him had such a vision of the role of general feed-back in nature and society. Odobleja is the first who tried to apply the feed-back law (the law of reversibility) to as many areas as possible, mainly to all fields. In this way he delimitates all the particular cases where the reverse connection was highlighted.

As far as the *Consonantist Psychology* is concerned, we consider that this work is not only a cyber work or a "theory of reversibility". It is a new theory of thought, a philosophy of mental processes and science, the author searching a number of general laws that apply to all areas, to all living and inert natural sciences, to psychology and socio-economic life. Even if he did not have the chance of international recognition of its valuable scientific contributions, Ștefan Odobleja is undoubtedly a genuine landmark of Romanian and universal thinking, science and culture.

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THE STRUCTURE OF FUTURE BIOTECHNOLOGISTS' HUMANISTIC ORIENTATION

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Abstract: *The purpose of the article is to determine the structure of future biotechnologists' humanistic orientation, based on the analysis of the scientific sources and the professional activity of biotechnologists and its humanistic orientation.*

It is proved actuality of forming humanistic orientation of future biotechnologists because it is an integral part of their professional activities and humanistic trends in biotechnology determine its important role.

Keywords: *humanistic orientation, structure, professional activities of biotechnologists, humanistic tendencies.*

Introduction

Today the development of biotechnology represents one of the main trends of scientific and technological progress. Range of actual and especially potential applications of biotechnological innovations is becoming more extensive. Biotechnologies are becoming an integral part of all spheres of life.

However, all achievements in the field of this science should be based on noosphere thinking, human values, protection of the individuality from negative effects of the use of biotechnology. Attention should be paid to the fact that further advances in the technological human development can be carried out only under conditions of the creation of a moral society. Technologies can not be considered in the isolation from the entity who will use them (or who will come into being to use them), therefore modern requirements to the biotechnologist individual actualize the need of forming humanistic orientation of future biotechnologists in professional training.

Consideration of forming humanistic orientation of future biotechnologists at higher agricultural education institutions

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corresponding to modern conditions, determines the theoretical foundation of the essence, the contents and development of the structure of this phenomenon.

The analysis of the scientific literature

The formation of humanistic orientation of future specialists has been researched by N. Bocharina (forming humanistic orientation of a future social teacher)¹, V. Vasylyk (forming humanistic orientation of future specialists lawyers)², I. Gerasimova (forming humanistic orientation of future managers)³, A. Kudusova (forming humanistic orientation of future teachers)⁴, N. Nerukh (forming humanistic orientation of future agronomists)⁵, M. Opolska (forming humanistic orientation of future managers-economists)⁶, I. Tymchuk (formation of a humanistic aimed personality of a future professional ecologist)⁷.

The analysis of the scientific literature showed that the issue of training future biotechnologists hadn't developed sufficiently in the

¹ Bocharina N. O. Psykholohichni Osoblyvosti formyrovanye humanistichnoyi spryamovanosti maybutn'oho sotsial'noho pedahoha: dys. ... Kand. psykhol. nauk: 19.00.07 / Bocharina Nataliya Oleksiyivna; Pereyaslav-Khmel'nyts. derzh. ped. un-t im. Hryhoriya Skovorody. - Pereyaslav-Khmel'nyts'kyy, 2012. - 300 s.

² Vasylyk V. V. Humanistichne spryamuvannya profesiyanoi podhotovky maybutnikh molodshykh spetsialistiv yurystiv u protsesi. Vyvchennya pravovykh dystsyplin: avtoreferat dys. ... Kand. ped. nauk: 13.00.04 / Vasylyk Volodymyr Viktorovych; Vinnyts. derzh. ped. un-t im. M. Kotsyubyns'koho. -- Vinnytsya, 2014. - 20 s.

³ Herasymova I. H. Humanizatsiya profesiyanoi podhotovky maybutnikh menedzherov vyrobnychoyi sfery: dys. ... Kand. ped. nauk: spets. 13.00.04 / Iryna Hennadiyivna Herasymova; Vinnyts'kyy derzh. tekhnichnyy un-t. - K., 2002. - 230 s.

⁴ Kudusova A. SH. Formuvannya humanistichnoyi spryamovanosti maybutnikh vchyteliv pochatkovykh klasiv v protsesi profesiyanoi podhotovky. : Dys ... kand. ped. nauk: 13.00.04 / Aliye Shukhriyivna Kudusova; Tsentral'nyy in-t pislyadyplomnoyi ped. osvity Akademiyi ped. nauk Ukrayiny. - K., 2005. - 301 s.

⁵ Nerukh N. B. Formuvannya humanistichnoyi spryamovanosti maybutnikh ahronomiv v protsesi Vyvchennya sotsiohumanitarnikh dystsyplin: dys. ... Kand. ped. nauk: 13.00.04 / Nataliya Vasylivna Nerukh; DVNZ "Un-t menedzh. Osvity". - K., 2009. - 298 s.

⁶ Opol's'ka M. V. Formuvannya humanistichnoyi spryamovanosti maybutnikh menedzherov-ekonomistiv u protsesi profesiyanoi podhotovky: dys. ... kand. ped. nauk: 13.00.07 / M. V. Opol's'ka; Nats. ped. un-t im. M.P.Drahomanova. - K., 2009. - 221 s.

⁷ Tymchuk I. M. Pedahohichni umovy humanizatsiyi navchannya maybutnikh ekolohiv u protsesi fakhovoyi podhotovky: dys. ... Kand. ped. nauk: 13.00.04 / Inna Mykolayivna Tymchuk; Vinnyts. derzh. ped. un-t im. M. Kotsyubyns'koho. - Vinnytsya, 2010. - 271 s.

theory and practice of vocational education and the concept of humanization of biotechnological education and the problem of forming humanistic orientation of future biotechnologists had never been the subject of research.

The analysis of the scientific sources on the subject of research indicates the problem urgency of forming humanistic orientation of future biotechnologists and need of special scientific and pedagogical research. In this connection, first of all, there is a need to study humanistic orientation of a person of a future expert and detection the system of values inherent to representatives of a certain professional area.

The purpose of the article is to find out the essence of humanistic orientation of future biotechnologists, define more precisely the contents and develop of its structure.

Scientists have different approaches to determining humanistic orientation. Humanistic orientation is examined as value-and motivational properties of a personality (A. Leontyev, L. Bozovic, G. Ball, J. Bech), a selective attitude towards reality (B. Ananiev, A. Kovalev, A. Bondarenko), a dynamic personal creation (S. Rubinstein, N. Chepeleva, S. Yaremchik, T. Danilova) as individual disposition (A. Lysenko) as significant characteristics of a personality (A. Asmolov, B. Teplov) as a set of personal and valuable human qualities (N. Nerukh).

According to the semantic load notion of "humanistic" ("aimed at people" as value) in the context of our research "humanistic orientation of a personality" we understand as the integrative property of an individual, which is implemented in activities for others. In its turn, humanistic orientation of future specialist has features, depending on the type of activity which he is preparing.

Humanistic orientation of a personality in many scientific studies is considered in the relation to leading activities of a certain category of people.

Thus, M. Opolska determines *humanistic orientation of a future manager-economist* as a leading professional quality that guides action of a manager for making administrative decision concerning a subordinate individual with the humanistic position⁸.

We find the definition of *humanistic orientation of a future social teacher* in

⁸ Opol's'ka M.V., Formuvannya humanistichnoyi spryamovanosti maybutnikh menedzherov-ekonomistiv u protsesi profesiynoyi podhotovky: dys kand. ped. nauk: 13.00.07 / M. V. Opol's'ka; Nats. ped. un-t im. M.P. Drahomanova. - K., 2009. - 221 s.

the research of N. Bocharina. According to the researcher, it is an integrated personal formation that accumulates social motives, altruistic setup, humanistic convictions that define the style of pedagogical interaction on the basis of moral and ethical culture⁹.

A. Vasylyk understands humanistic orientation of a lawyer as stable personal quality including the dialectical unity of knowledge, motivation and value orientations (ethics, motivations, relationships) and methods of action, based on the attitude as a whole of humanity and to each person as main social and individual values¹⁰.

The definition and structure of biotechnologists' humanistic orientation

Therefore, to determine the definition of "humanistic orientation of a future biotechnologist" there is a need to apply to the analysis of professional activities of biotechnologists and argumentation its humanistic orientation.

The transition to an information society raises new challenges to the nature and quality of professional activities of highly qualified specialists, especially for the agricultural sector. In the new environment there is a need of a new professional and socio-psychological model of a biotechnologist-humanist, who is not only able to manage skillfully and use of modern biotechnology, but also has high moral personal qualities, sense of responsibility to the society for "the cultivation of genetically modified organisms, accumulation of carcinogens and harmful mutations; experiments that involve changing the genetic code, which poses a threat to humans not only in local but also a global dimension"¹¹.

Fundamental changes in social production and the economy, particularly in agriculture, lead to strengthen of requirements of training

⁹ Bocharina N. O. *Psykholohichni Osoblyvosti formyrovanye humanistichnoyi spryamovanosti maybutn'oho sotsial'noho pedahoha: dys. ...* Kand. psykol. nauk: 19.00.07 / Bocharina Nataliya Oleksiyivna; Pereyaslav-Khmel'nyts. derzh. ped. un-t im. Hryhoriya Skovorody. - Pereyaslav-Khmel'nyts'kyy, 2012. - 300 s.

¹⁰ Vasylyk V. V. *Humanistichne spryamuvannya profesynoyi podhotovky maybutnikh molodshykh spetsialistiv yurystiv u protsesi. Vychennya pravovykh dystsyplin: avtoreferat dys. ...* Kand. ped. nauk: 13.00.04 / Vasylyk Volodymyr Viktorovych; Vinnyts. derzh. ped. un-t im. M. Kotsyubyns'koho. -- Vinnytsya, 2014. - 20 s.

¹¹ Kudusova A. SH. *Formuvannya humanistichnoyi spryamovanosti maybutnikh vchyteliv pochatkovykh klasiv v protsesi profesynoyi podhotovky. : Dys ...* kand. ped. nauk: 13.00.04 / Aliye Shukhriyivna Kudusova; Tsentral'nyy in-t pislyadyplomnoyi ped. osvity Akademiyi ped. nauk Ukrayiny. - K., 2005. - 301 s.

specialists in this field. A modern agricultural worker must have not only deep professional knowledge, but also realize the importance of their professional activities to the public, be responsible for the consequences of their actions and deeds, have a high level of general culture, stand out formation of manager qualities.

The qualification of a biotechnologist provides for a high level of special scientific knowledge, a spacious mind in modern achievements of the world science, high skill of the experimenter, originality of thought. A specialist in the field of biotechnology must be professional, able to combine research, design and entrepreneurial business, which is focused on creating highly efficient structures that stimulate the growth and development of various spheres of social and economic activities. In biotechnology man acts like a natural force, changing and creating different forms of life. As a whole, a subject of biotechnology performs an important social role, he makes not only more comfortable life, but also transforms all human being directly. Projected activities of a subject of biotechnology are aimed at creating the appropriate models in biotechnology and the principles of bioethics. In this regard, humanistic ideals which are formed in the minds of biotechnologists are especially important.

Therefore, activity of a biotechnologist in agriculture on the humanistic principles of kindness, responsibility, duty involves the following principles:

- creating environmentally and technologically safe conditions of social life;
- the preservation of biological authenticity of nature as such in terms of scientific and technological progress and development of genetic engineering;
- avoiding the use of agents and technology that may have adverse effects on human health;
- maintaining and improving the health of soil, plants and animals;
- prevention of the risks by adopting appropriate technologies and the rejection of the introduction of some of them, if the effects of their use are difficult to predict;
- prediction of the consequences of their actions and deeds;
- improving the quality of agricultural products, methods of production and processing to improve nutrition;
- conscious and active participation in professional activities to achieve the good of the society.

Focusing on the above, we can argue that the activities of a biotechnologist in agriculture should be humanistic orientated, which means that the main measure of his activity is the welfare of people. To achieve one's purpose educational process is to form students' certain qualities, positive attitude to the responsibility and duty of the state. Vocational training at high school should have a close relationship with professional orientation of an individual, with the formation of the specific system of values inherent to representatives of the biotechnology sector.

So for forming humanistic orientation of a personality is particular importance in professional training biotechnologist because it is an integral part of professional activity of a future specialist, and humanistic trends in biotechnology determine its important role.

It should be emphasized that the importance of humanistic orientation in professional activity of biotechnologists is essentially higher than for the vast majority of other professions. The exceptions are some of medical professions and other professions related to life and health of people. Application of the principle of humanism in professional activities of other professions due to its axiological character is not required strictly, they are entitled to a wide choice and mostly authorized power to influence of public opinion.

The analysis of professional qualities of biotechnologists and their activities serves as a basis to determine the meaning of "humanistic orientation of biotechnologists", which we understand as integrative characteristic of a personality that determines its behavior according to the ideas of humanism – the recognition of the intrinsic value of an individual, human rights in personal development and happy life, humane treatment of people, aspiration for the creation of humane technologies that will bring benefit not only people around one, but also contribute to the conservation of humanity and biological authenticity of nature itself, creating a new environment of life.

Before we define the structural components of humanistic orientation of a future biotechnologist personality we should analyze the components that researchers separate in their works, depending on the specific of professional activity.

Thus, A. Kudusova distinguishes such structural components of humanistic orientation of primary school teachers: cognitive (knowledge of the essence of humanity, its role, forms and manifestation peculiarities in pedagogical activity), motivation (personal acceptance of the ideas of humanism, humanist motivation for mastering ways to implement

educational activities), activity (mastering the techniques, tools, technologies of humanistic interaction with students)¹².

N. Bocharina considers that the structure of humanistic orientation of future social workers includes social, cognitive, motivational, emotional and conative components¹³.

B. Vasylyk singles out knowledge, emotional and valuable and behavioral components in the structure of humanistic orientation of a junior specialist lawyer personality¹⁴.

Exploring the humanistic orientation structure of a future manager-economist, M. Opolska identifies the following components: goodwill as a priori positive attitude to the employee; understanding partners and colleagues, taking notice individual characteristics of employees, communicative as the ability to establish and maintain contacts and influence on people; tolerance as tolerableness to individuality, thoughts and lifestyles of employees, professional optimism as the belief in human potential; knowledge of the rules and regulations of professional ethics, providing justice as an objective assessment work and discipline, moral assessment and self-assessment of behavior, stereotypes of moral behavior¹⁵.

N. Nerukh distinguishes such structural components of humanistic orientation of future agronomists: cognitive, emotional valuable, active¹⁶.

Based on the analysis of the essence of humanistic orientation of a

¹² Kudusova A. SH. Formuvannya humanistichnoyi spryamovanosti maybutnikh vchyteliv pochatkovykh klasiv v protsesi profesiynoyi podhotovky. Dys ... kand. ped. nauk: 13.00.04 / Aliye Shukhriyivna Kudusova; Tsentral'nyy in-t pislyadyplomnoyi ped. osvity Akademiyi ped. nauk Ukrayiny. - K., 2005. - 301 s.

¹³ Bocharina N. O. Psykholohichni Osoblyvosti formyrovanye humanistichnoyi spryamovanosti maybutn'oho sotsial'noho pedahoha: dys. ... Kand. psykol. nauk: 19.00.07 / Bocharina Nataliya Oleksiyivna; Pereyaslav-Khmel'nyts. derzh. ped. un-t im. Hryhoriya Skovorody. - Pereyaslav-Khmel'nyts'kyy, 2012. - 300 s.

¹⁴ Vasylyk V. V. Humanistichne spryamuvannya profesiynoyi podhotovky maybutnikh molodshykh spetsialistiv yurystiv u protsesi. Vyvchennya pravovykh dystsyplin: avtoreferat dys. ... Kand. ped. nauk: 13.00.04 / Vasylyk Volodymyr Viktorovych; Vinnyts. derzh. ped. un-t im. M. Kotsyubyns'koho. -- Vinnytsya, 2014. - 20 s.

¹⁵ Opol's'ka M. V. Formuvannya humanistichnoyi spryamovanosti maybutnikh menedzherov-ekonomistiv u protsesi profesiynoyi podhotovky: dys ... kand. ped. nauk: 13.00.07 / M. V. Opol's'ka; Nats. ped. un-t im. M.P.Drahamanova. - K., 2009. - 221 s.

¹⁶ Nerukh N. B. Formuvannya humanistichnoyi spryamovanosti maybutnikh ahronomiv v protsesi Vyvchennya sotsiohumanitarnykh dystsyplin: dys. ... Kand. ped. nauk: 13.00.04 / Nataliya Vasylyvna Nerukh; DVNZ "Un-t menedzh. Osvity". - K., 2009. - 298 s.

personality, paying attention to the professional activity of biotechnologists in agriculture, structural components we define the content of humanistic orientation (cognitive, emotional and motivational, active).

The developed the structure of humanistic orientation of future biotechnologists is represented in the table 1.

Table 1. The structure of future biotechnologists' humanistic orientation

Components	Content of the component
Cognitive	knowledge and understanding humanistic principles by personality; awareness of self-worth; knowledge of the norms of human relations in the context of national and universal ideals, of humane behavior in interaction with others, with nature; understanding humanistic principles of professional activity
<i>Emotional and motivational</i>	desire to self-development and self-realization; conscious desire to benefit people around one, in social and professional activities; sense of personal responsibility for nature conservation
Active	humane treatment with itself; humanistic orientation of actions; responsible attitude to training; humane behavior in interaction with nature

The components of the developed structure of humanistic orientation of future biotechnologists through the prism of the humane treatment with himself, another man, nature and the chosen profession are not a mechanical sum of the parts and the moving components which interact closely. Such system can serve as a criterion for forming humanistic orientation of students.

Conclusions

Thus, we can assert that humanistic orientation is expressed in the relation of a personality to the society, to other people and to himself, which is based on universal moral ideals that are the basis of moral self-

identity of a personality. Humanistic orientation defines and encourages all types and forms of the relationships, the content of a future specialist activity, ensuring his readiness for a certain kind of behavior, creative self-perfection.

In such a way, professional training at universities should not be limited to the transfer of certain knowledge and skills formation. It should have a close relationship with professional orientation of a personality, with a creation of a system of values that are typical for the representatives of one or other profession, especially a biotechnologist. In this regard, much attention should be paid to the formation of humanistic world view of a student, increase the individual responsibility for the safety of both his own health and life, and health and live of others.

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ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE AND CREATIVITY'S PERSPECTIVES

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Motto:

"Truly effective leaders in the years ahead will have personas determined by strong values and belief in the capacity of the individuals to grow. They will have a image of the society in which they would like their organizations and themselves to live. They will be visionary, they will believe strongly that they can and should be shaping the future, and they will act on these beliefs through their personal behavior."

R. Beckhard, *Organizational Development. Strategies and Models*

Abstract: *My paper is focusing on the analysis and predictions that some famous experts offer concerning the dramatic changes in the future organizational culture, given the complex transformations in our economies, societies, and in our civilization in general. Two areas – education and leadership – seem to play an important role in improving or even in maintaining organizations on a normal scale of functioning. Both could be reinvented by creativity. But creativity, as it is treated in present educational institutions, seems to be each person's interior "promised land", which is buried deep inside. The revolution of creativity that Sir Ken Robinson suggests, starting from education and imprinting business sectors as well as other cultural sectors, seems a possible solution. In this spirit, I will evoke other authors with similar visionary suggestions.*

Keywords: *creativity, cultural creative industries (CCI), organization, organizational culture.*

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1. Introduction

Nowadays we witness some considerable changes in our culture, from journalistic practices to the effects of new media on education, from the new technological revolution to its consequences on public preferences for reading. These changes are more and more influential on essential aspects of our social and individual sphere; besides, they occur faster and faster.

Given these premises, it will seem vital for any lucid mind of our days to try to analyze such a large process, even if we lack an objective distance, or a neutral period of time between the observance of the process and the evaluation of facts and ideas. But also it seems that we will never have these desirable conditions of study in the future; so we better hurry in facing new moving realities and searching for solutions to the problems occurring in the human ability to think rationally, before it is too late.

Too late would mean that we could eventually become part of the problem, in a future which shows no patience with humans, no help for their reasonable minds. As Sir Ken Robinson puts the problem in his field of education, it is a matter of *survival*¹. In the future, we couldn't afford the phenomenon of mercerization as it is spreading today. A lot of events, values, domains in the Western organizational culture, which decades ago seemed immune to the tyranny of mercerization, nowadays they are submitted to this tyranny. They do not follow anymore certain ethical, civic or educational principles, neither the economic requirements for a healthy economy. And everyone could give here negative examples of how almost anything is treated and promoted as merchandize, from arts and artists to election campaigns. What some lucid minds which I'll evoke here are saying is that things have to change dramatically in the future, if we wished to have an acceptable future and not a barbarian one.

2. The change in organizational culture

First of all, I have to note that the famous definition which Hofstede gave to organizational culture – that of a group's 'mental software'² – is not functional in the context of such complex factors that are intertwined

¹ Sir Ken Robinson, *Out of Our Minds. Learning to Be Creative / O lume ieșită din minți. Revoluția creativă a educației*, Bucharest, Publica, 2011, p. 20.

² Geert Hofstede, Gert Jan Hofstede, Michael Minkov, *Cultures and Organization. Software of the Mind. Intercultural Cooperation and Its Importance for Survival / Culturi și organizații. Softul mental, Cooperarea interculturală și importanța ei pentru supraviețuire*, Bucharest, Humanitas, 2012.

in the nature and activity of an organization nowadays. That's because these factors are only influencing it, and they are in a permanent change themselves, so they are not causing such an entity as the mental software. This view would lead us to the idea that an organizational culture is hard to change, is not flexible enough in order to face the social, economic, cultural changes from all around it.

A more appropriate definition of organizational culture, also from the point of view of Romanian realities, could be this: 'an aggregate of values, beliefs, aspirations, expectations and behaviors articulated in time in each organization, which is prominent and both directly and indirectly influences its functionality and performances.'³

Given all these specific items, it seems that the most flexible area for a fast adaptation in an organizational culture could be the area of leadership. In the future, a good leader should be capable of engaging in radical changing, involving in that the process of changing the other members' values, mentalities, beliefs, expectations and mostly their behaviour. And this kind of change requires a leader with a higher conscience of the realities of a multicultural world, with conflicting values and goals. In this respect, I will quote what Hampden-Turner and Trompenaars declare in a very influential book:

"So what really prevents periodic descents into barbarity is that a minority of people, but just enough, have created an integrity of personal conviction and personal attachment that resists cruel acts. Whether one is moved most by compassion for victims or by rage against illegitimate authority, both impulses combine to prevent abuse."⁴

Other author such as Howell and Dipboye were stressing more decades ago that is not so important what leaders and managers do, in order to understand their effectiveness. But is more important their style in doing things, in carrying out their responsibilities. And this concerns:

- the degrees to which the leader allows subordinates to participate in decision making;
- the way he structures their work roles;

³ Ovidiu Nicolescu, Ion Verboncu, *Fundamentals of Organization Management / Fundamentele managementului organizației*, Bucharest, University Press, 2008, p. 322.

⁴ Charles M. Hampden-Turner, Fons Trompenaars, *Building Cross-Cultural Competence. How to Create Wealth from Conflicting Values*, Chichester, John Wiley and Sons, LTD., 2000, p. 108.

- the way he considers their needs and feelings. The authors' conclusion is that the more participative, considerate styles of leadership "seem to produce greater employee satisfaction and commitment to group goals..."⁵

At the beginning of our century, two other authors - Conger and Kanungo - wrote an inspiring book on charismatic leadership, making useful distinctions between leadership and management and their opportunities and limits nowadays. Also they address the problem of business ethics more vividly, and they stress the need for innovation and creativity in an organizational culture which is oriented to the future and performance. Jay A. Conger and Rabindra N. Kanungo say:

„When organizations are overmanaged by underled, they often fail in their adaptive capability. To meet the challenges of the future, corporate executives must take on the responsibility to lead for change rather than simply to manage. This book provides a framework as well as examples of how this can be done. In addition, the attention of management researchers must be redirected from the exclusive preoccupation with specific task characteristics in small groups to the study of the larger global context within which organizations accomplish their mission" ⁶.

They include here a pragmatic study of specific charismatic leadership behaviours, in order to determine which is most effective and in which conditions, how they interact with certain variables and contingencies. Their vision is that past research has emphasized the transactional influence process,

“but future research must be directed toward exploring the basis of transformational influence in the context of the management of change, innovation, diversity, and business ethics”⁷.

The authors offer an interesting correspondence between the changes of cultural environment and the adaptive strategies which creative and

⁵ William Howell, Robert Dipboye, *Essentials of Industrial and Organizational Psychology*, Chicago, The Dorsey Press, 3rd edition, 1986, pp. 188-189.

⁶ Jay A. Conger, Rabindra N. Kanungo, *Charismatic Leadership in Organizations*, London, Sage Publications, Inc., 1998, p. 250.

⁷ *Ibidem*.

charismatic leaders should adopt for business organizations. Here is the correspondence, according to three major environmental changes⁸:

1. Globalization of business – the major task would be managing competition, and the leader's qualities should be entrepreneurial and innovative;

2. Explosion of information technology – the major task would be managing this information and knowledge, and leader's qualities should be: change and scanning oriented, visionary, environmental, participative;

3. Diverse labor force and consumer markets – the major task would be managing diversity and gender issues, and the leader's qualities should be: culture sensitive, global mind-set, sensitive to members and customer needs.

3. Creativity's input

Creativity doesn't mean solely to produce a new element, but it could mean approaching a new organizing principle of some existing elements and structures in the sense of Stefan Odoobleja's definition of creation: 'Articulating new ideas out of the available elements. Elaborating new consonances between ideas or between world and ideas.'" This is taken as a working definition by some Romanian experts concerned in the effectiveness of our organizational culture, especially in that of cultural organizations and institutions. Thus, M. Moldoveanu *et alia* wrote:

"The effectiveness of culture institutions, their capacity of accomplishing their goals depend a lot on the personal qualities of their managers. Managers themselves consider that some qualities and capacities couldn't lack those who manage cultural values and facts in a collectivity. They meant, among other aspects, the attitude of creating new things, of coming up with original solutions to the problems (...), but also the capacity of mobilizing community's creative energies."⁹

As I believe, by understanding the complexity of today's rapid cultural transformations, we shall be able to orientate to the most effective areas and factors to face these rapid transformations, and first of all the human resource would be the target. The creativity which it could provide should be helpful for organizational culture, and mostly when it comes from a charismatic and creative leader. He could direct the organization

⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 247.

⁹ Maria Moldoveanu (coord.), Valeriu Ioan-Franc, Romulus Antonescu, Alexandru Duma, *Managementul culturii / Culture Management*, Bucharest, Expert, 2000, pp. 137-138.

forward and impart a rhythm of cultural change, he could organize short term specialized trainings with the members of organization, thus providing trainees with specialized information, new skills and perspectives, and also an ethical vision.

Of course, creativity could be approached for other reasons as well, but the context which I am focused on is the one of a grim future, if the things kept evolving the way they do now.

Under these circumstances, I will present Ken Robinson's revolutionary point of view on education and its role in stimulating creativity. He thinks that the future of education means partnership of schools with business sectors, philanthropic sectors and multiple cultural sectors. As an institution, school shouldn't be a sort of academic ghetto anymore, because it has much more to offer to various cultural sectors.¹⁰ He says:

“our best resource is to cultivate our singular abilities of imagination, creativity and innovation. Our greatest peril would be to face the future without investing fully in those abilities.”¹¹ “The organizations which are investing in people will discover that these people themselves would invest in the organizations. This is the power of innovation and of a creative leadership.”¹²

As Robinson sees, there are four key values to be pursued by a new educational approach: creativity, communication, collaboration and critical thinking (the four Cs).

In author's vision, *teaching for creativity* as a method could improve an entire community, including business sector, organizations, philanthropic sectors, besides the educational sector. This method has three phases:

- *encouragement* implies the motivation of subjects to explore their own aptitudes and experiment without the fear of failure;
- *identification* presupposes their guidance in introspection and self-knowledge in order to detect the native affinities and esthetic preferences, vocations and endowments that they want to nurture;
- *fostering* presupposes the stimulation of independent activity, autonomous thinking, the communication of their ideas and feelings with

¹⁰ Sir Ken Robinson, *op.cit.*, p. 320.

¹¹ *Ibidem*, p. 69.

¹² *Ibidem*, p. 296.

self-confidence, praising intuition, the game of ideas and mental scenarios, critical thinking.

Now moving our focus on Romanian realities in what concerns creativity, we must admit there are only a few pragmatic approaches. About them we can find recent data in the annual Report issued by the National Institute of Research and Cultural Development (Institutul Național pentru Cercetare și Formare Culturală - INCFC). Thus, the last report from 2015 offers data about the new so called cultural and creative industries (CCI)¹³. It seems that CCI have an important spill-over effect on the occurrence of new business patterns, especially in digital economy: the e-commerce and new integrated platforms. CCI can offer many opportunities, but still in our country they are not cultivated and exploited. The benefit of cultivating them would be the elevation of cultural environment, the raising of civilization level. The report's authors mention:

“Probably in a short term it will be difficult to find an area in which creativity in its absolute form not to be decisively involved, that's why these measurements and analysis are essential for the evaluation of future social developments.”¹⁴

Now we are aware of the multiple present difficulties and deadlocks in our society which the implementation of CCI or creativity education could encounter. But we could try focusing on the improvements that might be obtained individually, if only each teacher in the classroom and each creative leader of an organization would be interested in these aspects, as Ken Robinson summarizes¹⁵:

- to promote experiment, analytical spirit, and even the disposition to fail;
- to encourage generative, free thinking;
- to encourage expressing of ideas and feelings;
- to transmit the understanding of creative activity stages and the need for the time requested for all these;
- to develop the awareness of the role of intuition and esthetic processes in creation;

¹³ Valentin Cojanu, Carmen Croitoru, "Introduction" to *Caietele Culturadata*, National Institute for Research and Cultural Education, Bucharest, Pro Universitaria, 2015, pp. 10-11.

¹⁴ *Ibidem*.

¹⁵ Sir Ken Robinson, *opt.cit.*, p. 328.

- to encourage the others playing with the ideas and suppositions;
- to facilitate the critical evaluation of ideas.

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EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABILITY IN UNIVERSITY. EXPLORATORY SURVEY ON DESIDERATA OF ITALIAN TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

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Abstract: *Like the sustainability, the object of this paper, this research was made by an interdisciplinary study group on “Sustainability and University”, created in 2013 with the participation of two colleagues: one from the Department of Life Sciences, University of Parma, and another one from the Department of Human Sciences, University of Milano-Bicocca.*

This group decided to promote a research aimed to understand the state of education for sustainability in high education institutions, such as the University.

Consequently, the ambitious aim of this project was to promote and to catalyse the engagement of these institutions in the debate on education for sustainability, in relation to their approaches to teaching, curriculum, policies (green campus, for instance), governance and to a broader engagement with community.

Keywords: *sustainability, culture, University, educational policies, curriculum, governance.*

Introduction

An analysis of the projects and initiatives relating to education for sustainability within the Italian University are quite discouraging: education for sustainability is rarely taught as part of the different curricula, researchers involved in this field are often disadvantaged in their academic career and sustainability is not part of the governance and the policies at an institutional level. But also sustainability is a very interesting topic for university future (Wals, Jickling 2002; Pellizzoni, Osti 2008; Disterheft, Azeiteiro, Leal Filho, Caeiro 2015).

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Today the imbalances and the difficulties in managing the complexity are pushing mankind toward a new phase. So also the university needs to adapt itself to this world without abandon its historic functions of training and disinterested search by caving in the fad of the day and becoming the uncritical protagonist of fashion and of a certain "standardization" of its work and its protagonists. On the contrary, we believe that the greatest contribution that the University - and only the University - can give to the development of society is that of maintaining, within the study of issues of general interest, critical thinking, the value of objectivity and the "passionate commitment".

In general, but with particular reference to the Italian situation, which is the main subject of this paper, what is apparent is a sense of approximation, which will have consequences on the medium and the long-term; university policies have abdicated their universal vocation of contributing to the establishment and planning of the society of the future.

Although late, the Italian academic community is trying to respond and rectify this issue. It is doing so with pedagogical optimism which is reflected in the naming of an Italian television program of the Sixties: *Non è mai troppo tardi* (*It is never too late*).

The research in short

Considering the above weaknesses and to support a global and broad perspective of education for sustainability, an Italian interdisciplinary network was set up, in July 2013 with contributions from people of different backgrounds: institutions, schools, business, NGOs, universities, to name a few.

Among the ambitious aims of this network are: the development of new projects and initiatives for education for sustainability in the different contexts of learning, to affect policies and practices within the communities and to sustain and promote participation and attention of public institutions.

This synergy would seem in line with what is going on in the world, but also at the level of Italian institutions. Even Pope Francesco Bergoglio has dedicated to the important issue of sustainability his first encyclical "Laudato si. Sulla cura della casa comune", dedicated to the Earth as our common home (Bergoglio, 2015).

The aim of the research carried out between March and June 2015 was to investigate the knowledge of issues related to sustainability, the meanings ascribed to the subject and the relevance for university courses,

both scientific and socio-humanistic.

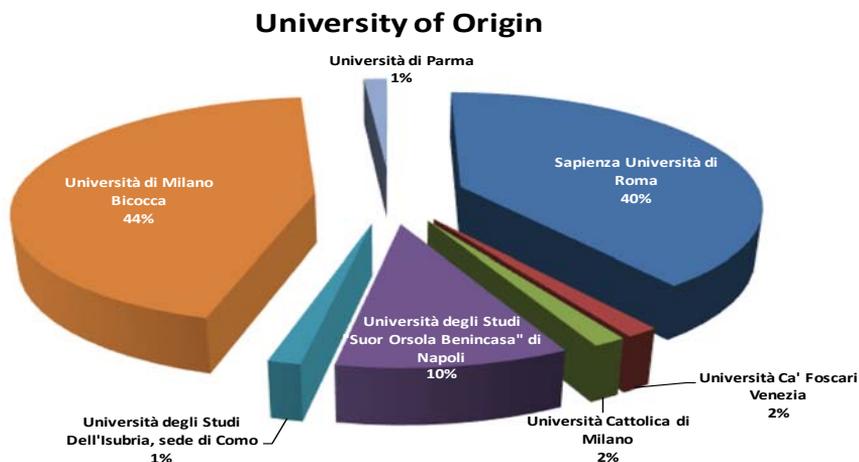
Through a limesurvey based on a semi-structured questionnaire, 258 students from different Italian universities were interviewed.

Their point of view has been compared with the results of focused interviews with 40 professors from various Italian universities and from different disciplines.

Preliminary results. The students' point of view between sustainability as environment and sustainability as culture

The preliminary results considered the responses of 258 students from various Italian Universities: students are distributed quite evenly between North, Central and Southern Italy. This information is important, taking into account the relevant regional differences that characterize the Italian universities (fig. 1).

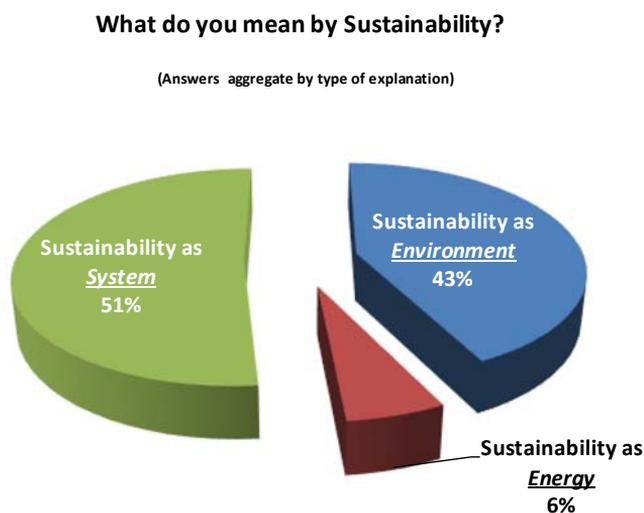
Fig. 1 - A Map of the respondents



Source: 258 complete replies – Students

Besides, we can assume that sustainability is gender sensitive (the major part of our respondents are women) and is also an usual term for the university students. However, the 88% responds positively to the question "Have you ever heard of sustainability?".

Fig. 2 - The Imagery of Respondents: Sustainability as...



Source: 258 complete replies - Students

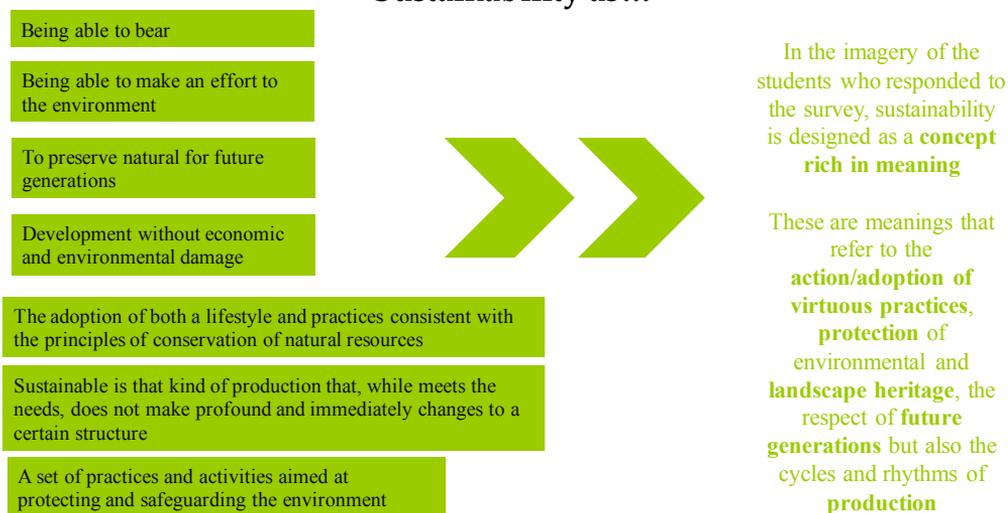
From the answers of respondents would also emerge that the knowledge of the subject or at least its dissemination has been ensured, in particular, by the media (especially television and Internet). However, it is interesting that 38% of respondents answer that they had heard of sustainability in the university context.

Then it is interesting the sense that college students give to sustainability. For 52% of respondents sustainability must be understood in a systemic point of view and it is connected to the becoming of society in all its complexity.

However, it lacks the definition of sustainability as interpretive category for the environment (43%) and energy (6%). The latter sense brings out clearly the need to create a concrete link between sustainability and the everyday life and the practices of the people.

Going into more detail we can see that in the imagery of the students who responded to the survey, sustainability is designed as a meaningful concept. These are meanings referring to the action/adoption of virtuous practices, the protection of environmental and landscape heritage, the respect of future generations but also the cycles and rhythms of economic activities and industrial production.

Fig. 3 - Going Into More Detail. The Imagery of Respondents: Sustainability as...



Source: 258 complete replies - Students

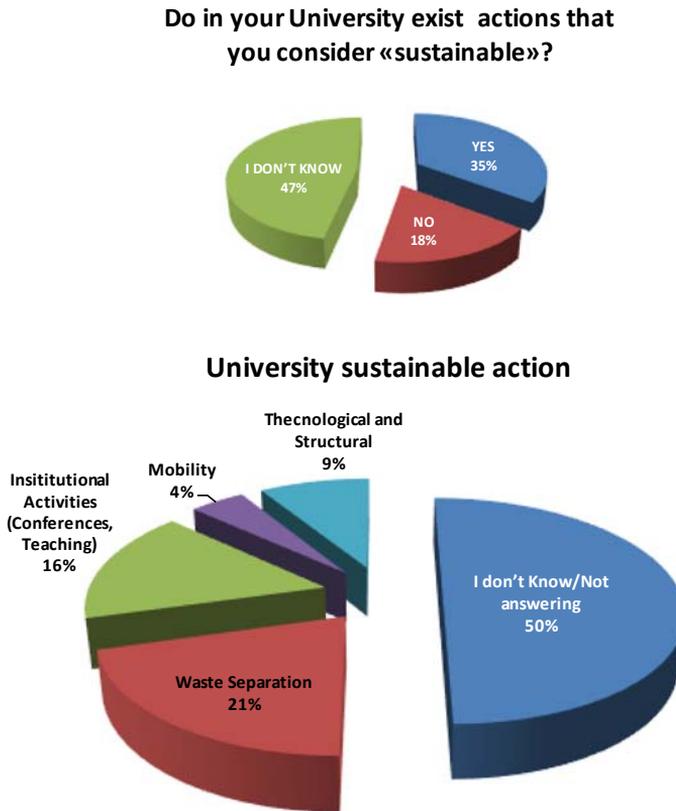
The sustainability issues are particularly important for college students, as can be seen from the answer at the question "Do you think that the issues associated with sustainability are important for personal growth?", with a clear prevalence of responses "much" and "very much". The reasons are many:

- because from our current practices will depend our future life;
- opening our mindset with regard to respect for nature and the repercussions for our health;
- because they are part of the growth processes in a collective context.

In reply to this interest, the responses of the Italian universities seem particularly weak or poorly understood by students, as can be deduced from the answers related to the question "In your university, there are initiatives that you consider *sustainable*?"

On the other hand, students show in a large majority the desire to follow initiatives or courses of study focused on these topics.

Fig. 4 - The University to the Test of Sustainability



Source: 258 complete replies - Students

As it is clear from some of the answers given by students, the actions that the University should implement to be "sustainable" are closely linked to the awareness and to the dissemination of knowledge and skills. In this sense, expectations are moving on one axis of Weber's understanding that, in some cases, takes on the traits of sustainability as solidarity (social trust, cooperation, sense of community, etc.). For our respondents, the sustainability, as well as being a common good with plenty of references to the sense of community and to the future, it is also a starting point to trigger a personal and individual change.

It is namely to intend the sustainable development as a personal and professional "becoming".

So, the sustainability is a cross-cutting issue that should concern all areas of study for the impact it has on the future of the humanity and of our planet. But, about the students, University cannot be the only spokesman of these strategic issues. The hope would be to create networks of knowledge and expertise together with the institutions, businesses, media and citizens to ensure that sustainability becomes the result of concerted actions: as in an orchestra where the result is not to cancel the contribution of the individual but it requires harmony and polyphony.

The university teachers point of view. Sustainability is a life style, is not just an ideology

A cross-cutting comparison between the answers of students and teachers is the need to update specific training to sustainability for the university teachers. Only in contamination between scientific research, the professional development of university teachers and teaching activities you will get to turn sustainability into a way of life inside and outside the university community.

In doing so, one creates a virtuous circle requiring conscious management between individual learning and the learning organizations to which they belong. University should start from teacher training to sustainability. So we obtained the point of view of teachers studied through a brainstorming with a qualitative analysis of the views expressed in this first phase of our research.

At this step, we heard about forty colleagues from various Italian universities: University of Aosta Valley, University of Florence, University of Rome, University of Naples, University of Lecce and Messina.

The subjects taught by colleagues surveyed are varied, though mostly due to the human and social sciences: communication, sociology, political communication, sociology of land and of environment, international cooperation, educational sciences.

What is interesting to observe is that sustainability is, next to the solidarity and to issues relating to the common goods, a topic addressed in various courses of study and scientific disciplines. The academics interviewed claim to speak of sustainability in different contexts, principally:

- cultural processes in masters and higher education courses;
- demographic changing processes caused by migration and the development of intercultural skills;
- the issue of development, change and modernity in sociology;

- sustainable development;
- sustainable University.

All this confirms that at the basis of any training course-regardless of the level and audience -several principles should be anchored in the idea of the common good and the total knowledge base that makes up the university. A few years ago, encouraging there covery of across-sectional awareness of the scientific disciplines, Hessel and Morin reflected on the true essence of teaching at all levels, with the aim of maintaining balance and harmony in society.

“It is essential, yes, to teach humanism, but also what the human being is in its triple nature: biological, individual and social. It is essential to spread a clear consciousness of the human condition, its history, its twists and turns, its contradictions and its tragedies. It is essential to teach human understanding in order to promote solidarity and brotherhood. It allows us to understand our identity and our differences relative to each other, to recognize its complexity rather than reducing it to a single, generally negative identity. It is essential to teach knowledge of the planetary era that we live in, its opportunities and its risks, including individual and collective problems, of our era marked by globalization”. It is essential to teach how to deal with the uncertainties that every individual in the community inevitably encounters, the history of nations; uncertainties that have worsened in the beginning of the twenty-first century for ourselves, our society, our humanity (Hessel, Morin, 2012).

Today, more than ever we need broad-based knowledge which can help to address complex and multidimensional problems, even outside the fortified citadel of individual disciplines. Making explicit reference to Weber's thought, we must admit that in our time the institutions and, in particular, the University may regain its centrality on two conditions: on the one hand by continuing to be a repository of knowledge and tradition which permeates and gives shape the life of society and its evolution; on the other hand, becoming and "appearing" much more functional and closer to the learners themselves, that is to say, young people and adults who see in the university a guide towards the future.

These are general principles that are also reflected in the definitions of sustainability provided by academics:

- auto-decentralization, sense of contingency, knowing that there is always more than us;

- balance and harmony between environment, economy and society, also in view of guarantees for future generations;
- balance and integration between systems and practices;
- sustainability meant as creation of the conditions for development processes may persist in the future and be viable by future generations;
- the ability to implement an action without causing significant damage to the ecosystem
- the feature that makes any process durable, ensuring a use of resources which guarantees to operate in the long term;
- a balance between economic development, individual and collective needs and environment;
- a process of social transformation that promotes well-being, harmonizing the individual and society;
- growth in the full respect of the social and natural.

Moreover, with the answers to the question "Is Sustainability University's goal?", you get much further identifying sustainability even with respect to the freedom of teaching:

- the sustainability is also a relevant issue for human and personal building, regardless of degree programs;
- University is also a part of a life path;
- today, all kinds of professionals must know how to handle situations and processes of different nature. Sustainability is the ability to create balance and efficiencies from the integration of all these elements. Sustainability is an approach to the job and to the life, that follows different values: sustainable values;
- declining the concept in all its possible meanings related to human development and not limiting it to environmental issues;
- finally, sustainability is not just an ideology.

Conclusion. Build together University and Culture, build a sustainable future

Starting from these preliminary results of our survey, the auspicious is the integration between different disciplines, approaches, methodologies and so the long-life learning approach to education for sustainability can be supported. Today, therefore, more than ever, we need broad-based knowledge which can help to address complex and multidimensional problems, such Sustainability, even outside the fortified citadel of individual disciplines (Morcellini, Martino 2006; Gavrila 2013).

The hope is that the Italian Universities can play a strong educational role in the promotion of a sustainable future and at the same time can be proud to become a model of coherence between their teachings and their actions related to sustainability.

If universities are to be the frontier of change, then there is only one way to reduce the discomfort inevitably created by the new demands of society and by the increased level of social knowledge: this way is precisely re-evaluation of teaching as a strategy of socialization and investment for future generations.

While it is true that there is the risk of chasing after fads and losing sight of our own historical identity, of *what it has always been*, it is also true that without undergoing procedures for updating and "mobilization" of knowledge there is no future, and only a *narrow self-referential alternative* remains. Training can open the doors to society and to change, without pursuing the ephemeral scraps with which the new so annoyingly presents itself. Focus on training should therefore be seen as a decisive strategy for the university and not as a complacent way to link itself to modernity. When all of society changes and dynamism becomes compulsive and incomprehensible, only studying, sharing of educational situations, encounters and maieutics can restore stronger the mental preparedness which is adequate to the new challenges facing society.

There is a need to invent a specific educative tradition aimed at accompanying people in the complexity of modern society. In this sense, we can inspire again to Edgar Morin and his wise proposal of education for the future.

"The reform would introduce, at every level of education, from primary school to university, the following subjects: the knowledge of knowledge, knowledge of the human; the ability to deal with doubt; trinitarian ethics (individual-knowledge-species)" (Morin, 2011, p. 141).

We can say more: nature.

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STUDENTS' STEREOTYPES ON AGEING AND THE USE OF ELDERLY PEOPLE IN ADVERTISING

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Abstract: *“It is well known that elderly people represent one of the most stereotyped social groups considering the criteria of age. Not only young population but also even the elderly people have negative cognitions regarding their peers and ageing. In this article, we present the results of a pilot research on students’ stereotypes and their attitudes regarding the appearance of the elderly people in a commercial for promoting a product. As the young people who took part in this research (students from communication and advertising faculty) were not familiar with age friendly values, our first purpose of the research was to investigate how the students portray the elderly people. Therefore, a content analysis has been done upon the students’ responses (N=59) to a class activity task. The research data showed that most of the students assigned positive features to the elderly people such as happy and healthy. Otherwise, the content analysis of the commercial scripts indicated that they would cast seniors to a stereotyped role rather than to an active one on the job market or in the business and showed them happy only in connection with the product usage”.*

Keywords: *ageing, advertising, students, stereotypes, attitudes.*

Introduction

The number of the elderly adults has increased exponentially during the recent years, and it is estimated that till 2060 the “grannies” will be the dominant age group within the entire population. At present, almost one fourth (24%) of the European population is represented by the old grown-up people, and this demographic segment will become 10 percent more numerous by 2030. The international offices of statistics in the European Union provides alarming data: in the next 45 years, the population over 65 years will be one third of the EU total population number; the persons over 80 years, will be as numerous as the youngsters and children of 0-14

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years (approximately 12%) in the European countries; the working population of 15-65 years will cover over a half in the EU population (approximately 57%). In 2013, the great majority of males and women were 45 years old; in 2060, it is presumed that the old population will be the dominant segment¹.

In the last ten years, the dramatic demographic growth of those over 65 years old have boosted the research on how different age groups think about the elderly people and ageing process. At the same time, the debate regarding the proper framing of social policies to support „functional“ old age has been intensified within both the academic and public area. In this context, stakeholders as well as researchers have warned about the educational role of mass media particularly that of media advertising in achieving a more inclusive society by including those from disadvantage social groups (old people, disabled people etc.) in commercials and by reflecting the real chronological age of the models that advertise products or services targeted to seniors.

Considering these aspects – exactly the regulation of advertising activity for a social inclusion as well the population ageing – in the current study we present the data of a pilot research about the stereotypes and attitudes of the future specialists in advertising – respectively of the students in the last year of study. Particularly, we are interested in the way they would share and portray an old person in a commercial for advertising a product or service. On this purpose, firstly, we will review the previous studies on this topic, and afterwards we will present and discuss the results of our research.

Young people’s stereotypes and attitudes toward elders

The investigation of stereotypes and attitudes of different age groups toward elders has been the aim of numerous research since the middle of the last century. Much of this work has been engaged in emphasizing negative attitudes toward seniors², especially when young adults were

¹ Eurostat 2016, Population structure and ageing, http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Population_structure_and_ageing.

² Kite, M.E., Stockdale, G.D., Whitley, B.E. & Johnson, B.T., (2005), Attitudes toward younger and older adults: An updated meta-analytic review, *Journal of Social Issues*, 61(2), p.271; National Center for Protection of Old People (NCPOP), (2009), *Public Perceptions of Older People and Ageing: A literature review*, p.7,

http://www.ncpop.ie/ncpopresearch_review1; Kogan, N. (1961), Attitudes toward

surveyed. Despite the increased European public campaigns on being age friendly, a relatively recent Eurobarometer on active ageing showed that teenager from all 27 Member States perceived older employees (55+) as more experienced and reliable, but less opened to new ideas and technologies than their peers. The younger the respondent, the higher his negative perception on the older age groups regardless the use of new technology and the openness to new idea³.

The results of this Eurobarometer are mostly similar to those derived from the social psychology research on age-related stereotypes. For instance, the systematic research and meta-analysis done by the psychologists Mary L. Hummert⁴, Amy J.C. Cuddy, Michel I. Norton and Susan Fiske⁵ showed that the age stereotype is a multi-dimensional concept, including beliefs, opinions and judgments (evaluations), both positive and negative. Taking into account that among youngsters, the attitude towards old people have both positive or negative components, a question rises about the way of how negative aspects can be changed and which circumstance or dimension (positive or negative) leads to a general assessment of an old individual. Consequently, contextual and socio-demographic factors has been investigated to understand how children, teenagers and adults form an impression whether interacting or simply observing the behavior or the appearance of an old person.

As children from the USA develop negative attitude towards the elderly people since they get four years old, Nate R. Cottle and Rebecca J. Glover have raised the question whether the education based on topics regarding ageing, as a curriculum intervention, would be able to counteract age-related stereotypes among the students. On this purpose, Nate R. Cottle and Rebecca J. Glover design are search based on a questionnaire by which they have tested whether or not the students' attitudes towards the elderly people change after they have attended a lifespan development course. Thus, the attitudes of 253 students (17 -35 years) on ageing have been measured at first course session (T1) and the last course session (T2) within a semester, as well the level of interaction

old-people in an older sample, *Journal of Abnormal & Social Psychology*, 62, p.44.

³ Special Eurobarometer 373, *Active Ageing*, 2012, p.53-54, available at http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_378_en.pdf

⁴ Hummert, M. L., Physiognomic cues and the activation of stereotypes of the elderly in interaction, *International Journal of Aging and Human Development*, 1994, 39, 5-20.

⁵ Cuddy, A.J.C., Norton, M.I. & Fiske, S.T, This old stereotype: The pervasiveness and persistence of the elderly stereotype, *Journal of Social Issues*, 2005, 61(2), 267-285.

(high/low) with old people. The attitudes regarding ageing have been measured by means of *Ageing Semantic Differential Scale*⁶. According to the experimental procedure, the students were shown two colored photos: the first one represents a young man of about 25 years old, and the second – an older woman, of about 70 years. Each photo was assessed on a scale with bipolar attributes. Subsequently, the scores of this scale have been divided into three dimensions: Instrumental-Ineffective (a person who has the capacity to adapt itself to the change and be determined to achieve personal goals); Autonomous-Dependent (a person able to be independent and to contribute to the society); Acceptable-Unacceptable (person accepted or not accepted by the other individuals). Also, at both T1 and T2 moments, students' knowledge about ageing have been measured by means of a version of *Palmore's Facts on Aging Quiz I and II*⁷. The survey included at the same time some supplementary tasks, as for instance, to imagine an old person and to mention that person's age. The answers regarding the age a person is considered old by the students varied a lot: at the first course, some students appreciated that the ageing process emerges at 45 years, whilst at the last course sessions the chronological age of becoming old was, according to their opinion, the age of 50 years. The authors of the study supposed that the younger the person, the older is considered the emerging of ageing (e.g., 45 years). Indeed, the student's age itself proved to be the only significant predictor of the elderly persons at the T1 moment: that is, older students stated a higher age at which a person is considered old. But at the T2 moment, the attitude towards elderly people correlated significantly to the age the students estimated the emerging of old age. In this case, the results of the research showed that after the end of the course, the students tended to change their attitudes towards the elder people, considering them as persons able to adapt to changes and develop themselves in order to achieve their goals. (i.e., the instrumentality attitude dimension). Moreover, the results also showed an increase of knowledge about ageing process at the end of the course. The data about ageing process was consolidated at the end of the course, though almost 20 % of its content was based especially on issues related to elderly people. The overall results of the research sustained the

⁶ Rosencranz, H.A. &McNevin, T.E, (1969), *cited by* Cottle, N.R. & Glover, R.J., 2007, p. 506

⁷ Harris &Changas, 1994; Harris, Changas, & Palmore, 1996 *cited by* Cottle, N.R. & Glover, R.J., 2007, p. 505

hypothesis that attending a course on lifespan development can elicit positive changes for the students' knowledge and attitudes towards the ageing process, in general, and especially towards the old people⁸.

Other authors have inquired when the attitudes towards the old people emerge, whether these attitudes are mostly positive or negative during the primary socialization, and whether or not they remain unchanged later, along the adult life. In a study reviewing previous researches on children's attitude towards ageing, published in *Educational Gerontology*, Carla N. Gilbert and Kristina G. Ricketts drew attention on the fact that kids develop their negative attitudes towards old people starting with the age of four. Most of the children's negative attitudes regarding the old age and elderly people have been put on the imitation observed behavior form parents as well as frequently villains or victims roles cast to old people in cartoon. As they grow up to the age of ten, children estimate better and better whether a person is old or young as they can make the comparison between groups of nursery kids and schoolchildren, being able to say which among colleagues belongs to small group and which to the bigger one. Although, the variable which higher predict the negative attitudes of preschoolers and children of primary classes was the lack of contact with the elder persons⁹.

However, the data of previous researches do not reveal that the young people would have more negative stereotypes by comparison to adults¹⁰, just as the young people have a restraint understanding of the term „ageing“, less knowledge in this topic and a higher degree of anxiety towards the awareness of the fact that they are also getting older. For instance, in an experiment conducted by Douglas Johnson and John B. Pittenger, both young (18-35 years), and elder (60-93 years) people, who assessed photos with attractive and not attractive persons, considered that the old attractive persons have positive personality features, happier life experiences and high occupational status¹¹.

In another case, Anne Barrett and Laura Cantwell employed the

⁸ Cottle, N.R. & Glover, R.J., Combating ageism: Change in student knowledge and attitudes regarding aging, *Educational Gerontology*, 33(6),pp. 501-512.

⁹ Gilbert, C.N. & Ricketts, K.G, (2008), Children's attitudes toward older adults and aging: A synthesis of research, *Educational Gerontology*, 34(7), 2007, p.572.

¹⁰ Barrett, A.E. & Cantwell, L.E., Drawing on stereotypes: Using undergraduates' sketches of elders as a teaching tool, *Educational Gerontology*, 33(4), 2007, pp. 332-344.

¹¹ Johnson, D. & Pittenger, J. B., Attribution, the attractiveness stereotype, and the elderly, *Developmental Psychology*, 20(6), 1984, pp.1168-1171.

drawing as a researching instrument, considering that it has a potential in reflecting the implicit attitudes towards the elder individuals. Thus, the task of drawing an old person's sketch represented the Icebreaker of the *Aging and Life course* ungraduated course. Students were instructed to illustrate the first images that came to their minds when they hear the words „elderly person“. At the end, 183 sketches have been obtained on whose back were written socio-demographic answers (name, sex, year of study, age, respondents' name). Then, the sketches were analyzed according to the following variables: gender of drawn person (male/female/indefinite/both female and male); facial expression (happy/sad/neutral); presence/absence of walking aids (hearing aids, canes, wheelchairs etc.); presence/absence of physical characteristics (wrinkles, grey hair, boldness etc.) and some accessories (glasses); drawing as a portrait or posture (whether the illustration showed only the face or the whole body), accompanied by animals or by other persons. The analysis of the sketches revealed a pattern in stereotype assessing of an old person; thus, old women were portrayed more as “grandmothers who cook cakes”, being illustrated more often as interacting with other persons (usually, by grandsons) or by pets compared to the depiction of old men as „the happy grandfather“ as well as the shrew and elder statesman. The most striking aspects of the sketches were those related to the physical characteristics of getting older, respectively presence of wrinkles, grey hair and devices for supporting walking (canes), all these most likely to be portrayed with old men rather than in those with old women. The results of this research were used later on as a support for a debate regarding the social construction of getting older and of ageing, the authors emphasizing the students' tendency of associating the old men with grandparents rather than with some active roles, as for instance, that of an employee on the labour market. Another way in which the chronological age was illustrated in the sketches was portraying the old men dressed in T-shirts on which the high school graduation year was branded¹².

Nevertheless, we point out the study conducted by Mihaela-Alexandra Gherman (2014) in order to investigate the social representations of ageing the Romanians. On this purpose, 80 persons took part in an experiment in which their task was to write down the first

¹² Barrett, A.E. & Cantwell, L.E., *Drawing on stereotypes: Using undergraduates' sketches of elders as a teaching tool*, *Educational Gerontology*, 33(4), 2007, pp. 341-344.

there words that come to their minds when they read the word - stimulus "ageing" and then to justify the answers they have provided. The results showed that "ageing" triggered associations both positive (positive resources, good mood, self-care, activities, moderation, decency) and mostly negative such as: „wrinkles, loss of strength, ugliness, hospital, doctors, incontinence, medicine, inconvenience, diseases, death, tremors, rheumatism". By comparison to elder people (61-73 years), who associated the old age to social exclusion, young subjects (20-29 years) tended to match the ageing to the family. The presence of some characteristics such as "physical degradation", "mental degradation", "positive resources" (independence, maturity, experience) and "negative consequences" (end of career, unsafety, pension, futility, helplessness) in social representations about ageing was predominant both at young and old participants at the research¹³.

It seems that the negative attitudes towards the old people are hold also by students who could choose a career in social work of the elderly, as the revealed the research conducted by de Zvi D. Gellis, Susan Sherman and Frances Lawrance. They pointed out that the first year students (N=172) enrolled in social work faculty have dominant negative attitudes towards old individuals, these attitudes being stronger in case of male subjects and the younger ones. The experience in working with assisted elder people and the high degree of interaction with these persons did not prove to be important predictors for the positive attitude towards the elder people. But, the more a respondent wants to follow a career in working with old people, the higher his positive attitude towards them¹⁴.

As it was noticed in previous extensive reviews¹⁵, some of the limits and conclusions can be mentioned about the research on ageism of different age groups. First of all, no matters what the research techniques and methods were used, the results of the previous studies showed that the old people are seen as friendly and warm, disregarding the

¹³ Gherman, M.-A., *Social Representations of the Process of Ageing in Young and Mature Romanian Adults*, Romanian Journal of Applied Psychology, 16 (2), 2014, p. 48-50.

¹⁴ Gellis, Z.D., Sherman, S. & Lawrance, F., *First year graduate social work students' knowledge of and attitude toward older adults*, Educational Gerontology, 29(1), 2003, pp. 12-13.

¹⁵ Kite, M.E., Stockdale, G.D., Whitley, B.E. & Johnson, B.T., *Attitudes toward younger and older adults: An updated meta-analytic review*, *Journal of Social Issues*, 61(2), pp.241-266; Cuddy, A.J.C., Norton, M.I. & Fiske, S.T., (2005). *This old stereotype: The pervasiveness and persistence of the elderly stereotype*. *Journal of Social Issues*, 61(2), (2005), pp. 270.

respondents' age, but less ambitious, responsible and intellectually competent¹⁶. The source of these mixed assessments is possible to come from the fact that people hold prejudices towards elder people, that is they feel admiration and compassion for them, at the same time. In an experiment conducted at Princeton University, in which the students (N=55) faced a counter-stereotype situation [to evaluate how good (competent) and kind (warm) a plumber, George is, a retired, who solves very fast the customers' demands], the information about competence did not change participants' impressions regarding the ageing stereotype: they saw him as kinder but less competent. As the authors emphasized, the stereotype about elder persons is "widespread, resistant to change and it is costly"¹⁷. From here we get the second and third conclusions of a literature review: the ageing is pan-cultural, as the research conducted on students from Costa Rica, Hong Kong, Japan, South Korea revealed that the old people are kind, but less competent. Moreover, even if it could be believed that the age stereotypes are prevalent in Western and northern American culture, surprisingly they are more negative in collectively cultures such those from Japan, Taiwan, China and Thailand. Thirdly, mixed-evaluative dimensions of ageing are persistent: elderly people are perceived incompetent and warmer even though they behave or they are presented as competent.

In addition, a limit of the previous research consists in the ways the variable "ageing attitude" was measured. When investigating the ageing stereotypes, the scholars often gave the research participants the task to assess a fictitious older person. In this case, if only a single descriptor is presented – such as "person elder than 65 years" / "elderly people" / "old people" – then the negative attitudes were activated, based on the stereotype appreciation of the old age. But, when more details are available regarding the person-stimulus upon which the respondents have to make an evaluative judgment, its appreciation is less stereotyped¹⁸.

¹⁶ Cuddy, A.J.C., Norton, M.I. & Fiske, S.T., This old stereotype: The pervasiveness and persistence of the elderly stereotype. *Journal of Social Issues*, 61(2), 2005, pp. 270.

¹⁷ Cuddy, A.J.C., Norton, M.I. & Fiske, S.T., This old stereotype: The pervasiveness and persistence of the elderly stereotype. *Journal of Social Issues*, 61(2), 2005, pp. 278.

¹⁸ Kite, M.E., Stockdale, G.D., Whitley, B.E. & Johnson, B.T., Attitudes toward younger and older adults: An updated meta-analytic review, *Journal of Social Issues*, 61(2), 2005, p.245-246.

Students' stereotypes and attitudes toward the use of elderly people in advertising

Aim of the research

Considering the results of the previous studies, we design a research in order to observe whether there are stereotyped representations of the elderly people among the Romanian young population, especially ungraduated students. It is interesting to investigate how these young people portray the seniors, in this case, the students from our sample have not been familiarized with the age friendly values yet, but they were studying communication and advertising when the research was conducted.

The social group studied in our research is represented by first third year students enrolled in a communication science faculty (with a major in advertising) from a Romanian public university. The reason why we studied this social group is two-folded. Firstly, this ungraduated students could be the future employees of the advertising industry. As they will be in charge with creating advertising messages, it is worthwhile to find out what is the state of their knowledge regarding ageing and their attitudes toward the use of elderly models in advertising. The second reason why we approached the perceptions of a younger segment of the society towards important social issues (ageing process) consists in observing if there is a pattern of their cohort regarding the perception of elderly people.

Methodology

Procedure and research instruments

A number of fifty-nine ungraduated students(21-23 years old), enrolled in a nonverbal communication course, took part in our study and had to complete a 50 minutes activity - that was a task consisting in creating an ad message for a real or fictitious product/service addressed to the 65+ consumers. They had to mention the product/service promoted, the creative concept of the commercial, the ad messages (the slogan) and the script. Additionally, they had to mention socio-demographics such as age, year of study, residence. The creative task was employed during the in order to find out their implied attitudes toward the elderly people.

Their responses were then coding using a content analysis with nine item such as following: a) product category (food, health services, tourism, beauty etc.) b) physical traits of older people (healthy/unhealthy;

with/without physical injuries etc.) c) psychological traits (conscious/confused) d) nonverbal cues (facial expressions – sad/happy etc; gestures embracing others etc; clothes and accessories: casual/classics; with/without glasses) e) personality traits (extrovert/introvert); f) role assigned to the elderly people (the grandfather/the grandmother; the gardener grandfather; the father/the mother; the business grandfather; the sportsman grandmother/grandfather etc.); g) the context (alone, with their in-group, with their family, in the park, at the supermarket, on the public transport, at the bank etc.); h) the social values promoted by the ad (youthfulness, health, utility, technology, human support, family etc.); i) gender of the older people (man, woman, undefined); j) emotional state (happy, sad, neutral) before and after using the product.

There were no questions to measure students' perceptions of chronological age of being elder as to avoid social desirability answers on the activity required. Therefore, we asked students to do the class exercise individually and in exchange they would receive grades for their activity.

Results

In order to assess the attitudes toward ageing and the use of elderly within advertising ads, we analysed the content of a totally 59 written answers received from students enrolled in our course.

Generally, the participants at the research described the old people as healthy and strong (71%), and almost a third of them would realize a commercial with fragile old people with different disabilities (28,8%). In the commercial created by students, other characteristics and situations were assigned to elderly people such as the following: elderly people smiling (39%), being conscious (80%) and interacting with other persons (5%).

However, when they had to make the proper execution of the ad, respectively the script of the commercial, most of students chose the stereotype tags for the elder people. Specifically, the students described the old people as promoting products to which they are depicted in the current Romanian commercials, such as medical pills and medical services (35,6%), ICTs products (15,3%), clothes, shoes and accessories (8,5%), touristic offers (6,8%), beauty and personal care products (6,8%). Only one student out of 59 would use an old person to promote financial services or cars. Most of the students' advertising scripts made use of old people of both sexes (59,3%) over 65 aged, and over one fifth of them used only male old people (20,3%) or old females (20,3%).

Furthermore, in those scripts the elderly people are represented as

consumers of some products that are advertised by means of positive emotions which old people show when purchasing and using the product. In this case, depicting the elderly people as sad (42%) before using the product and happy (83%) after having purchased the product is predominant in students' scripts.

Regarding the social and physical context in which the elders appear in commercials, the students prefer to show them indoor, at their home (35,5%) and outdoor, in the park(18,6%). Most of the students illustrated the elders interacted with other persons of their age (35%) or with younger ones (23%), and only three out of 59 students labelled them stereotypically as socially isolated. Only one student imaged a context for a product promo as entertaining places (concerts and shows).At the same time, the elders have been assigned to roles such as home retired (45,8%), grandfather/grandmother (16,8%), husband/wife (22%). Only one student out of 59 would assign the elders a businessman/businesswoman role in the commercial.

Conclusions and discussions

Based on the results presented above, we could draw some conclusions regarding the students' attitudes on ageing and distribution of elders in advertising. Students' works illustrate the stereotypes to which elders are frequently associated in the society and in the media. When some variables-descriptors were analyzed (physical traits, emotional expressions, moods) which we can consider evaluative when labelling some persons, no matters the age, the portraits of elder people in the commercials performed by students were mostly positive: for instance happy old people, healthy, strong and accompanied by other persons, only few tagging them negatively such as sad, lonely, socially isolated, home elders or unhappy people.

Moreover, the data of our research revealed a pattern in the depiction of seniors made within advertising activity. Two of the variables remained unchanged in all the 59 scripts, respectively elders'emotions related with the product usage and the social roles the elders were assigned. Thus, in most of the advertising executions provided by students, old people were portrayed as sad before purchasing the product and happy after having used it. Most of the students assigned "indoor" social roles to elders, such as retired old people, grandmother/grandfather, husband/wife and there was only one script that cast an active role in the business (businessman/business woman).

Regarding the nature of stereotypes, both positive and negative about elders, reflected by students' scripts, the results of our research are similar to those performed previously on the same topic¹⁹. Students stereotype elderly people as happy, healthy and socially connected with their peers and relatives. But in the meantime they depict elderly only as grandparents and retired persons without any connections with the job market or business. On the one hand, student stereotypes reflect their expectations and cognitive schemas regarding elder people which are effortless and ready available for the mind. On the other hand, we can state that their ads scripts provided during the class task-activity mirror the way TV, online and printed advertising has portrayed seniors in the commercials. Indeed, elders appear in advertising mostly as unhealthy, fragile, confused, but as they get the product, they are presented as young and healthy individuals. Further research is needed in order to address the way Romanian media advertising spread the stereotypes regarding elders and how ads influence the attitudes of the teenager toward ageing.

Nevertheless, the homogeneity of the sample as regarding to their number and socio-demographic characteristics is one of the limit of the current paper. But as we have already mentioned, the nature of this study is exploratory allowing as to draw several conclusions for further research on this topic. In our opinion, the establishment of lectures on ageing process within the Romanian university curriculum and the launching of social debates regarding the way in which media, especially advertising media, portray the elders, could increase the student' awareness on ageing society where the numbers of old people will be a dominant one and where the age friendly value will be a must.

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¹⁹ See section *Young people's stereotypes and attitudes toward elders* of the current paper.

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THE SUBJECTIVE PERCEPTION OF QUALITY AND BENEFICIARIES' SATISFACTION WITH THE QUALITY OF EMPLOYMENT COUNSELING SERVICES OFFERED BY PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT SERVICES. STUDY.

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Abstract: *Measuring the customer satisfaction is becoming more and more important not only for private organizations but also for the public ones, especially when they have a key role in the accreditation process of private service providers. Public organizations' customers are different from those in the private sector. Given that the process of the assessment of services involves many subjective factors related to the customer satisfaction, quality assessment must take into account two aspects: a. one related to the beneficiary, which includes various measures to meet the customer expectations and fulfillment of standards of quality; and b. one related to the organization, which includes efficiency measures (cost / benefit approach within internal processes), quality costs, employees' efficiency, etc. The methods used in this study were: the survey based on a questionnaire and self-assessment based on Lickert type scale. Although the questionnaire-based survey revealed that 89% of respondents said they were satisfied and very satisfied with the quality of counseling services received, we consider it is still important to analyze the reasons that led to this high degree of satisfaction, in order to avoid treating a high score as a reason to not changing anything in the process of service delivery or quality of service.*

Keywords: *customer's satisfaction, employment counseling, quality services, public employment services, clients' needs and expectations.*

Literature review

Satisfaction was the object of various attempts of conceptualization, having been addressed over time by different authors, as a process, as a result of a process, as an emotional or cognitive assessment, or as a general state of emotional fulfillment.

A definition given in Sanchez-Gutierrez et al. (2011) considers

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customer satisfaction as "a process that involves complex cognitive, emotional, psychological and physiological human interactions."¹

The focus of satisfaction is considered by Giese and Cote (2000)² as being the selection, purchase and consumption of the product and/or service.

The literature³ identifies the conceptual limits of satisfaction: the higher being considered the consumer's delight and the lower being described as consumer dissatisfaction.

Adult career guidance provided by public employment services (PES) addresses a highly heterogeneous population, with a very high degree of diversity in terms of life stages or professional status. Cases submitted by customers are often complicated by complex family responsibilities and life and work experiences, sometimes atypical, which influence their values, attitudes and decisions.

Therefore, the skills that a career guidance counselor within PES should display are more varied and more complex, requiring completion of training programs and continuous supervision, as their guidance role is combined uneasy with many others' (psychologist, coach, HR specialist, mediator, labor market analyst, etc).

The complexity of these services is given by the fact that although the main type of intervention is focused on the immediate goals of the target population (finding a job, changing jobs, changing the occupation/profession, etc.), a remedial intervention, placed in customers' transition process, is complemented by preventive interventions, proactive, anticipatory, aiming to mitigate/reduce the negative impact of social realities: failure or dropping out of school; difficulties in social/professional (re)insertion of vulnerable groups at risk of social exclusion (prisoners to be released from prison within 6 months), future high school graduates, post-institutionalized young people, etc.

To our knowledge, in Romania, until now there has been no research or studies on specific populations aimed at assessing PES' customer needs and expectations on career guidance and at measuring satisfaction of beneficiaries, although they would be extremely necessary and valuable for the development of the area and would improve the quality of services.

¹ Sanchez-Gutierrez, Gonzalez-Urbe, & Coton, 2011, p. 18

² Giese, J. L., & Cote, J. A., (2000). *Defining Consumer Satisfaction*. Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science, (1), 1-24.

³ Rust, R. T., & Oliver, R. L. (2000). *Should We Delight the Customer?* Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science, 28(1), 86-94

Objectives of this Study (conducted in the exploratory stage of a wider research):

- 1.1. Identifying the level of beneficiaries’ satisfaction with the quality of employment counseling services provided within PES;
- 1.2. Identifying the structure of beneficiaries’ satisfaction with the quality of employment counseling services provided within PES.

In accordance with these objectives, the following **research questions** have been established:

- 1) Which is the level of beneficiary’s satisfaction with the quality of employment counseling services provided within PES?
- 2) Is there a specific structure of client satisfaction on the quality of employment counseling services provided by PES?
- 3) Are the components of customer’s satisfaction with the quality of employment counseling services developed to the same extent, or is there uneven development of these components?
- 4) What are the differences and relationships between components of client satisfaction with the quality of employment counseling services provided in PES and socio-demographic characteristics of the beneficiaries?

Participants

In this study, we investigated 20,238 beneficiaries of employment counseling services within PES (nationally) from all county agencies for employment.

Beneficiaries investigated in the initial phase of research, which aims at identifying the degree of beneficiaries’ satisfaction on employment counseling, are distributed as shown in the tables below:

Table no. 1 PES customer distribution by gender and place of residence.

		Environment		
		Rural	Urban	Total
Gender	F	4792	4567	9359
	M	6026	4853	10879
Total		10818	9420	20238

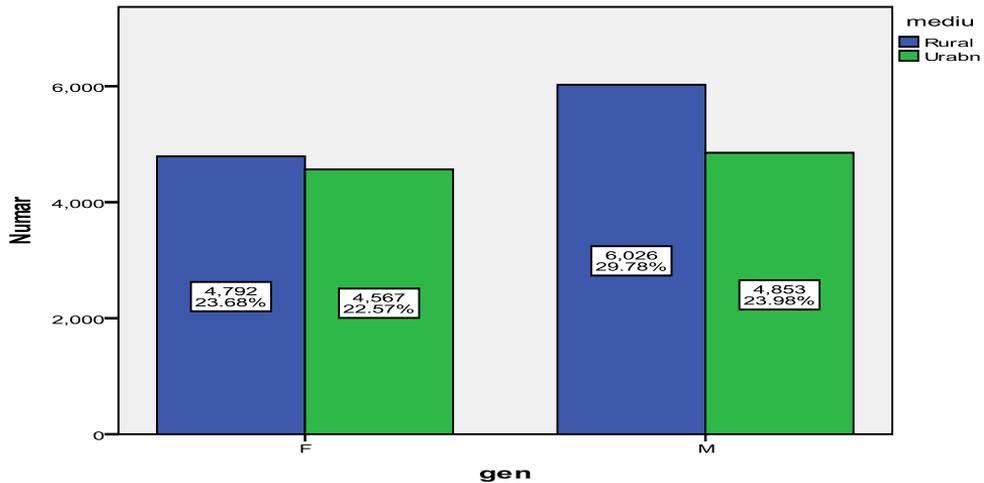


Fig. 1 PES customer distribution by gender and place of residence

As seen in the chart above, among the investigated beneficiaries of career counseling services offered by PES, there are more men than women. One possible explanation is that, as the statistics of the National Agency for Employment (NAE) reveals, the activity rate is higher for men, both nationally and in each development region of the country.

Consequently, the higher number of beneficiaries of services that come from the rural areas compared to those in urban areas could be the result of awareness campaigns led by the NAE in the rural areas that explained the advantages for people enrolled in PES. Statistics (NAE, 2012) of the rate of activity by region shows a very different situation from one region to another. However, in terms of population groups at risk of becoming economically inactive, it is obvious that one of those most at risk are rural people who work in family households in subsistence agriculture, although they are not recorded as employed persons (since they are not the owners of agricultural products obtained). Therefore, the higher number of beneficiaries from rural areas compared to those in urban areas could be a consequence of the awareness campaigns conducted by the NAE in rural areas to promote the benefits offered at registration in NAE's system.

Table no. 2 Distribution of investigated beneficiaries by gender and statute.

		Statute		Total
		compensated unemployed	unpaid unemployed	
Gender	F	5220	4128	9348
	M	5602	5270	10872
Total		10822	9398	20220

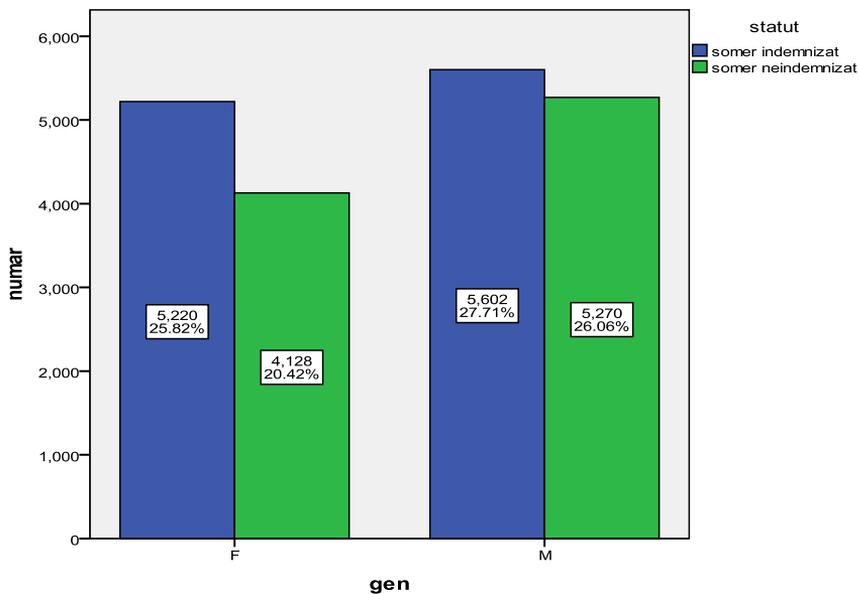


Fig. nr. 2 Distribution of investigated beneficiaries by gender and statute.

Depending on the length of employment, the maximum period for granting the unemployment benefit is 12 months. During this period, the unemployed benefit of all active employment measures provided by the law: career (employment) counseling, vocational training, mediation, which all aim at increasing of employment chances. After this period, it is expected that they will find a job suitable with their interests and their professional education and training.

Table no. 3 Distribution of employment counseling beneficiaries by age

Age (years)	Number	Percent
under 25	2453	12.1

25 - 35	4629	22.9
35 - 45	7891	39.0
over 45	5265	26.0
Total	20238	100.0

Methods and Tools

The methods used in this study were: the survey based on a questionnaire and self-assessment based on Lickert type scale.

The specific tool (Beneficiaries' satisfaction assessment questionnaire on the quality of employment services) chosen for this stage of the investigation was developed by the author in line with existing models in the literature.

The tool comprises two sections: 1. one on socio-demographic data (gender, age, area of residence: rural/urban, level of education, social statute: unpaid unemployed, paid unemployed), and 2. one regarding the beneficiaries' satisfaction with the quality of the services received - that comprises 14 items, out of which 10 focus on the satisfaction with the dimensions of employment counseling services provided by PES and 4 items concerning other aspects of PES customer's satisfaction.

Rating Scale of client satisfaction with the quality of employment counseling services provided within PES

To identify the level and structure of the client's satisfaction with the quality of services provided, we built a Satisfaction Scale with the quality of employment counseling received within PES.

The items of this scale focus on customers' satisfaction with the dimensions of employment counseling services offered by the PES, regarding: responsiveness of the counselor to customer questions and requests; support from counselor to identify and develop skills in achieving an individual career plan for identifying and filling an acceptable job and for implementation of the individual career plan; information received from other services providers related to issues that are beyond NAE's responsibilities but could be solved by other institution; counselor focus on the real problems of the beneficiary; the number of counseling sessions; relationship counselor / beneficiary; effectiveness / realism of the given support; trust in the counseling services offered by the NAE.

To identify the factorial structure of the scale, an exploratory factor analysis with principal components method was conducted.

The Rating Scale of client satisfaction with the quality of employment counseling services developed by author, was sent to all representatives of the county agencies for employment (CAE), and the municipal agency for employment (MAE). The PES officers that registered the customers offered the Scale to all counseling services' beneficiaries in order to express their satisfaction with the received services. As a coordinator of the employment counseling department within NAE, the author collected all the questionnaires (completed by the customers) from the counties agencies for employment and interpreted the data.

The Results

Regarding question Q1 *What is the client's satisfaction with the quality of counseling services provided within PES*, the response is supported by the data in the table below.

Satisfaction with services provided by counselors: M = 4.25 (DS = .66)

Table no. 4 Descriptive statistics for the beneficiaries' satisfaction with counseling services within PES

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Satisfaction with services offered by counselors	20238	1	5	4.25	.663
Satisfaction relationship with counselors	20238	1	5	4.29	.655
Satisfaction with the usefulness of counseling services received	20238	1	5	4.00	.623
Valid N (list wise)	20238				

Central tendency of representative beneficiaries' satisfaction scores show that customers' satisfaction with services is relatively high, the lowest score (expressing "very much") is the one regarding satisfaction with the usefulness of counseling services' (M = 4.00), and the highest being the one that welcomes the relationship with the counselor (M = 4.29).

Regarding question Q2: *If there is a specific structure of beneficiaries' satisfaction with the quality of services received within PES* - answered the factor analysis of the scores obtained by beneficiaries when applying the scale of satisfaction with counseling services received within PES. Thus, we identified three dimensions of this satisfaction construct: "Overall satisfaction with counseling services received" "satisfaction regarding relationship with the counselors," and "satisfaction with the usefulness of services."

Regarding Question Q.3: *If components of client satisfaction with the quality of employment services are developed to the same extent or there is uneven development of these components*, results show that there is a homogenous development of the dimensions identified (there is little difference between the mean scores of the three dimensions of beneficiaries' satisfaction).

Although counseling services provided within PES are appreciated, beneficiaries consider that there is too much formalism and even a dirigisme in providing this service, the counselor speaking more than the customer during the counseling sessions.

The financial problems facing the vast majority of PES target groups, coupled with their low levels of education, could explain their tendency to minimize the importance and the usefulness of these services.

In this context, employment counselors within PES try to compensate by building and maintaining a positive relationship with their customers, developing beneficiaries' coping skills and dealing respectfully with the resistance of their customers to the changes required by the labor market. This would be a possible explanation for the higher score of the component "satisfaction with relationship with the counselor".

To answer the question 4 (Q.4) about *the differences and relationships between components of customers' satisfaction with the quality of counseling services provided within PES and socio-demographic characteristics of the beneficiaries*, the scores of satisfaction with the services provided and those of the dimensions of these services were subjected to statistical procedures of correlational and differential analysis.

Differential analysis was performed by T-test for statistical significance of the difference between the average scores and by one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA). Correlational analysis was measured by bivariate Pearson correlation test.

Bonferroni multiple comparisons state that beneficiaries aged under 25 years have a significantly lower level of satisfaction with counseling

services than beneficiaries in other age groups.

One-way ANOVA investigated customers' satisfaction scores, depending on their studies, and revealed statistically significant differences in all dimensions of satisfaction.

Comparison of paid unemployed customers' satisfaction scores with those of unpaid unemployed (by Student t-test) shows that the paid unemployed report a statistically significant level (coefficient t is significant at $p < .001$) of higher satisfaction with counseling services (with all three dimensions: $M = 4.28, 4.33,$ and 4.03) as compared to the unpaid unemployed ($M = 4.20, 4.25$ and 3.95).

Table no. 5 Differences in customers' statute regarding satisfaction with counseling services provided within PES

Statute		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Satisfaction with counseling services provided	with Paid unemployed	10822	4.28	.640	.006
	Unpaid unemployed	9398	4.20	.687	.007
Satisfaction relationship with counselors	with Paid unemployed	10822	4.33	.630	.006
	Unpaid unemployed	9398	4.25	.680	.007
Satisfaction the usefulness of services received	with Paid unemployed	10822	4.03	.604	.006
	Unpaid unemployed	9398	3.95	.641	.007

Another way of analyzing data on customers' satisfaction with counseling services was correlational analysis. Overall, the beneficiaries' satisfaction with counseling services received correlates strongly with the satisfaction regarding the usefulness of services compared with the satisfaction regarding the relationship with the counselor (although it is very high: $r = 0.90$ to $0.92, p < .001$).

Table 6.Correlations between the customers satisfaction' dimensions

	1	2	3	4	5
1.Satisfaction with counseling services provided	1				
2.Satisfaction with the relationship with counselor	.92**	1			
3.Satisfaction with the usefulness of services received	.97**	.84**	1		
4.Counselor PES is concerned in more formal procedures than to find a solution to the customer's problem	.34**	.28**	.10	1	
5.During the meetings with PES counselor, he/she spoke more than the customer	-.25**	-.35**	.15**	-.14**	1

N= 20238; ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Discussions and Conclusions

The literature on quality of services (EUPAN, 2008), revealed that perceptions of provided services are measured separately from beneficiaries' expectations and the difference between perceptions and expectations provides a measure of the quality of services that determine the satisfaction level. Given the fact that the beneficiaries' expectations are critical in influencing satisfaction with services, which in turn are determined by a number of factors, it is important to understand how they are formed.

Quality of service of an organization must be assessed by the beneficiaries for which these services were designed. Therefore, customers' satisfaction must be a permanent reason of concern for any organization in order to provide quality services.

The reasons of satisfaction can be difficult to express, especially when considered less tangible aspects of service. The reasons for dissatisfaction

can be expressed more easily, especially if it is a state of exception.

We consider of real importance for any organization not only the measuring of the client's satisfaction with the services received, but also the analysis of the structure of this satisfaction and the reasons that led to a certain degree (low or high) of satisfaction. If we do not understand the causes of satisfaction, there is a danger of treating a high score as the reason to not changing anything in the process of service delivery or quality of service, considering the score obtained in the broad sense, without deepening the analysis.

The overall evaluation of employment counseling services within PES brought information on how they are generally perceived by the beneficiaries. The questionnaire-based survey revealed that 89% of respondents said they were satisfied and very satisfied with the quality of counseling services received. Although this first phase of the assessment service was not aimed at assessing the extent to which its components influence this state of contentment, the result of the overall evaluation is relevant because it allows comparisons with the results obtained in further stages. This will allow tracking the evolution of customer perception of services provided within PES over time and will, therefore, propose proper corrective measures if the trend is not the one desired (planned).

This type of evaluation must be complemented with both a careful investigation of the current needs and expectations of beneficiaries and the assessment of various elements of the services provided so that it reveals the elements and aspects most appreciated by the recipients, as well as those causing a negative perception among beneficiaries, thus pointing out those aspects that require improvement.

In deference to citizens (customers) and to comply with EU recommendations of aligning to the guidelines and standards for ensuring a high quality of services, PES should show a constant concern for the quality of counseling provided by:

- identifying the needs and expectations of its beneficiaries;
- measuring customers' perception on services provided (generally) and in detail - regarding its various components;
- detecting errors and their causes;
- designing a procedure to improve the quality of services.

Knowing customers' expectations is essential for quality planning and evaluation. In fact, the perception of satisfaction exists when the service is at least equal to the expectations of the customers in connection with it.

Succeeding in this correlation, even if the perception exceeds expectations, is a condition for acquiring quality of services.

Developing a standard methodology for continuous measurement of customer needs and expectations and the level of beneficiaries' satisfaction with the services received may provide PES with quality, useful and timely information on which to base its work meant to improve the services offered and thus achieve the goals and organizational priorities.

It should be noted that this type of measurement is subjective and was based on a questionnaire that was aimed at measuring the customers' satisfaction in terms of overall quality of service and, in particular, the satisfaction with the relationship (interactions) with the employment counselor. This aspect was determined in consideration that any improvement of the quality of services provided are related unquestionably with the quality of staff (counselors) who provide these services, which should demonstrate some knowledge and skills to meet the diverse needs and expectations of the beneficiaries.

In a "sanogenous" organizational culture, promoting and practicing a fair system of recruitment and professional selection (based on competence and positive attitude), a high degree of customers' satisfaction can affect the level of the counselors' job satisfaction, as a factor that strengthens their motivation to increase (or at least to maintain) their level of involvement, which may entail the increase (or maintaining) a high degree of customer satisfaction (by providing quality services). The role of this factor (level of customer' satisfaction) has not been sufficiently harnessed (exploited) in previous research. In agreement with the principles of the Herzberg's Theory of dual factors (motivational), customer's satisfaction indirectly influences counselor's satisfaction by the positive assessment, and the professional recognition he/she receives from the customers, which is one of the intrinsic motivational factors leading to extreme satisfaction, mobilizing the individual to work better.

In closer analysis, it is possible to identify a cyclical relationship between the two variables: the beneficiary's satisfaction with services received and a counselor's satisfaction with professional activity which are, at the same time, antecedents and consequences for each other.

A central objective of our study was to investigate *the level and structure of client satisfaction* with the services received. Although the identified level of satisfaction was high, knowing the shortcomings of the system, we consider it important that further research will focus on the satisfaction with the quality of service to investigate the reasons associated

with the level of satisfaction (high or low) obtained.

The results of this study are absolutely necessary for PES (NAE) in their process of ensuring a high quality of services and that the high level of beneficiaries' satisfaction is gratifying and promising. It is obvious that to increase the level of service quality in general and employment counseling services in particular, it is necessary to continue the approach started by the continuous improvement of services. Further rigorous studies should be conducted on these issues, such as specific longitudinal studies on specific populations on the needs and expectations of PES recipients, as well as studies regarding the customers' satisfaction with the counseling services received.

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ERÓTICA Y ESTÉTICA PERSONAL. UN PROBLEMA SOCIAL Y UN DESAFÍO PARA LA EDUCACIÓN.

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***Abstract:** This essay starts from the re-conceptualization of the terms of erotic and personal aesthetic. In this regard, we analyze the implications that these concepts have both at macro and micro levels, ie. In the social superstructure, as well as in individuals and social groups. Subsequently, we move to develop the influences between superstructure, individuals and social groups, in order to analyze the issues that arise and affect subjects, whether individual or collective. We will conclude this essay glimpsing how these relationships affect the educational field, and offering actions to confront this problem.*

Keywords: *erotic, aesthetics, repression, conflict, transformation.*

1. Introducción

La redacción del presente artículo va encaminado a mostrar la ruptura existente entre la estética personal y la erótica. Desde nuestra perspectiva, esta quiebrase establece como una de las mayores problemáticas sociales actuales y uno de los principales retos de la educación del siglo XXI.

Mostraremos la conceptualización de la erótica y de la estética personal para, a través de ellos, demostrar la conflictividad existente entre ambos, que desemboca en contradicciones personales internas elevándose a posteriori a una problemática social.

Esta conflictividad entre estética y erótica personal es un fenómeno complejo en el que inciden todas las estructuras que conforman la sociedad desde las macro hasta las micro. Pretendemos hacer un breve recorrido por las que consideramos fundamentales para que este fenómeno ocurra, siendo conscientes de que obviaremos determinados elementos que también inciden en ella.

Continuaremos con el desarrollo de la problemática que esta

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conflictividad crea en la sociedad, descubriendo sus motivos, mostrando sus consecuencias y pretendiendo exponer un espacio para la reflexión personal hacia el reconocimiento de esta conflictividad como paso elemental para la superación de esta.

Finalizaremos señalando la educación como una de las herramientas más potentes como transformadora de la sociedad y desarrollaremos los retos que se le plantean a esta, así como las actuaciones que consideramos certeras para la confrontación de esta problemática en pos del desarrollo humano.

2. Re-conceptualización de los términos. Erótica y estética personal.

Vamos a hacer una breve re-conceptualización de los términos de erótica y estética personal. Ambos son términos muy trabajados por los pensadores clásicos de todas las épocas, sobre todo desde las perspectivas filosóficas y artísticas. Platón, Freud, Schopenhauer, Heidegger, Marcuse o Galeffi entre otros, los sometieron a grandes niveles de análisis. Estos abarcaron desde diferentes complejidades la estética y su íntima relación con la erótica a través del arte, la crítica a este, la sexualidad o las connotaciones filosóficas que estas poseen. Las dimensiones comentadas se encuentran fuertemente interrelacionadas en sus estudios llegando a fundirse en la mayoría de las ocasiones.

Pretendemos ofrecer una re-conceptualización de ambos términos tras pasando el concepto de arte como obra creada por un artista (o grupo de estos), para mudarlo hacia una visión holística de la vida, donde esta sería la obra y cada sujeto (individual o colectivo) el artista creativo. En esta obra se interrelacionan todas las dimensiones humanas, convirtiendo cada vida en una obra única e irrepetible al estar formada mediante la complejidad personal humana.

Desde esta perspectiva consideramos la erótica personal muy cercana al concepto que conformaría la lucha permanente del id (ello) y del ego (yo) tratado por Freud. Concibiendo el resultado de esta lucha como la sensualidad, la pasión y los profundos intereses intrínsecos, que adaptados a la realidad histórica en que vivimos se encuentran en lo más íntimo de cada persona. La personalidad inseparable, pero en constante evolución, de cada uno de nosotros. Esta formación erótica tiene por un lado su base genética o innata y por otro las construcciones personales adquiridas a través de la socialización en el entorno más próximo. Nuestra erótica se desarrolla fundamentalmente en los primeros años, por tanto, el ambiente familiar y el contexto más cercano en el que nos desarrollamos

aportan la mayor parte y más persistente de nuestra erótica, en la que también influye la cultura en la que estamos envueltos, aunque en menor grado que en nuestra estética como veremos. Queremos recalcar que no es un elemento estático, sino que está en constante evolución, pero haciéndose cada vez más resistente al cambio.

Por otro lado tenemos la estética personal, cercano al concepto de superego (o súper-yo) acuñado por Freud que lo identifica como “el portador del ideal del yo con el que el yo se mide, al que aspira a alcanzar y cuya exigencia de una perfección cada vez más vasta se empeña en cumplir” (Freud, 1991, p. 60) y que surge de “la identificación primera, y de mayor valencia, del individuo: la identificación con el padre(...) en el posterior circuito del desarrollo, maestros y autoridades fueron retomando el papel del padre; sus mandatos y prohibiciones han permanecido vigentes en el ideal del yo (superego) y ahora ejercen, como conciencia moral, la censura moral” (Freud, 1992, p. 33-38). Entendemos pues la estética personal como la representación que cada persona pretende mostrar de lo que es hacia el mundo exterior, lo que desearía ser. Esta representación se encuentra fuertemente influenciada por los valores dominantes, la moral socialmente aceptada y también por las corrientes (artísticas, culturales, políticas, etc.) contemporáneas que en gran medida son impuestas por las grandes multinacionales del conocimiento, que manejan tanto los medios de comunicación como la educación a través de los libros de texto editados por ellos mismos. Interpretamos estas influencias como la superestructura de la sociedad siendo conformada por la lógica del sistema imperante, el Estado y los medios de comunicación. Siguiendo a Marcuse (2003, p. 46) y su añadido a la teoría freudiana, esta superestructura ejerce la *represión excedente* definidas por él como “las restricciones provocadas por la dominación social”. Esta represión excedente empuja hacia una homogeneización social estética, que no erótica, con unos valores cambiantes (según los intereses del momento) y con una extrema fragilidad en sus nexos favoreciendo lo que Zygmunt Bauman (2000) denominó Sociedad Líquida.

La superestructura, con sus contradicciones internas, juega un papel muy importante en la estética individual de las personas. La superestructura también vive sus contradicciones estético-eróticas. Su lado estético muestra lo deseablemente bueno, lo ideal, como sería lo humanista, la libertad, la paz, el diálogo, la solidaridad, el respeto, etc. Esta parte estética tiene menos incidencia sobre las conciencias individuales ya que, al ser el ideal de ella, tiene menos coherencia y

consistencia en sus actuaciones y, por tanto, menos potencia de influencia sobre los individuos. Mientras que la íntima erótica de la superestructura se caracteriza por su lógica interna represiva, de control, violenta, explotadora, en resumen, deshumanizada. Esta lógica interna (erótica) tiene gran influencia sobre las conciencias de las personas, ya que no sufre fisuras en su actuación y se ve retroalimentada por las diferentes instituciones que conforman el ente: sistema, Estado (con todas sus instituciones, de autoridad, educativas, laborales, etc.) y medios de comunicación. Consideramos que esta es la raíz de la problemática tratada ya que entendemos como McLaren (2006) que

(...) el capitalismo no es algo que pueda ser fijo, o humanizado, porque su "forma de valor" se basa en la explotación del trabajo humano. En cierto modo, estamos atados al mástil como Ulises mientras las sirenas del consumo nos llaman a un paraíso de tontos. (p. 118)

Con esta metáfora define a la perfección las contradicciones del propio sistema que nos ofrece un paraíso a todos que, sin embargo, está reservado para unos pocos. El Estado ejerce como órgano represivo para la perpetuación tanto del sistema como del propio Estado como institución de dominación, y, a su vez, es apoyado por los medios de comunicación en poder de los grandes capitalistas con evidentes intereses en que el Estado permanezca ejerciendo esa represión (Althusser, 1980).

La superestructura es el único ente en el que las contradicciones entre su estética y su erótica permanecen siempre de forma consciente en él. Ese juego contradictorio es empleado para la dominación a través de la atomización de los individuos. Ejerce sobre ellos esa contradicción constante entre lo deseable de forma estética y lo represivo de forma erótica. La superestructura sigue la máxima de *divide et impera* mediante esa contradicción inmanente a ella. Así, alternando su estética y su erótica según determine necesario, consigue la confrontación permanente entre las comunidades sociales y sus individuos. Comunidades que luchan enfrentadas entre sí por elementos secundarios. Metidos en esa distracción, no reflexionan sobre que comparten el mismo objetivo en sus conflictos primarios, y, por tanto, no actúan de forma conjunta contra él. La superestructura entiende muy bien la complejidad multidimensional del ser humano y actúa en consecuencia de su interés, que no es otro que la dominación para perpetuarse.

Esta superestructura deshumanizada crea unas condiciones de contradicciones antagónicas de paz-violencia, solidaridad-competición, libertad-represión o respeto-desprecio. Estas se reflejan en la estética

personal de los individuos de nuestra sociedad, ya que, aunque se mantenga una erótica personal potente, la superestructura siempre está sobrevolando la conciencia de cada uno de los individuos que la conformamos.

A través de estos dos conceptos de erótica y estética personal, y su directa relación con la superestructura, trataremos de mostrar el conflicto permanente en el que vivimos y que afecta tanto a la esfera social como a la individual.

3. Estética y erótica: Conflicto personal y social.

Desde la conceptualización de ambos términos ya se intuye el conflicto latente entre ambos. Nuestra erótica es; nuestra estética desea ser. Ambas no pueden convivir de forma armónica y pacífica pues suponen un conflicto permanente y latente. Esta dualidad personal hace que cada una se quiera imponer en diferentes situaciones dependiendo de varios factores. Sin embargo, existen individuos en los que su estética se encuentra erotizada, es decir que son conscientes de la dualidad con la que conviven. Estos quedan excluidos del texto que vamos a desarrollar.

Entendemos que las dimensiones estéticas y eróticas de las personas no son antagónicas al ser conceptos complejos. Más bien son dos realidades que se entrelazan, estando acordes en unas ocasiones y siendo opuestos en otras. Cuando no están de acuerdo al afrontar una situación, entran en confrontación. Ahí es donde comienza el conflicto de intereses estético-erótico.

Como indica Edgar Morin (2000) respecto a la complejidad de personalidades dentro de cada individuo:

No solo representamos papeles sociales distintos, sino que estamos ocupados por personalidades distintas a lo largo de nuestra vida. Cada uno de nosotros es una sociedad de muchas personalidades. Pero existe este *yo* de la subjetividad, esta especie de punto fijo que está ocupado tan pronto por la una como por la otra” y sigue “Cuando estamos poseídos por el *súper-ego* (estética) continuamos diciendo *yo* de la misma manera que decimos *yo* cuando perseguimos unos fines puramente egoístas. (p. 177)

Son estas *personalidades distintas* las que provocan el conflicto. Suceden dos extremos de circunstancias principales en nuestra actuación vital. El extremo que afecta directamente a nuestros intereses personales y el superfluo o de situaciones sin alta incidencia en nuestros intereses propios. Entre estos dos existe un amplio espacio en el que ambos extremos se acercan en diferentes proporciones. Es decir, existen

situaciones mayoritariamente superfluas pero con un leve grado de afectación a nuestros intereses personales y a la inversa. Esto se da en todas las proporciones considerables de ambos extremos.

Cuando la situación que tenemos que afrontar se encuentra en el extremo superfluo se producen el conflicto personal y, en menor grado, el social. Al no sentirse peligro los intereses personales, la estética se mimetiza con la situación actuando como el ideal del yo, erotizando los valores dominantes de la sociedad, sintiéndose parte de un grupo más amplio que también erotizó la estética impuesta o que ya poseía esa erótica. Bauman (2004) describió este fenómeno a la perfección mediante las denominadas *comunidades de guardarropa*:

Los asistentes a un espectáculo se visten para la ocasión, ateniéndose a un “código de sastrería” distinto de los códigos que siguen diariamente – situación que simultáneamente diferencia esa ocasión como “especial” y hace que los espectadores presenten, dentro del teatro, un aspecto más uniforme que fuera de él. (p. 210)

Mientras que

(...) otros intereses –los que los separan en vez de unirlos– son temporariamente dejados de lado o silenciados. Los espectáculos, como ocasión de existencia de una comunidad de guardarropa, no fusionan los intereses individuales en un “interés grupal”: esos intereses no adquieren una nueva calidad al agruparse, y la ilusión de situación compartida que proporciona el espectáculo no dura mucho más que la excitación provocada por la representación. (p. 211)

Como bien dice Bauman, la ilusión de situación compartida no dura mucho más que la excitación provocada por la representación. Añadimos que, incluso durante la representación, existen *espectadores* en los que esa ilusión de pertenencia está en conflicto durante ella. Estos individuos actúan en base a su estética y, aun siendo una situación superflua, su íntima erótica entra en conflicto al no verse representada en su actuación. Esto produce un conflicto interior al verse reprimido por unos valores impuestos desde el exterior. Por otro lado, también produce un conflicto social al crear unas falsas expectativas sobre otros miembros de la comunidad que si contienen esa estética dentro de su propia erótica. Las perspectivas de actuación de esa comunidad son mayores que las que realmente tiene, ya que en ella permanecen un número determinado de personas que pertenecen a dicha comunidad por la estética más que por su erótica y que, cuando tengan que tomar decisiones comunitarias, se desligarán de sus responsabilidades al entrar en conflicto con sus intereses

personales. Pero esto ya se conjuga con la incidencia en los intereses personales que es lo que trataremos a continuación.

Cuando el escenario de actuación confronta con los intereses personales es cuando surge el conflicto más fuerte y se hace patente de forma directa. Es en este ambiente cuando la estética y la erótica se encuentran. Lo que se es y lo que se desea ser no tienen cabida en esta situación. Aquí, normalmente, es la parte egoísta, la erótica, la que toma las decisiones. Y digo normalmente, porque no siempre es así, veremos esto más tarde. Como decimos, generalmente es la parte erótica la que actúa al verse en juego sus intereses personales. El individuo actúa mediante su erótica, obviando la moral aceptada socialmente y poniendo en juego su yo más íntimo, ignorando su ideal del yo, con el que había actuado en situaciones superfluas, suponiendo esto un choque introspectivo al reconocerse como un ser dual, con una actuación estética y otra erótica bien diferenciadas. Se muestra y reconoce como un ser incoherente en su actuación vital creándole un conflicto interno sobre su personalidad y su actuación.

El conflicto personal comentado muda a conflicto social al reconocer esa dualidad ante la comunidad en la cual se produce. Esta conflictividad social se dará en dos posibles formas:

- Una primera será cuando, al actuar en defensa de sus intereses personales, la erótica salga a relucir con todas sus consecuencias, el individuo se mostrará como un ser dual ante la comunidad y esto provocará desconfianza en él por su incoherencia vital. Esto es extensible a cada uno de los individuos de la comunidad.

- La segunda forma de conflicto social se dará cuando, afectando a su persona, el individuo sufra una lucha interior entre su erótica y su estética para ver cual se impone, provocando incongruencias en su discurso y objetivos poco definidos en su actuación. Socialmente provocará dificultades para la organización y desempeño de la comunidad al no establecerse unos patrones claros de comportamiento en el individuo, obstaculizando así el progreso de la comunidad. Igual que en la anterior forma, es aplicable a todos los que pertenecen a la comunidad.

4. El conflicto erótico-estético. Una problemática social.

Hemos mostrado como la compleja interrelación de la erótica y la estética individual provoca conflictos personales, interpersonales y dentro de la comunidad. Estos, en conexión entre ellos, desembocan en una problemática social de grandes dimensiones.

Esta problemática se muestra en la sociedad que habitamos bajo un espectro de moralidad y valores que son impuestos desde fuera de los propios individuos. Como mostramos anteriormente, la superestructura, eróticamente deshumanizada y estéticamente libertaria y humana, crea un ambiente contradictorio que dificulta la armonía humana, su desarrollo personal y la creación de nexos entre las personas para crear comunidades de actuación frente a las problemáticas existentes.

Esta dualidad de la superestructura representada en los individuos a través de sus estéticas individuales converge en una sociedad esquizofrénica con grandes dificultades para establecer una coherencia en sus actuaciones. Con esto no pretendemos perseguir una coherencia mecanicista de las personas, pues entendemos que en la diversidad está la esencia del ser humano y la riqueza cultural. Lo que pretendemos es que esa conflictividad erótica-estética sea reconocida y, mediante el conocimiento de nuestro yo y nuestro ideal de yo, emprendamos procesos de aprendizajes significativos que estén enfocados hacia nuestro desarrollo personal y social de forma coherente con nosotros mismos. También que adquiramos la capacidad de abstraernos de la estética impuesta para buscar una correlación intercomunitaria entre los elementos que compartimos y lo que no separa, para apreciar la diferencia y así poder establecer lazos de unión y actuación desde el respeto y dirigidos hacia el desarrollo humano.

Actualmente en este mundo lleno de guerras, con miles de millones de personas sin acceso a agua potable y donde la diversidad cultural y humana se encuentra en constante represión, se hace imperante establecer nexos fuertes de actuación tanto al interior de las comunidades como entre ellas para poder confrontar estas y otras problemáticas. Esto será difícil mientras sigamos conviviendo con un conflicto erótico-estético tan fuerte que a veces llegue a posiciones antagónicas entre ellas al no poner en una probeta reflexiva la lógica erótico-estética de la superestructura.

Es necesario valorar estos conflictos para emprender procesos de análisis y reflexión que nos permitan abordar el reconocimiento de la propia erótica y la conciliación con la estética. Esto nos proveerá de la conciencia y capacidad necesaria para afrontar la situación y dar un paso decisivo hacia la justicia social. La educación juega un papel muy importante aquí.

5. Un desafío para la educación.

La educación. Todos tenemos certeza de que es el *arma* más poderosa para el desarrollo personal y de la sociedad. ¿Pero actualmente está cumpliendo esa función? Espero que se nos permita ser críticos y concisos. Para nosotros, no. No dudamos de la buena voluntad de los docentes, las familias o los reales protagonistas, los alumnos. Pero tampoco vamos a caer en el idealismo de creer que sólo la buena voluntad de los participantes en la educación es suficiente para alcanzar la justicia social. De la superestructura, mediante su legislación y erótica represiva, sí que dudamos. Como dijimos, esta es muy consciente de la complejidad y en la educación, arma tan potente, no iba a ser menos. Freire (2007) ya lo comentó cuando dijo que

(...) las escuelas, primarias, medias y universitarias, que no existen en el aire, sino en el tiempo y el espacio, no pueden escapar a las influencias de las condiciones estructurales objetivas. Funcionan, en gran medida, en las estructuras dominadoras, como agencias formadoras de futuros *invasores*. (p. 188)

Tanto el sistema educativo como las personas que formamos el mundo educativo de forma directa estamos inmersos en el juego contradictorio de la superestructura expuesto anteriormente y, además, en una legislación educativa con la misma dualidad represora-libertaria emanada de su padre, la superestructura. Por solo citar un ejemplo, Apple (1996, p. 66) mostró un concepto muy evidente sobre esto al hablar sobre el currículum que pretende imponer una cultura común “en la que todos los estudiantes reciben los valores de un grupo específico -por regla general, del grupo dominante-, nada tiene que ver, desde mi punto de vista, con una cultura común”. Mientras el sistema propone (estéticamente) unos valores comunes para todos, lo que (eróticamente) está imponiendo, y violentando al resto, son los valores de una minoría. Esa es la práctica tradicional de la superestructura dentro de la educación.

Esta práctica se traspasa inconscientemente (o no) a los profesionales de la educación, a excepción de esas personas que han estetizado su erótica o al menos son conscientes de ella. La estética por bandera, la erótica por actuación. ¿Cuántos docentes hablan de participación, cooperación o aprendizajes críticos cuando en su práctica se limitan a la docencia magistral con evaluaciones cuantitativas? Es por esto mismo que consideramos necesario aplicar primero el proceso de análisis y reflexión personal los que trabajamos en y para la educación para reconocer nuestra

situación erótico-estética y, posteriormente, replantear nuestra actuación de una forma sincera y coherente para poder avanzar hasta objetivos mayores. Estos procesos no serán fáciles ya que la superestructura no lo permitirá mediante su autoridad social. Siguiendo a Marcuse (2003, p. 55):

La autoridad social es absorbida por la “conciencia” y por el inconsciente del individuo y actúa de acuerdo con sus propios deseos, su moral y para su satisfacción. Dentro del desarrollo “normal”, el individuo vive su represión “normalmente” como su propia vida: desea lo que se supone que debe desear; sus gratificaciones son provechosas para él y para los demás; es razonable y hasta a menudo exuberantemente feliz. (...) Su actuación erótica es puesta en la misma línea que su actuación social. (p. 55)

Para descubrir la autoridad social y su influencia sobre nuestra actuación es necesario que realicemos una reflexión dialéctica sobre la teoría y la práctica en la que nos encontramos envueltos, teniendo en consideración las condiciones a las que estas se encuentran sometidas. De esta forma podremos percibir las diferencias entre nuestra erótica y estética, encontrando los elementos que influyen sobre la última. Es decir, al comprender que en nuestra actuación “normal” intervienen elementos ajenos a nosotros, nos encontraremos en la posibilidad de analizarlos, haciéndonos conscientes y posibilitando la acción sobre ello. De esta forma podremos poner al descubierto la contradicción erótico-estética de la superestructura, en este caso dentro de las instituciones educativas, mostrando como su praxis se encuentra enraizada en su erótica más que en su estética.

Una vez descubierta y analizada la contradicción erótico-estética, podremos examinarnos teniendo en consideración los elementos de la superestructura donde estamos insertados que afectan a nuestra actuación. De esta forma podremos reconfigurar nuestra praxis educativa de una forma coherente, evitando la contradicción proveniente de la superestructura. Estamos de acuerdo con Illich y Lüning (1979, p. 114) cuando dicen que “se aprende democracia como se aprenden los verbos irregulares o los afluentes del Rin y del Danubio, esto es, no se aprende como Praxis”. Es decir, trabajamos en el sistema educativo a través de una contradicción entre la se quiere ser y lo que se es. Enseñamos sobre democracia pero todo lo decide el profesor; hablamos de cooperación y solidaridad pero el sistema de evaluación está basado en la competición; o establecemos la interculturalidad como materia transversal mientras que el sistema educativo es monocultural. Hemos absorbido la contradicción

de la superestructura, y por ello necesitamos descubrirla, para hacerla patente en nuestro pensamiento, y poder construir procesos educativos coherentes en nuestra praxis.

Descubrir y hacer explícitas estas contradicciones erótico-estéticas que afectan a nuestro desarrollo personal, será de gran importancia a la hora de los procesos educativos ya que, de esta manera, los discentes podrán emprender procesos de autoreflexión para analizar su propia erótica y estética, de lo que son y lo que desearían ser, y encontrar los elementos de la superestructura que se encuentran en ellos. La intención no sería deshacerse de todo lo proveniente de la superestructura en una suerte de purismo individualista, sino ser conscientes de las diferentes esferas que permean su formación como sujeto para poder emprender análisis críticos sobre ellos, y, de esta forma, poder acercar a una conexión más coherente la erótica y la estética de cada uno de los individuos dentro de los procesos formativos.

Es por todo lo comentado hasta ahora que consideramos necesario lo siguiente. Emprender procesos de análisis y reflexión sobre nuestra erótica-estética, al menos en la práctica educativa, y confrontarla con la impuesta. A partir de esto, situar la educación en su ambiente, la vida, estableciendo una interrelación permanente en la que lleguen a fundirse la sociedad y la educación. Ofrecer una formación viva donde las barreras entre el aula y la sociedad se quiebren para una armónica comunión de aprendizaje-enseñanza constante entre los individuos y grupos que conforman la sociedad. De esta manera conseguiremos, al menos restar importancia, a la fuerte influencia que la superestructura ejerce sobre los educadores y los futuros ciudadanos mediante la institución represiva que son hoy día los espacios escolares. También se fortalecerá el tejido social al establecer esa correspondencia entre sociedad y educación que siempre debieron ser extremadamente interdependientes, pero que hoy día, prácticamente son ajenas una de la otra.

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FAMILY, EDUCATION AND SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIVISM

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Abstract: *It can be considered that the educational function of family has declined considerably in the contemporary society - due to the women's action outside the domestic area, the increased professional requirements imposed on the labor market, the high level of competitiveness, the difficulties in finding and keeping a job etc., this function being largely taken over by specialized institutions. However, the empirical observations and specialized studies on school-family collaboration argue the opposite, namely that the evolution of society and, consequently, the education system has not led to a parenting resignation but, on the contrary, it has stimulated the family involvement in their children's education, requiring a redefinition of family-society relationship.*

Keywords: *family relationships, educational values, network, interpretative models*

Introduction

Family as a well-defined social group based on the mutual choice of the marital partners, with precise roles and statuses associated with its members, having common aspirations, goals and habitudes and ensuring, at the same time, the upbringing and education of their children, plays an important role in the functioning of society. The multitude of relations established between family members and cultural values which are transmitted through them represent together the family. Education, from the family's perspective, appears to be a function of social integration, representing a set of social actions as to the organization and management of individual or collective learning, the conveyance of messages and

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cultural information towards the "subjects" included in this process.

From the perspective of education philosophy and constructivist sociology, family education does not fulfill only a function of social integration, but also a constitutive one of changing and rebalancing the lifestyle which ensures the process of building up the self and the social world.

Family - roles, relationships, responsibility and their impact on children's education

The specialized literature reveals that the role of the experience lived by the child in the family is decisive for the image he builds himself about life. Educational action is exercised directly by the family education agency intentionally, according to a goal, through a special set of instruments based on the actual situation. Educational influences come from every family member as an agent of family education, and represent a direct expression of the relationships established within the family and of the behavioral patterns that they offer. Therefore, the responsibility of supervising the educational process of the child lies with the family as the first educational factor, thus providing, to a decisive extent, the function of socialization and social integration. There is no aspect of shaping the young personality which should be strange to the family; it can bring, in normal circumstances, a precious contribution to the formation of all the personality sides. Moreover, even the family has a set of conditions conducive to education, which no other educational factor possesses: that spiritual climate based on the affection which is absolutely essential to human development in the first phase of his life.

After the research has demonstrated that "mother and child interaction is strongly influenced, even dependent on the nature of the relationships between the spouses"¹, a whole orientation of interactionist sociology emphasizes the need to go beyond the particular level: mother-child, father-child, child-child relationship, highlighting the need to take into account the complexity of family interactions, which would enable the analysis of family as an open system towards the exterior, but also as one open to the interior, namely as a complex adaptive system. Family life instills in the child a set of moral, ethical and behavioral values that will show themselves in the next family that he/she will build up. According

¹ Clarke-Stewart, K.A., *Popular Primers for Parent*, American Psychologist, Vol 33(4), Apr 1978.

to the sociologists Terrisse B., Durning P. "the educational values are three-dimensional, entailing the cognitive dimension, since they involve a set of normative knowledge, including evaluation, affective dimension because they involve a differentiated attachment to one or another way of life, as well as the connotative dimension as the value directs and guides the action"².

Knowledge is a central element, which can be cultivated within the intellectual education. It represents the cognitive dimension of shaping and developing the human personality. According to the above mentioned ideas and from the perspective of cognitive education (which requires learning to know, learning to do, learning to live together with the others and learning to be) the knowledge gained in the domestic environment underlies the formation of cognitive, practical, socio-emotional and behavioral competences concerning family life, essential to every individual, regardless of gender, profession, age and beliefs.

Philosophically speaking, the rule is a criterion or principle governing the conduct, or which is referred to in order to make a value judgment. Values represent a very important element of the family educational ethos because they trigger and stimulate human actions. The current meaning of value lies in the quality of things, people or behaviors, whose compliance with a rule or the proximity of an ideal make them particularly worthy of esteem. In this respect, the example of adults is of great importance: that of grandparents, parents, elder brothers / sisters and other older relatives. The way children are educated will locate, in fact, all the three elements discussed above.

It is obvious that in a family that respects a healthy and rational lifestyle there will be effective communication and appropriate leadership and, conversely, where the lifestyle is thoughtless, coercive or too liberal, serious difficulties can be noticed at all levels: in communication, interaction, family management and tolerance, the type and structure of relationships, openness to collaboration and partnership. Seen in the light of these constituents, the family is the most efficient and ideal microenvironment for social integration, molding and shaping the child's personality.

² Terrisse B, Durning P. apud Elisabeta Stănciulescu, *The Sociology of Family Education*, 2002, 1st vol: *Educational Strategies of Contemporary Families*

Education as a mechanism of social construction of reality

The rapid changes in the contemporary society have broadened the scope of education by asserting the active role of the individual and the constructed character of society. The social reality is no longer understood as a datum, but as a construction achieved in everyday inter-subjective activity. In terms of the contemporary evolutions of the family system - that defines more clearly its limits in relation to the social environment, but at the same time opening itself to the environment, increasing the material and information exchanges with it - family education can no longer be reduced to the intra-family processes, as it actually requires intense interactions with the outer world.

Margaret Mead³ considers that the fundamental principle of social interactions is that of communication through gestures/significant symbols, involving a co-participation of the Self with the Other. Self occurrence is related to the use of language that triggers in the subject the same set of reactions (attitudes) that he (the subject) triggers in the others. The development of Self, for the child, is a stage process of transition from assuming some isolated roles (attitudes), after the model offered by the significant Other (mother, father, teacher) to assuming some organized units roles (attitudes) by the internalization of a generalized Other (school, class, a group of children).⁴

The child's socialization / education is strongly influenced by the significant Other by the expectations that the child/youngster thinks he has from his parents, teachers, friends. Practically, the Self is updated as a tension between two components: the social Self, acquired through the internalization of the group attitude and the personal Self, as a personal, unlearned reaction. In this theoretical context, education can be defined as a systematic activity that follows the formation of the social dimension of Self-awareness through the internalization by the individual of the shared attitudes of the group, using the means of the community cultural transmission. Education is the internalization of some situations in which the educated, the educator, the contents conveyed and the act of transmission part act as useful constituents. The child is not only a receiver of the message sent, but he proceeds to a re-signification of experience and his response will be according to this new significance. The "significant" adult is not just a "transmission belt" between society and the

³ Mead, M. , *Mind, Self and Society*, Chicago, Univ. Press, 1934

⁴ Ilut, P., *The Self and Self-knowledge*, Iași, Polirom Publishing House, 2001.

individual, but a (re) creator of the message sent; the second consequence as to the social functions of education – concerns not only the mere reproduction of the social structures in the subject's structures, but also the simultaneous and continuous establishment of these social structures. In this way, the process of internalization/education participates itself in the "establishment" of society, the education process assuming not only the progressive acquisition of rules and knowledge, but also their interpretative models.

The social actors are considered capable of reflexivity and free to choose a behavior or another - being still required to undergo some structural or interactional constraints. This highlights the coherent, guided character of the action in which the social actors seem to pursue a goal, to choose the appropriate means to evaluate the results of their action. For a successful socialization (education) it is essential to recognize the concrete way in which adults expose children to a rigorous order in everyday life (as the relating to rules and values in the current activity must be understood as indispensable to decide on the spheres of action by correlating concrete situations and general rules - in opposition to understanding the rules and values as general, idealized programs used post-facto to justify activities determined by the contingencies of a lived scheme of action).

In this theoretical context, it is considered that the family has an educational function not only in relation to a collective reference system and its benefit, but also in relation to the individuals who make up this society and their benefit. Educators and educated are considered, equally, social actors capable of reflexivity, free to choose one behavior or another.

Conclusions

In terms of the contemporary society family system - that defines more clearly its limits in relation to the social environment, but at the same time it opens to a greater extent towards the environment, the family education can no longer be reduced to domestic processes within the family, but it requires intense ties with the exterior. Kohn⁵, in the "network" theory, situates the child in the centre of a network made up of institutions and individuals. The term "network" implies the existence of some complex and varied relations among the "instances" involved in the

⁵ Kohn, apud Stănciulescu, E., *The Sociology of Family Education*, 1st vol., Polirom Publishing House, Iași, 1997.

child's educational process. Thus, the major components of family education environment include: networks of kinship, school, social networks of parents and children; neighborhood networks, various cultural institutions and/or sports ones, parental counseling services, etc. According to this view, the educational strategies of contemporary families arise at the intersection of these "poles" that work as assemblies of external constraints, but also as a resource. Therefore, it can be concluded that, far from having restricted itself, the "family educational function has multiplied and diversified"⁶.

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CHILD ATTACHMENT IN DIVORCED FAMILIES AND IN FAMILIES WITH A POTENTIAL FOR CONFLICT

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Abstract: *The attachment theory is focused on the man's need to establish positive and intense emotional relationships with the others, in this way ensuring his own safety. During his entire lifetime, these relationships are influenced by the nature, force and meaning of the emotional relationships which he developed with his mother (or his caregivers) in his childhood years.*

J. Bowlby, the founder of the attachment theory, considered attachment as a primal relationship, a behavior learned throughout the species evolution, meant to secure and protect the human being from dangerous factors (the animal baby defends itself from predators).

According to J. Bowlby, attachment involves three fundamental features: it is primal, it has a role of physical, biological and psychic protection and it influences all experiences. The attachment theorists consider that the nature of the emotional bond between a human infant and his mother, starting from his very first year of life, has an impact on his own development, particularly on his psychic development and it ultimately ensures his mental health. The psychopathology of an individual, especially a child or an adolescent, originates from the dysfunctions of the emotional relationship between him and his mother or a reference person. Based on its early experiences, an infant develops an internalized mode of representation, a psychic matrix which will last for his entire life.

There have been identified and described several types of attachment (first the secure attachment, then the insecure-avoidant attachment, the insecure-ambivalent attachment and finally the disorganized-disoriented attachment), as well as the stages of attachment (pre-attachment, attachment-in-the-making, clear-cut attachment, goal-corrected partnership).

Our/my personal and professional experiences have consolidated our/my belief that the relationships between children and those parents who are sensitive and especially responsive to their children's needs ensure the psychic balance and at least the emotional wellness of the future adult.

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We/I started from the axiom that the attachment relationships are the fundamental context of a child's development and, later on, a factor of a child's attitudes toward himself/herself, the others, his/her personal experience or toward new situations.

During my work experience, I have paid a special attention to the emotional substratum of interpersonal, even of inter-cognitive relationships. I have approached the issues of empathy, communication skill and educational relationship, based, of course, on a short experience and vulnerable tools.

Keywords: *secure attachment, insecure attachment, disorganized families, families with a potential for conflict.*

Introduction

Attachment is that strong bond built between the infant and his parents in the first year of infant's life, which later on provides a pattern in the child's relationship with his peers.

The attachment theory provides a framework for understanding not only the emotional reactions in children, but also love relationships, solitude and pain in adults.

The attachment style of an adult derives from the mental pattern developed in his/her childhood years (an adult with a secure attachment will not fear that he/she may be abandoned in a certain situation or that someone gets too close to him/her, while an adult with an avoidant attachment feels uncomfortable when he/she gets closer to other people, he/she does not like to depend on others and he/she does not usually build durable relationships; an adult with an ambivalent attachment wants a total fusion with his/her partner but, at the same time, he/she feels insecure).

Pressures and needs appear not only in childhood, but also in adolescent and adult life. The individual, in his attempt to adapt himself to such pressures and needs, develops different types of intimate relationships. The relationships built in different stages of our life have their roots in our early life and serve as pattern for our future interactions.

According to Freud's theory (1949), the infant's first intimate behavior is toward his mother during the act of breast-feeding. In our opinion, the infant held at his mother's breast, in her arms, receives not only material food, but also affection, he becomes tension-relieved, he gets safety and emotional comfort, that soothing nourishment which relieves him from

tensions and stress, sometimes from pain. This kind of relationship becomes a pattern for the child's future relationships. That is why mothers are recommended to hold their babies even if they use nursing bottles to feed them.

The need for attachment, as basic necessity of the human being, is inborn, and survival is its purpose.

To conclude briefly, the attachment matrix is built within the primal form of relationship between an infant and his caregiver – the other primordial element, the mother.

The secure attachment relationship is felt by an infant as safety-giving, providing him an optimum level of stimulation, care and affection; the caregiver responds to his needs, carefully manipulates him, communicates and builds a safety-giving relationship with him.

Having these, a child feels safe in his/her environment and his/her explorations of the surrounding world are assertive.

If this relationship is missing or unsatisfactory, a child interiorizes a matrix of unsafe or disorganized attachment (anxious-resistant attachment) and he/she is not sure that these needs will be satisfied. Due to this insecurity the child has a separation anxiety, his/her explorations are timid and he/she tends to cling to the adult. This attachment pattern is caused by a parent who is not always available to satisfy a child's primary needs, as well as by the many separations from the child and even by a threat of separation.

Another form of insecure attachment is the anxious-avoidant attachment where a child gets no affection from his/her mother, his/her primary needs are not satisfied and he/she knows for sure that he/she will be rejected, therefore in his/her adult life he/she will be perceived as a cold, distant person who does not involve in any relationships, but he/she would avoid to do so just because he/she is afraid of being rejected like he/she was before, in his/her childhood years.

By means of these patterns, infants in their first year of life form an image of themselves and of the others.

Moreover, the pattern established in the first years of life will persist and mark each relationship which the child will have in the future, according to the way this pattern has been interiorized.

The role of the mother-child bond is important for determining the pattern whereby the infant learns to perceive his relationships with the others, with the outside world (an infant who is separated from his mother for a long period of time or misses any attachment figure may be affected

by anaclitic depression – that early abandonment, in the first month of life. A lot of physical and mental blockages appear as a result of this depression).

When such separation between mother and infant occurs at a very early age of the latter, when their bond is still fusional, the infant perceives it as an act of abandonment, because he is not able to imagine his mother's return and has intense feelings of insecurity and anxiety which affect him.

Therefore, it would be far better to avoid a separation of the child from his/her mother, at least in the first year of his/her life, because it may cause traumas which are not easy to ignore, whose impact can be felt later on, and will be perpetual in his/her life scenario.

Here I can give an example from my own experience: at the Neonatology Department of "Mama si Copilul" (Mother and Child) Hospital in Bucharest, I could notice the neuropsychic stagnation of the abandoned newborns, between 3 and 12 months old, who by the age of 11-12 months could not sit up, they were just lying, languidly staring at a corner of the room. It is certain that those infants received no neurosensory stimulation, probably due to the caregivers' lack of training, but also due to the absence of the other primordial element, their mother.

Family - the primary context of human development

The family is the first sanogene environment of an infant, where he makes the first small, timid and hard steps in his development, which essentially must satisfy these needs – the parental support which involves both the material and the cognitive and affective support. All these three elements are very important. They are interdependent and inter-related, none of them can miss or be less important, but the lack of affective support may be considered a form of psychic abuse with negative consequences on a child's personality.

Thus, the atmosphere in disorganized families, the lack of parental authority, control and affectivity after a divorce lead to social inadaptation and inevitably to the formation of a dysfunctional attachment style.

Furthermore, the families with a high potential for conflict and strong psychoaffective and psychomoral disorders largely influence the process of psychological and psychosocial maturation.

The valuing or devaluing parenting model, the transmission by the parents of some identification values and also the parents' image will contribute to the shaping of a child's personality.

A child's behavior is always achieved through identification and interiorization with self and the others. Thus, the human ego is shaped in a triangle constellation of factors: love, authority and family safety. Any affective deficiency and any abuse of authority will cause behavioral disorders due to the parents' denial of their tasks, even by identification of parents with pathogenic parents.

The family becomes a real school of feelings, based on maternal affectivity and paternal authority.

Therefore, if childhood years are spent in a family climate saturated with hardships and hostilities, with conditions that deprive the infant of affection and of the adequate satisfaction of his natural desires and aspirations, he ends up in experiencing the so-called conflict of adjustment, expressed through an attitude of protest against any resistance, opposition or interdiction.

Thus, the family matrix becomes the basis for personality building and any abdication of this role may turn children to "orphans".

Divorce has negative consequences for the whole family, whether adults or children. Specialized studies have shown that the effects of divorce upon adults are similar to its impact upon children: threatened affective safety, mourning for loss, feelings of frustration, guilt, anger, low self-esteem (Berman, 1988) in the case of adults; poor performance at school, behavioral problems, even bad behavior, difficulties in adaptation in the case of children (Booth, Clarke, Stewart, Mc Cartney, Owen and Vandell, 2000).

However, society has evolved in recent times, lots of family breakdowns have taken place; in other words, the stigma of divorce no longer leaves a very strong mark upon children's emotional development. Factors like material situation, mother's status, social relationships and especially mother's affective involvement and good skills lead to the formation of a secure attachment in the child resulted from the broken family. We believe that these factors are much more important than the structure and breakdown of the family.

On the other hand, a violent environment, the quarrels and settlement of scores between parents while their children witness, have a much bigger impact than the parents' separation.

An infant learns through imitation, he observes the actions around him and then practices himself, believing that this is how it should be. Thus, after witnessing the fights between his parents, he would imitate this behavior with his peers, believing that this is the normal way, while

later on he will interiorize this behavior which will be manifested in his intimate relationships.

After his/her parents' separation, the child remains with an attachment figure. However, if the parents focus on their own emotional problems, their attention towards their child becomes reduced and in this case the child may develop an insecure attachment style towards both parents, feeling unsafe and abandoned, neglected not only by one parental figure, but by both of them.

Certainly, a divorce has very many negative psychic effects, anger against one or both parents, insecurity, sadness, even depressions, but many children learn, maybe with their parents' help or through psychotherapy, to accept their past, while the parents learn to make a place for their future, to cut their own way.

Assumption

We believe that it is much better for a child to feel safe near one parent only, to feel beloved and develop a secure attachment than to feel abandoned in his parents' conflicts.

In order to prove the worthiness of this idea, we have analyzed the behaviors of some children coming from divorced families and of some others who come from families with a potential for conflict.

Participants

There were 30 children of preschool age, between 4 and 6 years old, from Kindergarten no. 209 in Bucharest and Kindergarten no. 8 in Buzau, who participated in this study. The samples we created included a group of 15 children coming from divorced families and another group of 15 children from families with a potential for conflict.

Approach techniques and methods

A child's universe may be known through expressive and creative techniques including the following: projective techniques based on drawing (free drawing, thematic drawing), modeling, sticking, mimic and pantomimic exercise, musical improvisation, expressing through the moving body and dance, ludotherapy, drama therapy, artistic metaphor, therapeutic metaphor, work based on fairy tales, story-telling.

Both drawings and games are considered to be children's most relevant ways of expression, offering us essential information about the intelligence of those who benefit from these expressive techniques,

especially their affectivity, anxiety, needs, frustrations, attitudes, spite, encouraging projection.

The problems which are hidden, unknown, repressed or buried in the depth of mind are expressed, through a symbolic form, in the art work of the subject and therefore projected in its elements.

The unconscious conflicts remained unsettled, the blockages, while the repressed sufferings come out through these techniques.

Projection is an ego defense mechanism which consists in unconsciously ascribing own impulses, ideas, intentions and inner conflicts to some other people, most often in perceiving all these in the outside world.

The projective technique is the technique of studying personality based on the concept of projection; it is the favorite method of investigation with children.

The projective drawing technique is not difficult for children because their language remains behind their cognitive development and they can very easily communicate through drawing, expressing their inner life.

Drawing is not only a way of expressing feelings, an environment for exploring relationships, a means for describing experiences and confessing wishes, but also for self accomplishment.

For that purpose, we applied the projective tests, the family drawing and the CAT - Children perception test, as well as the free drawing.

The CAT helped us to identify the children's relationships with the important figures in their environment, their attitudes towards parental figures and their relationships with the same, the possible identifications with the parents and the potential conflicts with them. We identified some of the situations experienced by them, their conscious or latent conflicts.

The family drawing provides us information about the child's emotional problems, about his/her difficulties in establishing relationships with other people, his/her family and school and with the children of the same age.

The free or thematic drawing provides us valuable information about the child's personality, about his/her emotional problems, about the traumas he suffered from, about his adaptation to his/her living environment. Drawing has a relaxing effect, affective experiences and feelings being easily expressed; the fluidity of movements and the colors chosen by the children provide us information about their affective life.

Outcomes

Based on the psychodiagnosis, as well as on the information provided by the teachers and psychologists working in the two kindergartens, we identified the following problems related to the children who participated in our study:

The children have often verbal communication blockages, they refuse to directly express their inner feelings or they are not conscious of such feelings. Such refusal is not always caused by the negativism of a child; he/she has learned, from his own experiences, how to defend him/herself or to oppose when something is too difficult or too dangerous for him/her.

Emotional problems: anxiety, feelings of guilt, fear of being abandoned, isolation, mania – for one parent or even both parents, fear of death; emotional disorders: self distrust, even depression; behavioral problems: aggressiveness – identification with the violent family member or passive behavior towards others' attacks, sleep-related problems – lack of sleep caused by the fear that the parent would no longer come to take him/her from the kindergarten or that he/she would wake up in the middle of his/her parents' fights, sometimes even enuresis; school problems - distrust, self elimination, sudden changes of their performance in school, attention deficit, sometimes fatigue – the child gets asleep during school activities.

Conclusions

These problems were identified at children from divorced families and to children from families conflictogene. Their distribution is different.

All children have multiple problems. But they affect a larger number of children living in families conflictogene. Our hypothesis proves correct so be. Children exhibit more psychological problems in a violent environment and potentially conflictogen than after family rupture.

Children have more psychic disorders in a violent environment, with a potential for conflict, than they have after the family breakdown. They show more features which are specific to insecure attachment (their needs for safety, order and love are deeply neglected) than the children who come from broken families.

The parents can no longer exercise their parent functions or play their parent role, being guided by the conflicts between them. Thus, the children are neglected, left somewhere in their solitude accompanied by their parents' yelling.

Limits and implications in practice

The difficulties of adaptation, whether social, psychic or family-related, are blockages in the development of an individual. The settlement or overcoming of these adaptation difficulties may be achieved through counseling and psychotherapy not only of the child, but also of his/her family.

In order to settle these problems, we intend to start a psycho-behavioral optimization program aiming at developing and optimizing the psycho-behavior of children coming from divorced families and from families with a potential for conflict, through expressive and creative group techniques.

We aim to carry out this program during the school year 2014-2015.

Action channels: - increase personal assertiveness and expressiveness; optimize the self-knowledge capacity, the capacity of establishing relationships and the communication capacity; activate the creative resources; reduce anxiety, eliminate inhibitions, relieve tensions and re-energize the body; improve adaptation to the family and to the children of the same age; improve self-esteem.

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