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## SOCIAL CAPITAL AND THE ADDED SOCIAL VALUE THE ROLE OF WEAK LINKAGES IN THE PRODUCTION OF ADDED SOCIAL VALUE

**Alina Ionela BADESCU,**  
PhD<sup>1</sup>, Postdoctoral Fellow, The Romanian Academy

**Abstract:** *This study examines the multiplying mechanisms of social capital and, consequently, the effect of adding value, leading us towards considering the special type of capital that we called, by analogy, the added social value. The social capital as opposed to economic capital is growing and contracting and its multiplying effects based on specific mechanisms are not sufficiently reviewed in the economic theory. A new research direction has to be addressed within what we ought to call the moral eco-economy (related to the field of moral economy<sup>2</sup>) in order to facilitate the research of such multiplying mechanisms. We have revisited the opinions focused on the typology of capitals, noting the functions related to the bridging-type social relations within the process of generating added social value (proper to the type of social capital). Thus, we have examined this bridging-type function proper to weak ties, adding to the function of enhancing "cognitive flexibility". We are confronted with a low flexibility of thinking and, consequently, an altering of "cognitive flexibility" where such weak linkages do not exist. Growing "social intelligence" (i.e. the capability of using social capital and, consequently, the diversity of social linkages) defines the added social value. The dynamic of social intelligence decisively depends on the variation of rather weak social linkages than the strong ones. The*

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<sup>2</sup> The concept of a **moral economy** was first elaborated by English historian E.P. Thompson, (actually the term "moral economy" - моральная экономика - was first coined by the Russian economist Alexander Chayanov in 1920s, see Oeuvres Choisies de A.V. Cajanov, S. R. Publishers Limited Johnson Reprint Corporation Mouton & Co, 1967) and was developed further in anthropological studies of other peasant economies". See [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moral\\_economy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moral_economy). See, also, Thompson cf. Thompson, Edward P. (1991). *Customs in Common*. New York: New Press. „ The concept was widely popularized in anthropology through the book, "The Moral Economy of the Peasant: Rebellion and subsistence in Southeast Asia" by James C. Scott (1976" ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moral\\_economy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moral_economy)). See, also, Scott cf. Scott, James C. (1976). *The Moral Economy of the Peasant: Rebellion and subsistence in Southeast Asia*. Princeton: Princeton University Press

*performance and the competitive value of firms and organizations of any kind depend rather on their capability of using weak linkages within a given social space (as in the case of EU's) than on their capability of exploiting strong linkages. This is the main conclusion of our study.*

**Key words:** *moral eco-economy, types of capital, civilizational economy, bridging-type of social capital, bonding-type of social capital, semantic efficacy, positioning and spacing, ego-polis, relational well-being, weak-structured environments, strong-structured environments, added social value*

### ***Eco-economy of capitals. Types of capital***

We shall examine the issue of the types of capital in the light of the new contributions within what we may call the *moral eco-economy* in order to fortify the theoretical and methodological considerations induced by the intersection between the organizational ecology and the perspective of eco-economy. Generally, in business arise polarities whereon scientists should harmonize them. The classic example (given by Thompson) of such kind of opposites is when the English peasants campaigned for the *fair price* of a product while the new capitalist business representatives founded their entire management thinking on the grounds of so-called "free market price". "These peasants held that a traditional "fair price" was more important to the community than a "free" market price and they punished large farmers who sold their surpluses at higher prices outside the village while there were still those in need within the village" (according to informations from [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moral\\_economy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moral_economy). See, also, Thompson, 1991: 341). All the "drama" in economics derives from such a confrontation and difficulty of harmonizing opposites, making conjunctions based on disjunctions (in terms of opposites).

In our case, we opted for the syntagm of moral eco-economy to draw attention to the fact that within the "moral" relation of economic ecosystem there are three actors involved: firm (producer), labor (consumer) and the environment (nature) and all of these three concepts should be vindicated, i.e. harmonized two by two and all of them within their triadic unit. The perspective of moral eco-economy is illustrated not only by classical studies like Max Weber's, but, also, by more recent contributions like Tomas Sedlacek's in one of his famous work called "Economics of Good and Evil: *The Quest for Economic Meaning from Gilgamesh to Wall Street*", the subtitle (in italic – AN) being more than eloquent for the new approach.

Therefore, there is an *economy of the meaning* because the economic meaning is just the nucleus of economic act, admitting along Max Weber that in any action we identify a meaningful targeted by the actor who runs that action. Otherwise, there is no action without a certain meaning determined in and through the motivation and through the purpose of that action. Through an actor's motivation and purpose his manifestation

becomes meaningful. The intelligible action and all of his manifested actions become comprehensible through that meaning. The act is, therefore, a simple development of the meaning addressed by the actor within his action, suggesting, actually, that the elements of the act are being packed in a certain meaning based on “criteria of semantic efficacy” (I. Badescu, I.C. Badescu). Such criteria are not exclusively based on economic factor and, hence, are not conferring only “economic meaning”: there are purposes and, thus, realistic meanings and, consequently, they are feasible and there are unrealistic purposes and meanings and consequently they become unfeasible. What gives feasibility to the purposes do not derive strictly from their relationship with the means used for their achievement but, also, from the capacity of the actor to integrate different purposes and, thus, different meanings within the same intelligible and persistent semantic unity in time and space. Such operation depends, evidently, on the actor’s capacity to operate with at least three types of capital: economic, social and cultural (spiritual or symbolic) ones.

Calculation of profitability is operated through the weighing of the purposes and of the meanings targeted by social actors within their actions, as well as through the weighing of the goals determined by firms within their actions (i.e. on the market). The measuring unit is just the ideal type of unity or harmonizing diversity of purposes and/or motivations of an individual or collective actor within their specific (daily) manifestations. One worker, for instance, is, also, a member of the firm (corporation) and the purposes of the firm are, also, the purposes of the activities within the firm but, the worker is, in the same time, a member of a family having distinctive motivations and aims. He will have to harmonize such actions in order to get the maximum benefit out of his actions. We are approaching the theory of the types of capital within such a new perspective. Our hypothesis is that the typology of capitals is a logical construct because, in reality, each particular type of capital, from the type of economic capital to the symbolic-cultural capital involve all of the other types of capital pertaining to some mainly criteria. For instance, the social as well as symbolic or cultural capital are involved within the economic capital, and exactly such a mixture of economic capital with the symbolic-cultural capital led towards a new direction, i.e. that of a cultural economics. If we take into account what the Centre of Resilience from Stockholm has called “planetary boundary”, for instance, we understand that such a type of limitation (they called planetary boundary) is, also, involved in the expansion (growth) of economic and all of the other types of capitals. Such concept involves the idea of the critical boundary that shouldn’t be crossed unless causing disastrous consequences. We will invoke the economic theory of the critical boundaries in a forthcoming study.

We may say that the man and the nature should respect what God infused in the virtuality of the things at the Genesis. In humans are seeded inexhaustible gifts. Some child, for instance, may evince skills that none of his genealogical forefathers could confirm them. Galton tried to measure the genius of peoples, starting from the gifted families from every epoch within

various peoples. We denote such type of capital as being a gifted one because, as we may see, it does not come from the nature nor is it culturally induced but, rather, in a gifted way as the potential sum of gifts (talents, exceptional capabilities etc.). The moral economy invokes intangible assets. A certain branch of moral economy evidenced such kind of assets mediated by the theory of “quasi-rent”. We realize that the economies significantly owe to this type of capital. Max Weber considered such kind of capital as being the decisive factor of the genesis of the new type of historic capitalism called “modern capitalism”, finding its filiation not in the material factor but in the Christian ethic. Weber’s book is, as is well known, titled “protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism”.

Therefore, the spirit of modern capitalism sprang from the Christian ethic of Nordic capitalists, becoming the decisive nucleus of modern civilization itself. Let us review the species of capital, underlining the fact that such a typology has a theoretical significance as these species are intertwined within proportions that the economic science tries to measure them. The economics is continuously renovating, for such reason, its paradigms through “epistemological ruptures” that are, actually, new approaches comparative with the initial evolutions of disciplinary paradigm. This is one of the facets of the expansion process of economic discourse beyond the classical epistemological boundaries of this science, leading towards the emergence of a new renovated economic science, i.e. of the *new economy*. Our endeavors refers only to one of the ramifications of the new economy, called by a sociologist as *nooeconomy*, ourselves opting for the name of “moral eco-economy” mediated by another syntagm, i.e. of “civilizational or cultural economy”. We are not particularly invoking that our approach is the civilization itself when referring to the civilizational economy. We rather suggest that the economy can be addressed not only as a mode of production and of consumption but, also, as a cultural pattern of productive existence as well as of consumption. The economy is, consequently, a synthesis of economic, social, cultural-symbolic capital, and the economic discourse should take account of this fact. Exemplifying this idea arises, for example, from the simple fact that any firm is also a spatial determinant (given by its capability to integrate various actors, different firms, remote locations etc.) and a positioning determinant (firm’s positioning in the hierarchy of other firms in the market). That is defining for what we call social capital of the company. At the same time, we deduce that every company must unify opposites, polar coordinates (values), such as the value or parameter of positioning and of spacing (a firm is, simultaneously, the expression of a certain positioning as well as of an area, meaning that such representation is mediated by the logic of the included middle not of the excluded middle). We shall identify the mechanisms involved in producing added social value, i.e. that incremental determinant added to social capital available to an individual, a firm, a community, nation or group of nations (an alliance, for instance). Therefore, there is not only added economic value (commonly called surplus value) but, also, the added social value, i.e. about

social surplus or value that increases social capital of an individual or firm or even nation. While the economists measure the economic added value, the added social value was not typically measured and, consequently, the mechanisms of increasing social value were not even evaluated. We will address such mechanisms within our study for laying the theoretical and methodological foundation of measuring added social value (particularly, the added social value generated within the networks from virtual spaces).

### ***Theory of social capital. Ego-polis or about “collective persons”***

We shall review the conceptual definition of social capital as well as the discussions around the species of capital before further examination of mechanisms of producing added social value. The social capital is a phenomenon of positioning (i.e. punctual) as well as of a spatial type (i.e. extension or area). It concomitantly induces a position (point) and space (area) as previously mentioned. The social capital is a concept used by Putnam but, also, launched within the group of sociologists around Pierre Bourdieu (on the origin of the concept see also "The Downside of Social Capital," by Alejandro Portes and Patricia Landolt in <http://www.prospect.org/cs/articles?articleId=4943>) who evaluated the social space as one modelled by different forms of capital, the linguistics and social capital, among them, forming one of the axis of this space. In the view of Bourdieu, the social capital is some benefit to others and accessing social space represent something that measures just such a difference in positioning (“the advantage achieved over others”<sup>1</sup>) and in social coverage (the amount of social relations available). In the light of the theory of social capital, individual or collective advantage depends on the positioning field. Someone’s ability (individual or corporate) to influence something depends on the access to a network of strong and extensive social connections. We are facing the redefinition of social capital through the lens of Granovetter's theory of weak linkages versus strong linkages. We invoke Granovetter's concepts in slightly different meanings.

The weak linkages are those induced by belonging to social networks with not only shortage of economic capital but, also, a shortage of social capital. Thus, the social capital depends on the connection of individual and collectivity (nation, state) to a network with certain social linkages (weak or strong). The countries from the Eastern part of the E.U. are integrated in the Union but they belong to a subspace with weak linkages, reducing their

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.prospect.org/cs/articles?articleId=4943> (retrieved on 12.04.2014), "The Downside of Social Capital," by Alejandro Portes and Patricia Landolt (As an individual resource, social capital is roughly analogous to other individual assets. For Coleman, it differs from the financial capital found in bank accounts and the human capital inside people's heads; instead, social capital inheres in interpersonal relations. This analogy should not be carried too far, however, because social capital has certain characteristics, such as the expectation of reciprocity, that distinguish it from the capital that appears on balance sheets. ...). See also: *The Lost City*, by Alan Ehrenhalt

capability to influence the attitudes and decisions of those involved in networks with strong linkages. There is a decrease in the social capital in the Eastern part of the E.U. The social capital as a stock of available relations is unevenly distributed in the European space, inducing cascading social effects that European policies do not even guess it (the peripheral welfare regimes become part of such policies) (acc.to I. C. Bădescu, *Towards a meta-perspective on welfare regimes in the Central and Eastern E.U. states*, manuscript). In the interwar period, there was an attempt to correct such disparities of the social capital through the process of Balkan and Central European alliances. Belonging to “political families” in the Eastern and the Western part of Europe (European socialists, European Christian Democrats or the European Liberal Alliance) is another technique used by political elites from the Eastern Europe. Such a technique redefines Granovetter’s concept of strong linkages and the new meaning is one of friendship and kinship.

I have thoroughly examined the theory of weak linkages. “The theory of Granovetter regarding the power of social linkages starts from the distinction between weak linkages and strong linkages. We have strong linkages with friends, but weak linkages emerge within relations with acquaintances. We build, in time, persistent linkages with someone while less frequent relations are developed with others. Therefore, we have a densely knit clump of social structure, while keeping low-density network with others. The decisive importance of these linkages for the knit clump of the whole, i.e. of the social network in its entirety is the truly notably part of the theory of weak linkages” (A.I. Bădescu, *Competitivitatea și supraviețuirea organizațiilor* , op..cit: 79).

### ***Bonding capital and bridging capital***

Granovetter’s theoretical area of applications contributed towards the emergence of the theory of social capital. We are led to a distinction between *bridging-linkages*, concept belonging to Granovetter, and *bonding-linkages*. The distinction is however quite ambivalent because, as Granovetter noticed, the types of bridging-linkages serve as a unifying function where the bonding-linkages are no longer effective. In the diplomatic practice induced by the crisis in Ukraine, the relation with Poland significantly mattered and not only the relations with Germany and Russia, Poland being one of the states, belonging to a field of weak bridging-linkages. Therefore, the distinction between the bonding capital that, allegedly, has a unifying effect and bridging capital (mediating the link between subfields emerged within bonding-linkages) should be used with caution and strictly contextual. One such political actor (a state, a nation) plays a bridging-type role only in certain contexts (beyond this context, its function stops). Therefore, virtually, any social actor has a bonding capital as well as a bridging capital. We should not interpret, in a substantialist manner, concepts of bonding capital and bridging capital. In 70-80s, the social capital of the Romanian state was

a strong-linkage type of capital recognized as such by large political actors such as the U.S., China etc. Today, this capital is much lower even if bridging function of the Romanian state has not changed. Nowadays, the role of Romania, however, is under the position given by its virtuality. The Romanian ego-polis has its virtual advantage that the political actor seems to under-utilize it.

Secondly, we should not reduce the utilization of bonding capital to small and closed communities that are, often, overlapping biological kinship as this type of capital is updated between states as well (*Ego-polises*). The bonding capital can be found in political clubs, in well-established and closed "political families". Social capital is rather a capital of relationship and not a substantialist capital (is rather a relational parameter than a substantial one). Such kind of capital helps us to define and measure the relation between an Ego (individual, social, political, economic, and organizational, in essence) with various relational fields within a given space and within a certain era. The social capital of political Romania (ego-polis) of the 70s was, undoubtedly, superior to the one mediated, today, by the political class and the Romanian state. The accession of political Romania to the networks of strong relations reached very high thresholds. The E.U. and NATO membership of Romania is not strengthening its social capital. The relation is, somehow, reversed. The social capital is the one that contribute to its membership within the grouping of a certain political actors. The social capital measures the capability of an ego polis to induce consensualisation of different interests in relation with its own interests. The consensualisation is possible where some common norms exist (the case of E.U.) but, it is not updated and updateable mechanically. Here comes the function of the concept of social capital as it helps us to measure the effective capability of a state (an ego-polis) to produce consensualisations in their interests. This capability depends on trust and commitment. "A group whose members are trustworthy and trust each other will be able to achieve something more than a group in which these elements are missing" (Coleman apud Putnam, 2001, p. 188). It should be noted Putnam's remark that 'social networks allow trust to become transitive and spread: I trust you, because I trust her and she assures me that she trusts you' (Putnam, 1993: 169).

### ***The logic of value is the logic of included middle (tertium)***

Finally, unlike economic capital, the social capital is divided (distributed) without diminishing it. An economic capital (money, for example) once used and divided (distributed) shall diminish while sharing the social capital, conversely, lead to its increase, following a well-known precept: "Give you'll gain".

Friendship, for instance, increases through sharing just like love, altruism, generosity etc. Relational wealth grows through sharing and hence such type of relational wealth spread not through concentration and egocentrism as if economic wealth.

Social capital takes the shape of an open structure while the economic capital, on the contrary, takes the shape of a closed structure (illustrated by its most representative form: money box, bank deposit etc.). Though, there are various ways of using and, consequently, of updating (using) the social capital so that it can even be used contrary to its intrinsic logic (as suggested by the theory of strong linkages).

The postmodern organizational space evolves in a progressive manner towards the model of weakening structured spaces as suggested in my recent studies.

"Curiosity is that the evolution towards modern type organizations brings in a mutation of the quality of the organizational environments that are becoming less structured even if the organizations are becoming more structured. The links between individuals and between organizations are weak linkages in most of the common situations, organizational and social environment in general is predominantly composed of weak linkages, although intra-organizational linkages are more structured. Mark Granovetter, American sociologist trained as Michael Hannan, Glenn Carroll and William Barrett at Stanford University, originator of many theorists in the modern sociology, argued that the division of labor in society is one of the sources of weak linkages given that increased specialization as well as interdependence lead to a wide variety of role-based specialized relations" (A.I. Bădescu, 78) within which someone knows only a small segment of the personality of the other (Granovetter, 1973).

### ***The logic of capital formation: some conclusions***

On the other side, we shall notice a very important issue for the understanding of another concept and that is the notion of organizational capital widely used in my studies of organizational eco-economy. A significant organizational capital for the strong ties underpinning the organizing of state emerges along with a Union of Ego-polises. The access and, thus, the power to make use of such capital are not equally distributed among members of a space of belonging. There are states with strong ties as well as states with weak ties in the E.U. We shall revisit here an excerpt including a synthesis of my previous conclusions that were, also, presented in my paper cited above (A.I. Bădescu, 80-81). The curiosity rests on noticing that weak ties are those bringing in advantages to the individual person or to the isolated organization.

*„It follows, then, that individuals with few weak ties will be deprived of information from distant parts of the social system and will be confined to the provincial news and views of their close friends.<sup>1</sup>*

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<sup>1</sup> Ibidem; Here comes the entire citation: *“It follows, then, that individuals with few weak ties will be deprived of information from distant parts of the social system and will be confined to the provincial news and views of their close friends.\_This deprivation will not only insulate them from the latest ideas and fashions but may put them in a disadvantaged position in the labor market, where advancement can depend, as I have documented elsewhere (1974), on*

Rose Coser (1975: 242) stresses that individuals 'well caught in a *Gemeinschaft* are at risk of never becoming aware that their lives depend on what happens inside the group, but on some forces located far beyond their perception and thus beyond their control. *Gemeinschaft* may prevent individuals to articulate their roles in relation to the complexities surrounding the world. It is possible to hold on a distinct weakness within the strong ties (Granovetter, 1973: 203-204). Coser (1975: 254-256) rethinks the terms of *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* through Basil Bernstein's distinction between the "restrictive codes and the more developed codes of communication. Restrictive codes are simpler; many meanings are implicit and considered as being obvious where their speakers are familiar one to each other. The more developed codes are complex, needing a more universal reflection for someone to organize communication ... "<sup>1</sup>.

There are weak ties that behold predominantly the function of a bridge between groups and organizations that operate within strong ties. Links in the virtual space are also such weak ties, having a function of a bridge between different web-communities, i.e. networks between various sites, within which strong-tied virtual communities emerge.

Therefore, we are witnessing some weak ties having this bridge-type macro-structural effect that, additionally, led to the emergence of some "complex role-sets" as well as to the need of "cognitive flexibility". The curiosity rests upon the fact that we are confronted with a diminished flexibility of thought where such weak linkages are not being developed.

*„In American society there is thus some reason for suggesting that upper-class individuals as well as lower-class people may suffer a lack of cognitive flexibility. (...) in the form of arrogance and a sense of infallibility and had much to do with American involvement in the Vietnam War”* (traits found at many Americans, as Granovetter has noticed, 1973:205).

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*knowing about appropriate job openings at just the right time. Furthermore, such individuals may be difficult to organize or integrate into political movements of any kind, since membership in movements or goal-oriented organizations typically results from being recruited by friends. While members of one or two cliques may be efficiently recruited, the problem is that, without weak ties, any momentum generated in this way does not spread beyond the clique. As a result, most of the population will be untouched. The macroscopic side of this communications argument is that social systems lacking in weak ties will be fragmented and incoherent. New ideas will spread slowly, scientific endeavors will be handicapped, and subgroups separated by race, ethnicity, geography, or other characteristics will have difficulty reaching a modus vivendi.”*(Granovetter, 1973, p. 202)

<sup>1</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 204; Coser apud Granovetter: "Coser then elaborates the cognitive ramifications of this conundrum: "In a *Gemeinschaft* everyone knows fairly well why people behave in a certain way. . . . If this reasoning is correct . . . the manner of communication will tend to be different in a *Gesellschaft*. Hence, the type of speech people use should differ in these two types of structures" (p. 254). She relates this difference to Basil Bernstein's distinction between restricted and elaborated codes of communication. Restricted codes are simpler: more meanings are implicit and taken for granted as the speakers are so familiar with one another. Elaborated codes are complex and universal-more reflection is needed in organizing one's communication "when there is more difference between those to whom the speech is addressed" (p. 256).

Moreover, someone has to be integrated in weak-tied sub-fields in order to have access to information about jobs: „known people if compared with friends, are inclined to move in different circles from ours” (*Ibidem*, 205). The hypothesis of the effect of weak ties on the increased opportunities of information regarding the jobs is confirmed by the empirical study cited by Granovetter in his work regarding the weak ties: 27.8% from the subjects surveyed declared that they got information about the job through the mediating factor of weak-ties and only 16.7% through strong-ties (*Ibidem*, 205).

One of our first conclusions is that the weak-ties provide a relative advantage within certain circumstances. There are only the weak-linkages, playing a bridging function, that have a special value to the individual or the organization. Additionally, the weak ties are rather proper to the bridging function than the strong ties. We may denote that the most important mechanisms of business spaces' extension are the weak ties, i.e. *the links*. The analysis of such links will be given in a special paper dedicated to the theory of the co-extension of business spaces. We will conclude, so far, that the valuing of the individual or the organization is the effect of weak linkage, i.e. the weak ties have an essential role in producing the social added value, and, consequently, the increasing of social capital. Such concluding remarks would compel the strategists to re-consider the significance of small sized firms' strategies or the strategies of companies from the periphery of the system. The politicians would be compelled, as well to re-define the importance of small sized states within the unions of states as the E. U. The performance and the competitive value of firms and organizations of any kind depend radically on their capability of using the weak ties within a given social space (for instance, the space of E. U.) and not on their capability of using strong linkages. This is the main conclusion of our study.

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## THE POWER OF SPIRITUAL MANIFESTATION. SIMMEL'S THEORY OF CONFLICT APPLIED TO JUDAISM

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**Abstract:** *The study analyses the way in which the spiritual manifestation - the Judaism - forms in a very profound way the identity of a community. In this view we discover those key elements that become essential in the sociological understanding of a very troubled history, and we can reach this objective using the conflict theory of Georg Simmel. For this sociology of Judaism through what we can call creative conflict (with positive outcomes) we use the impressive studies of Max Weber and Antonin Causse concerning the ancient Judaism. The research of Judaism by the founding fathers of sociology permits us to read this unique people, contributing also to a right framing to understand present social realities, but also to the discovery of those decisive points that forms the immutable character of Jewish identity.*

**Key words:** *spiritual manifestation; conflict theory; Judaism; identity.*

### Standing on the classics – theoretical framing

#### *Social change*

In this endeavor to research the effects of religious beliefs in a community or a society, we start from the premise that an idea or a ideal factor (values or that axiological dimension as defined by Sperantia) can have repercussions over a long period of time, contributing in a very special way to the formation and individualization of the identity of a community. And this we can say underlying that the religious dimension represents a total reality, one which has the power to explain everything and one that gives meaning to the existence itself. It is important to mention from the beginning that the social changes that are based on the religious ideas and beliefs are profound and can legitimate the existing social order, the image of the individual and of the community in relation to the other or to the different communities. This type of ideas and religious beliefs can determine one of the most powerful forces that can trigger important social changes.

Social change is an inherent phenomenon in society, and it can be sudden (the case of political revolutions) or continuous, developed on long period of time, taking the form of social process. That is why we can say that the "social history is given its shape by such cumulative social changes" (Calhoun, 2000: 2643). According to this author, sociologists have three ways of analyzing these cumulative social changes: through the philosophy of history about the major changes from feudalism to modernity, from

monarchy to democracy, from traditionalism to modernism. Here Calhoun mentions three perspectives established by P. Sztompka concerning the changes that marked the history of sociology: cycle changes (A. Toynbee, O. Spengler, T. Pareto), changes based on evolution and historical materialism, those two having in the background the idea of progress, of a change that can improve social realities (A. Comte, H. Spencer, E. Durkheim, K. Marx); either favoring a multicausal explanation of change, through the research of cultural dimension that have the power to explain those transformations, Max Weber being the representative of this approach.

Modern sociology, according to Raymond Boudon, does not accept anymore the idea that "there is a dominant cause of social change (...), recognizing the plurality of changes" (Boudon, 1989: 326). The french sociologist is questioning the phrase *theory of social change*, because he does not believe in the capacity of sociology to sustain a theory with such a high level of generality.

The forms took by the social change in different social context, the ways in which these changes occur are so diverse, complex and can have different consequences, which is why their research must not ignore the social, cultural context, the special conditions of every community or society analyzed by the changes that marked its destiny and identity. This is the way chosen in this study, starting from the power of Judaic ideas and religious beliefs in modeling the social realities and identities of Jewish communities, beginning with the phenomenon of conflict (as a trigger for social change) in key moments in the history of the Jews.

#### *The conflict for unity*

Conflict as well is inherent in the life of the individual or the social life, in its multiple forms, from interior or exterior causes. If in the functionalist perspective, which underlines the stability and the equilibrium of social systems the conflict is considered as an negative element for social life, in the '50, '60 the theory of conflict is updated, starting a sociology of conflict. We see now the positive effects of conflict in society, demonstrated by Lewis A. Coser, Ralph Dahrendorf, Randall Collins, but starting from Georg Simmel. These authors develop the theories of the founding fathers of sociology that analyzed the conflict in the social logic, like M. Weber, K. Marx, G. Simmel (Abercomie, 2006). K. Marx saw the class conflict the source of social change, M. Weber analyzed the conflict in a multidimensional approach (Collins, 2000).

Georg Simmel and his sociology has a particular place in the intellectual medium in which he created his works. He does not approve the influence of the nature sciences or the spirit sciences over sociology, being a critic of the organicist theories and also of the idealist German school theories on society (Coser, 1971). Simmel contested the power of knowledge of these two main approaches, considering that the object of study for sociology must be the interactions and human relations, *sociation*, social types used by people in there interaction (Coser, 1971). This is the

formal sociology of Simmel, through which we can reach a real “geometry of social world” (Aron, 1965: 5). It will be important the typical social relations (cooperation or conflict, subordination or domination), categories through which the man mediates knowledge in social world, and these theories we see applied in his essays based on different categories: money, fashion, the stranger etc. Through the research of these typical schemes we have a sociological knowledge based on the social relations, Simmel disregarding the relevance of researching institutions or suprastructure, these being considered “monstrous realities created blindly by men as a result of the collective life itself” (*ibid.*, 8). That is the reason for which Simmel is interested by microsociology, where the relations and reciprocal interactions between people counts, there power to model the social reality (Coser, 1971). The German sociologist is seen in opposition to Emil Durkheim, the sociologist that investigates the institutional structures, the values that form and constrain the individual – a macrosociological vision of society.

Therefore important are the interactions and reciprocal relations, association, the conflict, because the individual is not under the full constrain of society, but not absolutely free in relation to society. The man is influenced by society and he influences the society. That is why the sociation “involves harmony and conflict, attraction and repulsion, love and hatred. He (Simmel – n.r.) saw human relations as characterized by ambivalence” (Coser, 1971: 184). With these principles Simmel analyzed dyadic and triad relations, relation of subordination and domination, conflictual or harmonious relations, starting from this ambivalence in his research, through the positive and negative elements inherent of every social realities.

Simmel starts from the point in which every interaction between people is a form of socialization, and conflict, since it’s resulting in a series of consequences, can have an important weight for sociology, having in mind that “it is one of the most intense reactions, and is logically impossible if restricted to a single element” (Simmel, *The sociology of conflict I*, 1903, p. 490). As we mentioned above, the German sociologist researched the interpersonal relations from a double perspective or through the ambivalence specific to the social realities, by the positive and also the negative consequences. “Conflict itself is the resolution of the tension between the contraries” (*id.*), and that is a way to regain the unity challenged or threatened as a result of the tension.

Simmel identified a few characteristics and effects of the phenomenon of conflict on the relations and human interaction (these will be identified in the internal and external conflict that Judaism faced):

- ❖ The dualist role of conflict – at a micro level conflict can have negative effects, but overall relations it can be positive. The example given here by Simmel is that of the Indian caste system, where there is not only a very clear separation, but also a “reciprocal repulsion” (*ibid.*, p. 492) that assures and guarantees to the social castes there specific position in relation to the others. These attitudes maintain very clear the frontiers between groups and consolidates there

- identity, the personality of that group. The opposition of two groups in an association is not essentially something negative, because in many ways this is the way that makes their coexistence possible, besides the clarification of their identity;
- ❖ The reaction against tyranny, injustice, betrayal, tend to intensify if these are supported without protest, in quiet. The opposition brings tranquility, relief the “gives us the feeling that we are not completely crushed in the relationship” (*ibid.*, 494). In the case in which the conflictual relation is superficial and the sentiments of opposition not fully developed, the conflict takes the form of aversion, repulsion, according to Simmel;
  - ❖ The conflict intensifies if the two parties have the same objective (here the example given is the one of science that searches the truth) – here any betrayal of the truth means a betrayal of reality, and that is why we have here powerful conflicts;
  - ❖ Those communities that share similar, common values are more likely to develop powerful conflicts; here Simmel gives the example of church relations, where the little misunderstandings about dogma can trigger irreconcilable fights. Explanation is that having so many in common, the little divergences become important, as in the family quarrels, one of the most powerful types of conflict. When we have a certain depth of relation, the conflict can be extremely powerful;
  - ❖ The lack of unity may lead to conflict – the hate of the apostates, the attitudes toward heretics – the severity is bigger when there was a connection – both sides defending its new identity and the differences in the context of reciprocal threat;
  - ❖ A corollary of this hypothesis is that the respect for the enemy does not exist where there was a community between the parties now in opposition, because it might be the peril of losing those differences, brought in foreground by the conflict and activated in conflict;
  - ❖ There is hostility based on association and unity – “the peculiar phenomenon of social hatred, that is, of hatred toward a member of a group, not from personal motives, but because he threatens the existence of the group” (*ibid.*, 519). The motive are intelligible from a sociologically point of view, because the enemy is a threat for the unity of the group. And when the other side has the same reasons the conflict becomes is intensifying. When the enemy distances himself from the group, he no longer is a peril to the group; he loses his quality of member. If he can not be removed, the results are hatred and conflict;
  - ❖ Groups confronted with persecution or groups which consolidated themselves in conflict “frequently rebuff approaches and tolerance from the other side, because otherwise the solidity of their opposition would disappear, and without this they could not further struggle” (Simmel, *The Sociology of Conflict*: II, 1903: 681). That is why, according to Simmel, the unity of the group desintegrates without the

enemies. Here the German sociologist gives the example of Protestantism, which in the lack of opposition, started to orient and search the conflict within itself, and this can explain the numerous protestant sects. Even the history of Catholicism fighting the heresy is a proof of power of unity in the face of an enemy, the fall of the Roman Empire been explain by the fact that all the enemies were defeated. That is why the complete victory of a group over its enemies is not always fortunate in the sociological sense, for the consequence may be a decline of the energy thaat guarantees the coherence of the group, and, on the other hand, proportional activity of the disintegrating forces that are always at work (*ibid.*, 681).

- ❖ Another important characteristic is the fact that the fight does not assure only the cohesion of the group, but it succeeds to bring together people or group that otherwise would not have been in a coalition. Here Simmel explain the religious relation, of the Christian God that unifies so different people.
- ❖ The conflict can be over in a serie of relations: victory, defeat (Simmel, *The Sociology of Conflict*: III, 1903). The compromise is reached through negotiation, “one of the most important inventions for the uses of civilization” (*ibid.*, 804).

These are the fundamental points of a sociology of conflict, rediscovered and reestablished in the '50, '60, with strong classic links, bringing a new understanding of the conflict in society, as we will see in the studies of Lewis Coser, Ralph Dahrendorf, Randall Collins etc.

Thus, starting from this important factor of social change – the conflict – we can understand the force and power of the specific characteristics of Jewish communities, formed in the interactions with other communities and religious beliefs, in the center of many fights (internal and external) in which the identity of this people is built and thanks to which we have its survival in exceptional historical conditions.

Lewis A. Coser is the sociologist that will research the characteristics, functions, types and consequences of conflict, reestablishing the sociology of conflict, based on the essays of Simmel, which he considered one of the most important of all. Coser starts from Simmel's premise according to which the conflict is a form of socialization, and this social phenomenon is seen “in terms of interactive processes” (Coser, 1956: 30).

Social conflict and the process of social change are closely related, aside the functions that conflictual situations have for the social systems. Regarding social change, it must be highlighted that “the distinction between changes *of* systems and changes *within* systems is, of course, a relative one” (Coser, 1957: 201), being much harder to establish if the changes produce a new system or a restructure of the existing one.

The modality in which the conflict determines either changes of social system, either their destruction or the formation of new system depends on “the rigidity and resistance to change, or inversely on the elasticity of the control mechanisms of the system” (*ibid.*, 202). That is the reason for which

the rigid systems suppress the conflictual manifestation, actually amplifying and causing through this inflexibility violent manifestation. As far as it goes the flexible systems, conflicts are tolerated, and that means a little possibility to produce deep cleavages in social structure. Conflict has a series of functions: it consolidates and revitalizes the social system; it might produce new norms and institutions; it is against ritualism and ossification of social relations; it contributes to the transformation of social systems, it generates cohesion in front of an external enemy; it determines a consensus between enemies regarding the conflict; helps relief social realities, keeping the health of the group; the intensity of conflict is stronger if there were repressed hostile feelings (the violence against the heretics); if the relations are closed, the conflict will be violent; the frequency of relation entails a high possibility of conflicts; the stability of the existence of the group is also assured by small conflicts, having in mind that the structure is profoundly threatened in the case of a big conflict that separates the group in two opposite sides (Coser, 1956).

If Simmel sees in conflict the possibility of consolidating the social systems, Coser wonders what it could weakened the social structure and could break the social relation. The answer is the necessity of analyzing two types of conflicts: the ones that regard the essential elements of the group and the ones that targets those not so important elements. Another key components that Simmel did not payed attention, according to Coser: the size of the group, the intensity of the involvement of the members, that should be correlated with the type of conflict: continuous or occasionally. Thus, the groups involved in external conflict tend to be more intolerant in the interior (sect like), and the group involved occasionally in conflict (church like) have a flexible structure and tolerates in a certain way the interior conflict, without demanding a full involvement (sect like) of the members (Coser, 1956).

Conflict can have either positive or negative functions. What it is important or decisive for the functional or dysfunctional character of conflict is the type of conflict, along with the social structure involved, according to Coser. The dysfunctional character it is evident when we see a lack of tolerance and of the institutionalization of conflict, in the context of the rigidity of social structure, this being the dysfunctional element because it does not allows the relief of system, but dangerous accumulations (Coser, 1956).

Ralph Dahrendorf is another important theoretician of the sociology of conflict. Analyzing the functionalist view of society, in which important are the stability, the equilibrium, the integrative force of social structure, Dahrendorf completes this model with an opposite one, in which the social change and social conflict are present in every society, and decisive is the coercive power, as we will see when we will underline the postive effects of respecting the Torah. These two models are considered both valid in social reality, having an explicative ability to complete each other (Dahrendorf, 1958). In his opinion, "the last goal of a social theory is the explanation of social change" (*ibid.*, 175), which means that it is necessary to: explain the

empiric reality without contradicting the theory of conflict, correlated with the integrative forces on the social level to explain the multiple types of conflict and different intensities of these. Dahrendorf is concentrating on the research of power, violent change of social structure by means of violence, analyzing the totalitarian states, combining the functional view of society with the conflict theories.

### **Toward a sociology of Judaism through out the creative conflict**

Starting from the premise that a conflict is essentially an interaction on societal level with different stages of intensity and with a particular impact on the identity of the community researched, meaning the sociology of conflict as elaborated by Simmel, we try to filter the decisive moments of Judaism that brought both internal and external social changes, fundamentally contributing to the identity of Jewish people.

Before seeing the work of conflict in the history of Judaism that formed a people and his identity, we must highlight a few elements concerning the importance of religion from a sociological point of view. Religion is essentially a human and social behavior relevant for the social relations and interactions. A decisive phenomenon both on a individual, as well as on macro level, causing a specific behavior in the contact with different communities, being a major element of the identity of people. We begin from the Weberian premise according to which important for sociologist is not the *essence* of religion (Weber, 1963), but the actual manifestation of this social action, relevant at an individual and social level, concentrating on those that caused major changes on the conflictual way, bringing crucial social changes for the Jewish people.

The Jewish people are a people created by religion. This specific dimension (par excellence human) of human and essential and total element of collective Jewish identity is the one that formed, shaped and made a people to survive thousands of years, a people witness of the fall of empires, of the emergence of Christianity, of the challenges in the medieval and modern time, without losing its identity force based on religion. Beginning with the overwhelming weight of religion for the identity of Jewish people, we see the conflicts analyzed in the category of the identity conflict (Thual, 1995). This type of conflict has an extraordinary force, a virulent capacity that threatens the historical, cultural, religious existence of this people. The hardening along the history through these conflicts made possible the survival of the Jewish people.

#### *A) Who are we? The ambivalent conflict*

Ancient Judaism, we find out from Max Weber, the origins of the Jewish people, can be best understand through the Indian caste system. The Jews are a *caste-people*, separated from a ritually and social point of

view from the surroundings, and this condition is crucial for the sociological research of these community. What separates the Jews as a *caste-people* are the following elements, according to Weber: they have been a caste people in a social environment without caste; the maintaining of this system was made for a future salvation, the ritualic separation being vital, and “the whole attitude toward life of ancient Jewry was determined by this conception of a future God-guided political and social revolution” (*ibid.*, 4).

Weber identifies the point of departure for this specific behavior - of *caste-people* – in the prophetic phenomenon and in the time of elaborating the Torah. Thus, the circumcision was not a strictly Jewish institution, the Sabbath was probably a celebration existing in another areas, but in time these institutions acquire a ritually strictness. With the Exile and the evolution of understanding the prophetic phenomenon we reach a powerful ritually segregation, a decisive one for the survival of this “internationally settled guest people” (*ibid.*, 338), Ezra and Neemia consolidating the boundary of the community among the different peoples.

Although in the time of Babylonian Exile there were tolerance for the Jewish communities, Weber underlines the impact of the apocalyptic prophecies in the face of Persian enemy and a virulent attitude toward the Babylon. The ritualistic boundaries were high, along an open and strong opposition towards the Babylonian power, and these made Weber to conclude that the community attained a very important cohesion, key elements decisive in the Jewish history, all being the merit of the priests, of the scholars. Now the mixt marriages are prohibited, the Sabbath was a important celebration, Babylon becoming the area from which the Jewish religious identity will resurrect consolidated by the ritualic segregation, this meaning that the Jewish people become “a caste-people with a cult center in Jerusalem and with international affiliated congregations” (*ibid.*, 363).

Beside this ritually separation, Weber identifies the existence of a profoundly rational religious ethics, with no elements of irrationality, that contributes to the accomplishment of a social and political revolution. In the study of ancient Judaism this it is considered the starting point of the disenchantment of the world, completed in the period of Protestantism (Schluchter, 2004).

Another research comparable with the Weberian sociology of the ancient Judaism comes from the French ideatic medium through Antonin Causse, a sociologist also preoccupied by sociology of Judaism. Causse researches this domain in the context of the existing preoccupations about myths, sacrifice, primitive mentality (themes consecrated in French sociology). The relevancy of biblical studies, for sociology and for history, assume “knowing how was made this transition from the primitive mentality, prelogical, when religion detached itself from magic until the most evolved ethical, rational and individualist concepts” (Causse, 1937: 9). This is a response from the French sociology to the weberian study of religion that concentrated on the connection to the economic ethics. A reproach of Causse to the weberian Ancient Judaism is that the German sociologist,

using the status of *caste-people* for the Jews, neglected the primitive mentality of social organization in that time, “putting in the late antiquity the development conditions of a more recent Judaism” (id.).

Causse in French sociology and Weber in German sociology represent the fundamental landmarks that cannot be ignored and from which we must begin every scientific research for sociology of Judaism. Although they analyze the social structure of ancient Jews from different perspective, these approaches complete each other, does not exclude one another, by the contrary, they contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of biblical social realities. Causse is considered the sociologist that realized in a comprehensive synthesis the “social evolution of Israel” (Kimbrough, 1972: 202), the study *Du groupe ethnique a la communaute religieuse. Le probleme sociologique de la religios d’Israel* being considered a monumental work. Here it is demonstrated the passage from a solidarity based on ethnicity criteria to a solidarity based on Torah, with rational and individualistic fundamentals.

Without neglecting the social context of that time, the specific of primitive mentality as Causse demonstrates, we can relate to Jewish people as a *caste-people*, with a very strong identity, based on the belief in Yahweh, with clear boundaries in front of the *Other*, in front of the pagans, with a political and social plan for this world and trough which it can be obtain the salvation in a future world, only with the condition of a strictly ritual behavior. This can be a concise answer to the question *Who are we*, but one that also has the germs of potential conflicts, with positive and negative effects, as we will see in the next section.

### *B) Against decay – the prophetic movement*

As Simmel demonstrates that the reaction, the opposition, the fight with injustice or betrayal assures the relief of group and the revitalization of the community, we can understand the prophetic phenomenon from a sociological point of view as a wide conflictual reaction in front of the problems that were a threat to the identity and existence of Jewish people. This reaction contributed to the salvation of community from the lost of faith, maybe even from extinction.

The passing from nomadism to sedentarism will modify and change the relation and social structure of Jews, having influences on the structure of family, tribe or clan. In spite of this reality it was maintaining “the moral unity with Yahweh in the center of this unity” (Causse, 1937: 27), this cult becoming “one of the most powerful social connection that grounded the entire solidarity of the group” (id.). Faced with external problems the clans unified under the royalty, that had primordial war functions. Another factor that had a weight in the start of the internal conflict in Jewish communities is the contact with the Cananean civilization, when powerful cleavages appear between rich and poor, the temptation of commerce, social mobility that is intensifying and the family structure is affected, in a few words – “the

uprooting of Israel begins” (*ibid.*, 49), even the power of the Covenant is affected, underlines Causse, the time has come.

That is why the inevitability of a religious crisis is imminent, because “religion is very important for the social group that this social crisis does not produce a religious spasm” (*ibid.*, 53). It is the moment of prophets, “in the middle of decadence of the old solidarity, proclaiming the Law of a new society, announcing a new Covenant – *berith*” (*ibid.*, 57). They bring in foreground the golden epoch of the Patriarchs, the old ancestral and tribal solidarities in response to the corruption of cities, of royalty, of the kingdom’s military power, which no matter how strong it would be, it could not save the people, because only Yahweh can save the people of Israel, underlines Causse. But, paradoxically, although they praised the recovering of old solidarities, they intensified even more the crisis, in Causse’s opinion, because they fought a series of sacrificial manifestation, the cult of death (Yahweh is the god of the living), “favoring without realizing the kingdom’s civilizing actions, that were centralizing and destroyer for the old communities” (*ibid.*, 99). The connection between Yahweh and his people is no longer natural, but is one conditioned by the following of moral precepts, otherwise the Covenant is broken. Here, according to the French sociologist, is the moment were it was a powerful social change, thanks to the ethics, to the rationality of social and individual behavior “the prophets opened the way to a individualist religion and social organization” (*ibid.*, 106). Through the prophets of VIII-VII century it is obtained the rationalizations of Jewish religion, in spite of the primitive mentality, this being the moment of the passing from the primitive collectivism to the individualist ethic, underlines Causse. He starts from these premises in demonstrating the passage from an existence based on ethnic bases to the formation of a religious community.

The work of the prophets becomes decisive, not from religious motives, but from a sociologically point of view because it shaped the community, assuring its identity and resistance over the time. This is relevant from a religious, sociological, even geopolitical point of view, because in the tumult of the conquests triggered by the empires of that time, this social reality developed, and “the religion of Israel transformed itself in a structure capable of resistance in the face of every destructive influence from outside, surviving until present times” (Weber, 1952: 263). Without that geopolitical context, considers Weber, the prophetic phenomenon had not appeared, which means that they were the supporters of the political groups (Jeremiah favors Babylon, Ishaia favored a treaty with Asirian empire), but without talking about “the best state and they did not helped to translate into reality a social ethic through advices given to the leaders” (*ibid.*, 275). An explanation is that “the political aspiration of Israel would be realized through a miracle of God, like the passing of the Red Sea, and not with a military power, especially not through alliances” (*ibid.*, 281). Political alliances can be harmful from a religious point of view, Weber explains, because it means a contact with different Gods, temptations, an openness that can penetrate

those boundaries built around the Jewish communities, thus been affected the manifest power of identity.

So, only the Covenant with Yahweh counts, any other help from the powers of this world risking to be transformed in the opposite of the help, without forgetting that “the Israelite internal development from a political association in a religious one would be unthinkable without the impressive constructions of Yahweh and without the trust in his promises” (*ibid.*, 334).

The of the disappearance of this community in the time of the great empires were so big that only “the thirst for revenge and the hope were the natural results of the believers, only the prophecy was the one that gave hope to all seeing this results during their lives, giving religious cohesion to the political communities destroyed” (*id.*).

As we saw before, although in Babylon they were tolerated and benefit from a series of liberties, paradoxically, right there we have a strong resurrection of religious beliefs, a rising and consolidation of boundaries that separated them from the rest of the peoples, the stabilization of a specific structure of *caste-people*. Elements that contributed to what Simmel established when analyzing the positive effects of conflicts, in the middle of which the strong identities are born, solidarities that could not have been arise except in the face of an enemy or dangers. And Simmel, himself a Jewish sociologist faced with the tumult of his time, will understand and theorize better this social reality.

In the context of a sociological analyze of the prophetic phenomenon we cannot ignore the wight of the conflict between the prophets and priests, the ones that will elaborate the Law, another conflict with heavy consequences for the history of Judaism. The prophets, we find out from Weber, were in tension with the priests, because the former valued a relation with God that had the possibility to bring salvation, without using the actions of the priests, like the sacrifices, but only the following the commandments. It was opposed therefore the new revelation and tradition, a clash that dependened on the each other to impose. For the codification the priest chooses and consolidates the prophetic teachings through their rational systematization, which brought “a decline or fossilization of prophecy, an inevitable outcome” (*ibid.*, 78). The spirit of prophecy disappeared after it accomplished its duty for the salvation of the people and of the Jewish communities, now it will start the rational codification of the teachings.

After the innovations and the shocks of the prophets it was necessary an extensive process of understanding and explanation of what was happening, of the tests of Yahweh for his people. It is the time of the Torah, when “they give explanations, when they give the rational motives”, this is the way to a religion of Torah (Causse, 1937:126). Now Israel has an organization, receives a holy legislation, the works of priests transformed the community in a cultural one, where “it is manifesting the powerful rational spirit of God and his centralizing national tendency” (*ibid.*,152). Now, underlines Causse, they put the bases of a community that it is no longer

founded on a psycho-mithical unity, but on a voluntary solidarity, a fraternity, one that resist until now, in spite of all difficulties.

### C) *Christianity*

Another key point in the sociological understanding of Judaism through conflict, considered as having not only positive consequences, as Simmel demonstrates, but even creative powers, is the time of the Christianity. In this axial moment we can verify a serie of premises of the sociology of conflict, as we have them in the Simmelian essays. We try now a lecture of the emergence of Christianity using the sociology of conflict. Thus, we see a severity of conflict when it arises from a set of common values; the two communities defend their truth, their specific values that means an affirmation and consolidation of identity in front of the one considered different, a protection of the boundaries that assures each other their identity. A corollary of these elements can be the existence of social hatred, as defined by Simmel, explained sociologically by the fact that an enemy of the group represents a peril for the existence of the group, and from here we can have numerous fights for identity affirmation and maintaining it in front of the *Other*.

As we saw below, after the passing of great empires and once the assimilation of prophetic phenomenon and the Law codification were completed, for the survival and the maintaining of the community based on religious foundations that created a people, the Jewish communities consolidated even more their boundaries, their status of *caste-people*.

Judaism is oriented toward this world, his promises are for this dimension of the existence, without interest for ascetic or contemplative views, according to Weber, and the propensity of Christianity for ascetic views does not come from the Jewish religiosity. The attitudes about the wealth, with a special attention for teaching, favoring the intellectual dimension of religious beliefs, the piety manifested in obeying the Law - were the result of Jewish "methodology of life and its rationalism" (Weber, 1963: 255), with a piety in patient waiting of the messianic event, based on the promises of God for his people.

But the challenge for the Jewish community, for its survival, was the emergence of Christianity, the activity of Paul, who will try to destroy the boundaries of the status of *caste-people*, attacking the taboos, and all the fundamentals of Jewish identity (Weber, 1963). These actions intensified with the activity of Jesus Christ and which will determine very strong reactions, once it endangered the foundations of Jewish identity.

From this rationalism of Judaic religious belief the Christianity appears, a reaction truly revolutionary that emerged "during the period of the most intensive messianic expectations" (*ibid.*, 270), founded on charisma. If from the beginning the Christianity, founded in the middle of Jewish people, kept "continuity with the older Jewish prophecies" (*ibid.*,274), after the conversion of Paul two new attitudes become fundamental in the missionary

evolution of this new religion, underlines Weber: the Second Coming of Jesus and the importance of the gifts of Holy Spirit.

*D) Conclusions or the odyssey continues...*

Religion, as we saw above, represents an understanding and relating system of the life, which could be seen from a sociological point of view, an total ideal typical institution. The commandments, the forms, manifestations and specific structure applied by each religion to the existence as it is lived and conceived, all these have an important weight and a comprehensive significance for the sociology preoccupied by this social phenomenon that is religion. Being a comprehensive reality, the sociological study of religion asks not only an impressive involvement from the part of researchers, but also an encyclopedic spirit. These criteria are fulfilled by the two classics of the sociology of Judaism, and their studies are proof of these imperatives. These extensive researches about the change in social structures following the evolution of the religious ideas, their impact and effects over the destiny of the Jewish people through out the time can help explain in an exceptional way the social realities of our time.

In spite of the many forms and changes brought by history, we cannot ignore those fundamental structure of the Jewish people, the base on which its identity formed and lived. But these changes and challenges right from the beginning of the Judaic religion did not brought a total change of the system or its extinction, on the contrary, an evolution to a even more profound identity. The social changes demonstrated with the studies of Weber and Causse can be considered changes *within the system*, and changes brought by the Christianity represent the birth of a *new social system*, from within but different from the Judaic one.

Through the research of ancient Judaism with the help of two classics and the Simmelian theory of conflict, we have access to a specific understanding of the powerful identity of the Jewish people, and to the special condition of the appearance of Christianity in the tumult of those times. The creative power of these conflicts, of Jewish people in face of the social, political and military challenges, and of Christians in the face of the religious challenges lived and assumed, was validated and proven for thousands of years. Founders of powerful and strong identities challenged more or less by the worldly powers, these two spiritual dimensions survives and continues to be interesting for different researchers, not only from the perspective of the sociology of religion. And this can be see as an incentive for interdisciplinary (a step closer to the encyclopedic spirit of the classics) so necessary for such a complex field of study like religion.

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**IN THE WAKE OF SLEEPING BEAUTY.  
EVER-CHANGING FACES OF FEMININITY IN TRANSMEDIA  
STORYTELLING. FROM CHARLES PERRAULT TO WALT DISNEY**

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**Abstract:** *Within the broader discussion about remediation (Bolter and Grusin, 1996), transmedial storytelling (Jenkins, 2006; Ryan, 2013) and transfictionality (Ryan, 2013), the present paper advances the proposal of a comparative intersectional qualitative analysis of femininity in Charles Perrault's version of the story *La Belle au bois dormant* (1697), Walt Disney's *Sleeping Beauty* (1959) and Walt Disney and Roth Films' *Maleficent* (2014) based upon associations between body representations, age groups and types of character. What would Evil look like if it were a woman? Would she be slender or voluptuous? What about the Good? Would she be wrinkled or sappy? This is a series of topics the current inquiry will put to the issue adjusting the intersectionality theory. However, it is not the experience of oppression that is central to the present analysis, but rather the pattern of intersection between gender, age and good or evil nature and how body representations coagulate at such intersections.*

**Key words:** *Sleeping Beauty, Maleficent, Disney, femininity, transmedia storytelling*

### **Instead of an argument**

Starting from the assumption advanced by Bruno Latour (1992) and Bolter and Grusin (1996) that once cultural content is subdued to operations of readjustment to another medium, modifications and restructuring take place at the level of representation, the present paper is constructed upon two major axes of interest, that is how bodily representations of femininity convert in relation to (1) age and affiliation to good or bad forces and (2) three types of media in which the story develops: literary, animated and cinematographic. Hence, Charles Perrault's version of the story *La Belle au bois dormant* (1697), Walt Disney's *Sleeping Beauty* (1959) and Walt Disney and Roth Films' *Maleficent* (2014) will be employed in a comparative intersectional analysis of three feminine central figures of the story: the princess, the good fairy and the bad fairy. Furthermore, the study develops upon the assumption that European fairytales represent *reusable prefabs* (Spiridon, 2013) for contemporary American popular culture within the broader context of *remediation* (Bolter and Grusin, 1996), *transmedial storytelling* (Jenkins, 2006; Ryan, 2013) and *transfictionality* (Ryan, 2013).

The fact that folk tales, later on fairy tales, are at the very foundation of European cultural heritage is almost axiomatic. Yet, it is not only literature that reflects their influence, but also European art, especially the western division. In this line of thought, we can instance Sir Edward Burne-Jones' painting *Legend of Briar Rose* (1885 - 1890), John Maler Collier's (1921) or Hans Zatzka's nineteenth century *Sleeping Beauty* purchased in 2004 at an auction in New York with no less than 41,825 \$. Adding up to such paintings, there are also famous sculptures inspired by the same fairy tale, for example, Ludwig Sussman Hellborn's *Dornröschen* (1878) or the contemporary work of Kraig Varner, *Sleeping Beauty*. Moreover, the Russian composer Tchaikovsky created music for the ballet performance *Spyashchaya krasavitsa* which was first played at the Mariinsky Theatre in Sankt Petersburg. In 1959, the Walt Disney company releases the fantasy animation musical inspired by the fairy tale *La Belle au bois dormant* adapted by Charles Perrault. This was to be the last of the series Walt Disney Animated Classics due to the lack of enthusiasm from both the audience and the critics. Since 2010 till present times, there have been released no less than four cinematographic productions of different genres, production which all deploy symbolic resources collectively acknowledged as affiliated to *Sleeping Beauty* fairy tale: Australian romantic drama *Sleeping Beauty* (2011), American fantasy adventure drama *Sleeping Beauty I* (2014), American fantasy adventure horror *Sleeping Beauty II* (2014) and American action fantasy *Maleficent* (2014). Due to the subject matter, I have chosen to exemplify by referring to *Sleeping Beauty*, but I could easily have attested to the same realities related to other stories such as *Red Riding Hood* or *Snow White*. For the present article, I have decided to analyze *Maleficent* based upon three criteria: it is the most popular among the recent cinematographic productions adapted after *Sleeping Beauty*, it is most relevant for illustrating adaptation and poaching strategies as developed by contemporary theories of *remediation*, *transmediality* and *transfictionality* (Jenkins, 1992, 2006; Bolter și Grusin, 1996; Ryan, 2013) and it is produced under aegis of Walt Disney brand as well as the animated film *Sleeping Beauty* (1959). Similarly, Perrault's version of the fairy tale was chosen in favour of the Grimm Brothers' because both the 1959 animated film *Sleeping Beauty* and the 2014 *Maleficent* clearly state that the productions are inspired by Charles Perrault's *La Belle au bois dormant*.

The array of recent cultural products based upon classic literary fairy tales and of retailing media does not only stand as an argument for the present inquiry, but also offer a spawning ground for cross-disciplinary enterprise with multivariate behoofs for the sociology of the body, gender studies, cultural studies, communication studies and global studies. Hence, the relevance of the present research derives from the global effect of both Charles Perrault's classic fairy tale and Walt Disney's adaptations upon children and adults all around the world.

## Remediation. An endless story

The following chapter will focus upon delineating the broader theoretical framework necessary for a proper understanding of the process of adaptation of classic literary tales into animated films and cinematographic productions. Discussing dominant traits of *remediation* (Bolter and Grusin, 1996), *transmedial storytelling* (Jenkins, [1958] 2006; Ryan, 2013) and *transfictionality* (Ryan, 2013) and *spreadable media* (Jenkins, Ford and Green, 2013) will shed light upon content modifications affiliated to the transition from a medium to another in order to subsequently focus on the transformations of bodily representations of femininity.

David Bolter and Richard Grusin (1996) use the term *remediation* for referring to poaching media content, which is easily identified by the audience and is held familiar in the collective memory, and modify it according to the conditions of another host-medium while maintaining both a sense of transparency (*immediacy*) and self-referential function (*hipermediacy*). For example, most action, adventure and fantasy Hollywood movies currently use digital techniques and special effects under the aura of the inherent (Bolter and Grusin, 1996: 342). It is the same in the case of *Maleficient* every time a display of the supernatural is presented, for example, when the raven shape - shifts or at the celebration, when Maleficient puts the spell on the newborn princess. The process of remediation is strongly linked to the diversification of media technologies, especially *new media*, digital devices which make possible ongoing communication at distance in real time and user-generated unregulated content. According to Bruno Latour (1992), technological developments lead to transformations in terms of practices, therefore determining shifts in the social order. Literature, cinematography, painting, photography and other such media are 'technologies of representation', ultimately meant to embody fundamental cultural frames in the mundane realm by means of *immediacy* (Latour, 1992; Bolter and Grusin, 1996). Hence, the present paper is concerned with two types of embodiment. One refers to the technologies of representation, the other concentrates upon representations of femininity.

The notion of *remediation* suggests an unidirectional relation between the old and the new media, in which the latter poaches and adapts the initial content, referring to the first only for making a display of its supremacy in terms of representation. However, cultural products and channels usually interact at many levels and the relations between them are not always constructed upon the logic of competition. Rather than propagating the attention of the public, they are often designed as complementary in order to create a multivariate, but congruent universe, which comprises several consumption patterns. The higher purpose is *convergence* (Jenkins, 2006) in designing a virtual alternative reality in which the consumer actively takes part in, therefore, maximizing both the popularity of the product and the profit.

Thus, a concept that condenses the relations of exchange, cooperation and complementarity between different products and media more precisely is the one of *transmediality* defined by Monica Spiridon (2013, p. 134) as "a co-operative relation between products of the same channel or of different channels, which mutually endorse each other and transfer public segments between each other"<sup>1</sup>. Transmediality implies mutually sustaining relationships between different products or channels, for example, between advertising and popular culture products. In this line of thought, Henry Jenkins refers to *transmedia storytelling*, defined as "the flow of content across multiple media platforms, the cooperation between multiple media industries, and the migratory behaviour of media audiences who will go almost anywhere in search of the kinds of entertainment experiences they want" (Jenkins, 2006, p. 2). In other words, Jenkins (2006, p. 95) understands *transmedia storytelling* as "a narrative so large, it cannot be covered in a single medium". Mary-Laure Ryan stresses upon the story more than upon the discourse when delineating the concept of *transmedial storytelling* as "the creation of a storyworld through multiple documents belonging to various media" (Ryan, 2013, p. 361). According to Ryan, the story world is central to maintaining cohesion between different products. Another concept that develops in relation with *transmedial storytelling* and captures the very nature of the cinematographic production *Maleficent* is *transfictionality*. This is often the case of written fictional narratives and it refers to the "migration of fictional entities across different texts, but these texts may belong to the same medium" (Ryan, 2013, p. 365 - 366). What is more, the relation between two story worlds falls under one or more of the three categories: *expansion*, *modification* and *transposition* (Doležel, 1998: 206-207).

Despite the time gap between Charles Perrault's version of the story *La Belle au bois dormant* (1697), Walt Disney's animated film *Sleeping Beauty* (1959) and Walt Disney and Roth Films' *Maleficent* (2014) and the fact that they weren't conceived to work together for triggering complementary modes of consumption like a book, a movie and a game based upon the same story world for example, it can be argued that this is a case of *remediation* and *transmedial storytelling*. Both Walt Disney's animated film *Sleeping Beauty* (1959) and Walt Disney and Roth Films' *Maleficent* (2014) openly rely on Perrault's account of *La Belle au bois dormant* (1697) for falling back on the fairy tales' popularity and emotional transference in order to achieve success and enhancing audiences' loyalty. Re-appropriating '*La Belle au bois dormant*' fairy tale set by Charles Perrault in order to match the requirements of another medium, the one of animated musical fantasy film implies modifications of both configuration and content. While fundamental operations of *transfictionality* discussed by Marie-Laure

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<sup>1</sup> In the Romanian original version: "o relație de cooperare fie între produsele aceluiași canal, fie ale unor canale diferite, care se susțin reciproc și, mai ales, își transmit unul altuia segmente de public" (Spiridon, 2013: 134).

Ryan (2013: 361-363) focus rather on expanding the initial narrative or constructing different versions, therefore, on operations of addition and redesign, Disney's *Sleeping Beauty* is an example of compression.

Although it is not fan fiction, nor a T.V. series, *Maleficent* comes under one of the poaching strategies described by Henry Jenkins in his book *Textual Poachers, Television Fans and Participatory Culture*, that is *refocalization*. As Jenkins defines it, *refocalization* is meant to "(...) shift attention away from the programs' central figures and onto secondary characters, often women and minorities, who receive limited screen time" (Jenkins, 1992: 169). As Jenkins suggests, when *refocalization* is based upon a feminine character, it creates premises for exploring feminine experiences and identity and autonomy and authority derived from power relations socially constructed among genders. Moreover, it emboldens a thorough insight upon the psychology and the becoming of characters laterally presented in the initial product, in the present case Perrault's account of *La Belle au bois dormant* (1697), allowing character trajectories and developments which could have not been accomplished within the first scenario. For instance, *Maleficent* operates modifications upon the immutable nature of evil by accounting for the circumstances which engendered Maleficent's actions towards the princess. Thereby, *Maleficent* can be understood as an illustration of a *moral realignment* because it is one of the cultural productions which "(...) invert or question the moral universe of the primary text taking the villains and transforming them into the protagonists of their own narratives" (Jenkins, 1992: 171). Likewise, it grows out of the logic of committed polarity of Perrault's account of *Sleeping Beauty* because it presents a heroine who exceeds the fundamental cultural distinction, the boundary between good and evil. *Maleficent* is of both, therefore, she is of none, surpassing the very distinction. Walt Disney and Roth Films' recent production is one of the few which advance the idea that it is possible for the role of villains to be understood as part of a higher understanding of the world, which is not legible within the initial account. Concurrently, it can be argued that the production also reflects operations proper to what Henry Jenkins (1992: 175-176) defines as *character dislocation*, a process in which "characters are removed from their original situations and given alternative names and identities".

### **Sleeping beauties, waking sorceresses. The Faces of Femininity: The Good, the Bad, the Ugly<sup>1</sup>.**

The present paper advances the proposal of a comparative intersectional qualitative analysis of embodied femininities in Charles Perrault's version of the story *La Belle au bois dormant* (1697), Walt Disney's *Sleeping Beauty* (1959) and Walt Disney and Roth Films'

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<sup>1</sup> The title of the present section is inspired by the 1966 Italian movie *Il buono, il brutto, il cattivo*.

*Maleficent* (2014) based upon the associations between physical appearance in terms of physical characteristics like hair or eye colour, body weight or height, and also of clothing, footwear, cosmetics and decorative objects, age group and type of character, namely affiliation to the good or the evil.

The current study emerges in the context of public debate around the influence of femininity models advanced by Disney's fictional products upon young girls, the so-called *little princess syndrome*, reflected in articles like *What's Wrong with Cinderella?* (Orenstein, 2006) in *The New York Times Magazine* or *Are Disney Princesses Evil?* (Mechanic, 2011) in *Mother Jones* and Disney's recent paradigm shift in constructing the so-called *independent princess: No princes required: Independent Disney princesses not seeking romance* (Associated Press, 2014) in *Fox News* or *Daughters inspire independent Disney princess* (Associated Press, 2014) in *The Buffalo News*. Walt Disney's productions have been of interest not only for their aesthetic style and animation features (Pallant, 2010) or for their marketing practices or development strategies, but also related to issues of gender, race or ethnicity in Disney's discourse about the world and life (Faherty, 2001; Craven, 2002; Hurley, 2005; Lee, 2006), sexuality and 'queer sensibility' (Griffin, 2000) or Disney's influence upon children's culture (Giroux, 1994). However, the matter of good and evil still remains insufficiently covered, therefore, the exploratory and preliminary nature of the present study, interested in mapping out a series of associations to be further tested and developed by quantitative and qualitative methodologies. Thus, it is not the requirement of completeness that the present study arrogates to itself, but the perks of setting milestones for future cross-disciplinary research.

What would Evil look like if it were a woman? Would she be slender or voluptuous? What about the Good? Would she be wrinkled or sappy? This is a series of topics the current inquiry will put to the issue adjusting the *intersectionality theory* articulated by Patricia Hill Collins (1990) with respect to the experiences of black working-class women, according to which "while all women potentially experience oppression on the basis of gender, women are, nevertheless, differentially oppressed by the varied intersections of other arrangements of social inequality" (Madoo Lengermann, Niebrugge, [2003] 2010: 218). However, it is not the experience of oppression that is central to the present analysis, but rather the pattern of intersection between gender, age and good or evil nature and how body representations coagulate at such intersections.

Research expectations originate from classifications of femininity defined as the body of social accounts which regulate attitudes, behaviors, practices and appearance associated with a feminine gender identity. There are three fundamental coordinates inexorably affined to the concept of femininity: *ethics of care*, abnegation and relating to aesthetical standards established by men's predilections (Rovența Frumușani, 2002). The term *ethics of care*, coined by Carol Gilligan, refers to making moral choices based on empathy, mutual responsibility and prosocial behavior as opposed

to a masculine morality developed around the idea of rights and justice (Miroiu, 2002). Traditional femininity derives from the ethics of care while the non-traditional one appears as a result of emancipation and reluctance to domination. Prosocial behavior, self-sacrifice, passiveness and submission are central to traditional femininity. When associated with youth, traditional femininity implies sexual readiness (Roventă Frumușani, 2002) whereas in the case of mature women a condescending attitude is to be expected. In other words, young women are widely associated with eroticism and mature women tend to be affiliated to central attributes of motherhood.

The comparative analysis of Charles Perrault's version of the story *La Belle au bois dormant* (1697), Walt Disney's *Sleeping Beauty* (1959) and Walt Disney and Roth Films' *Maleficent* (2014) revealed that Good seems to be represented as a collective instance whereas Evil is conceived as singular. In Perrault's account of *Sleeping Beauty in the Woods*, seven good fairies are mentioned while in both of Disney's versions there are only three fairies. Except for indicating that there is an age distinction between them, the portrait of the good fairies remains vague in Perrault's case in terms of appearance as readers are not told about their clothes or about other physical traits. In Disney's animated film, the three good fairies, Flora, Fauna, and Merryweather, are represented as middle-aged corpulent ladies of average height with their hair in a bun. One of them has black hair and the other two, brown. The cinematographic production illustrates much more variety when it comes to the three good fairies as one can easily discern there are differences of age between them and also differences of hair colour, type and style. The youngest is a curly blonde while the other two wear their tawny hair in braids. All three of them are slender and the youngest of them is wearing a dress with a cleavage. If in the case of the animated film, the good fairies resemble a couple of motherly housewives, *Maleficent* creates a much more individualistic representation of the collective character.

Perrault only describes the princess when she is already under the spell of the evil fairy, stressing that her beauty remains untouched by the passing of years. The only descriptions refer to her cheeks which resemble marble, her lips red like a choral and her gentle breathing. The ethereal aura never leaves Princess Aurora. Not in the Disney animation, nor in *Maleficent*. Young femininity glides along in translucence. Even if she is an animated character or one in flesh and bones, Disney's Aurora is invariably a light blonde. For that matter, Walt Disney's animated film *Sleeping Beauty* was released in a cultural context in which blonde was much more than a hair color as the 1950s were the year of a rising media celebrity: no other than Marilyn Monroe, the modest, yet beautiful blonde who conquered America's hearts (Spiridon, 2013, p. 116). The cultural icon of the blonde is enforced by the release of the Barbie Doll just one year before the Disney animated film, in 1958. Therefore, it could be argued that in the given cultural circumstances the princess could have easily triggered the stereotype of the

*dumb blonde* (Spiridon, 2013: 116) who can easily develop into another common representation of Freudian inspiration, the *woman-child*.

The image of the villain in Perrault's version of *La Belle au bois dormant* is constructed around a single feature which seems to be central to the representation: age. As a matter of fact, the negative character is not even referred as the "bad fairy", but as the "old fairy". Due to the development of the story, equivalence is established between malevolence and age. Disney's animated film alters this correspondence recreating a thin and tall bad fairy, all dressed in black. Her skin streams in a phosphorescent purple-blue, especially when she works her magic. An interesting aspect concerns the fact that she is the only one wearing makeup, jewellery and also nail polish. *Maleficent* can be assimilated to a representation of the non-traditional femininity, which constructs itself by antagonism, making a stand against hegemonic masculinity (Roventța Frumușani, 2002: 148), in the present case, the ruling king who had betrayed her trust. Offering resistance, rebellion and dissimilarity from the traditional pattern are often considered to be traits of the marginal, fated to oblivion: sexual workers, lesbians, rebels, viraginitians or witches (Connell, 1987:188 apud. Roventța Frumușani, 2002).

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## THE IMPLICATIONS OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN POLITICAL COMMUNICATION. A NEW FORM OF ELECTORAL CAMPAIGN

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**Abstract:** *In this paper, the author, starting from literature, makes a brief analysis of political communication and message transmission during the election campaign via the Internet in general, and through social media in particular. The power of new technologies to mobilize the electorate has been proven in US election campaigns from 2008 when Barak Obama used them with great success, but also in Romania's presidential campaign in November 2014 when Klaus Iohannis became president as a result of using the social network Facebook. In the short period since it began to be used in political communication, the Internet has managed to transform the way in which politicians, political parties, government organizations, but especially the media and, not least, the citizen acts.*

**Key words:** *electoral campaign; social media; communication; Internet*

With a broad and effective potential, new media is the concept that has transformed the understanding of mass communication, its implications in political communication causing change to the way of communication, constructing strategies and conducting election campaigns. Thus, in political life was introduced the online environment as a combative new space where individuals, organizations, political institutions and even Governments communicate and negotiate their messages and political roles (Boşoteanu, 2011: 47-48). Modern man's life was changed almost suddenly by new technologies, and communication in the public sphere has witnessed the fastest development in relation to what had previously been (Davis, 1999: 27).

The emergence and development of the Internet has led to a radical change in the way political communication currently operates; there is certainly a strong connection between technology and communication. We cannot exist without communication, and the presence in virtual/social space involves the exploitation of communication in all its forms, the political environment benefiting fully from the advantages they confer. If journalists and politicians in the past were those who transmitted the political message, in "the era of social media, influence power of politicians and journalists has dropped considerably, and the process of communication is conducted by users of social networks, which customize, transmit and debate the political message through an interpersonal communication in their social groups" (Tănase, 2014: 7). The Internet offers the possibility of politicians to interact

with voters, to talk and to listen. The politician is facing a different kind of electorate, younger and familiar with the Internet for which political messages must be adapted in accordance with the expectations and requirements of such an audience. Thus, a traditional media channel no longer represents the single channel through which the political message is transmitted and public images are formed.

Claude-Jean Bertrand believes that, until 1997, the Internet was not reckoned as media, but its extremely rapid progress has made to be included in this field (Bertrand, 2000: 34). Specialized research based on the construction of political and electoral communication online reveals the evolution and adaptation of this type of communication at the global trends in the use of new media. According to specialists, the Internet was the tool that changed the nature of political communication through which the political message was conveyed in the following areas:

- volume: can be transmitted much larger amounts of information compared to other models of media communication;
- speed: the time it takes for sending a message was greatly diminished;
- format: combination of printed communication and electronic information was able to enable audio, video and text format. Thus, the receiver is stimulated simultaneously, in a dynamic and visual form;
- direction: communication is interactive and synchronous in real-time and in wide space, with high speed of message's circulation;
- performance testing: voters can decide what to see and what to be published (Gibson and Ward, 2000: 304).

Since the end of the past Millennium online activity was felt, although access to the internet was limited in the lines of population engaged in civic act, and its importance was largely due to the increase of applications in the field of trade or online entertainment at the expense of information that encouraged political participation, of web designers charges who were steadily increasing, but also of the capacity of candidates or parties with notoriety in the offline environment to better guide voters in virtual environment (Pătruț, 2011: 58). In a very short time, social media has managed to become the most important and exploited channel in mass communication and political actors have tried to understand its operational mechanisms in order to be able to use it in election campaigns, aware that online audiences has become a key factor that has to be turned into an important vector for the transmission of political message. The Internet offers us in communication with voters and innovative methods such as email, blogging, online feedback mechanisms, participation on social networks like Twitter or Facebook, a network that has significant impact on media, society, health and politics and has managed to revolutionize communication, becoming a global phenomenon (Bărbieru, 2014: 20).

Social media is conceived as a collection of web technologies that is made available to the general public and is intended to transform communications and content in interactive dialogue through social networks, like Facebook or Twitter, blogging technology, WordPress, via the site of

videosharing and photos, like YouTube or Flickr. Social media is a web-based infrastructure, very accessible to the general public and which helps users to publish online content interesting for them and for their friends and social networks are groups of people with the same interests and concerns.

Over the past decade, the Internet and social media, important elements in the process of globalization, have witnessed an exponential growth with a particularly high impact on people. Through social media individuals may access other networks than those whose active members are, separating themselves from inactive members (Lăzăroiu, 2010: 161-164), but the profile of participants in the online meeting shows that they are less committed to a political party and are younger than the traditional activists. Needing information about the party that appears on their website, they use mainly the Internet (Rune, 2010: 46) and subsequently, express in a stronger manner their support for the favorite candidates, becoming receptive and active. It also initiates the interactive communication being allowed dialogue among internet users and politicians. Interactive online communication is structured in an temporary interactive communication on the basis of which candidates are using social media platforms and establish interaction with voters during the election campaign, and after this moment they give up their presence online and interactive communication in which candidates find themselves permanently in the online environment and develop a communication framework regardless of election periods.

Today's political class, irrespective of the country of origin, understood that information is circulating rapidly between politicians, political parties, institutions and citizens, moving quickly with minimal cost over boundaries. Parties and candidates who do not receive significant funds for supporting the election campaigns and which cannot cope with the challenges of the big parties have a real chance to keep up with them, to attract the electorate and to reduce the gap between the known and the unknown candidates. The internet politics is now not only an extension of offline politics, as it was a few years ago. Virtual space has made available for sending the political message tools easily accessed and used through which complex information is transmitted and available to all interested. Internet addresses an audience much larger than the offline public and is not limited by geography, can attract disinterested groups, such a group being represented by young people whose major concerns are not political, provides information in a form accessible to the target groups, enables content modification in real-time such bottlenecks in informing citizens are avoided, citizens' information costs are reduced and monitoring is done in real time. Social networks and video sites have a significant involvement in sending political messages as long as they are used by a large number of users who spend more time using them.

During the 1996 presidential election in the United States, when Bob Dole encouraged voters to visit its website, using the internet in political and electoral communication drew the attention of academics and media. According to specialists, Dole's announcement was the symbol of the

beginning of Internet expansion in election process (Davis, 1999: 85), and during the campaign the researchers estimated that 29% of Americans have used it to gather political information (Gibson and Ward, 2000, p. 301). Thus, since 1996 US election campaigns, in addition to traditional components, have had an operational online component on the sites of candidates' campaign.

If television in 1960 brought John F. Kennedy's victory in the presidential election, in 2008 Barack Obama's victory was largely based on new media. It can be considered that the one, who kicked off the election campaigns held in the online environment for winning the presidential election, even though trends existed in 2004, was Obama. The name of the key element was social networking. In 2008 he counted on allies such as Facebook pages, YouTube channels and personal sites to promote his own image, thus complementing traditional campaign strategies in an innovative way at that time, with great appeal to the American public. With a relatively small budget, its political message went straight to the population and the impact of using the Internet to his campaign was compared to the impact of using television in Kennedy's campaign. 2008 was the moment when the Internet has changed the way of political reporting. In its struggle for the presidency, Obama used absolutely all the tools the Internet could offer in transmitting his election agenda, built dedicated pages by placing ads on video games and turned to sms for keeping abreast with supporters. His staff initiated the website called "Count the lies", which accounted for all the blunders, errors and lies of his opponent in order to provide comprehensive information about the Republican McCain to voters and volunteers. His victory has revealed that the massive use of the Internet has led to the mobilization to vote of large numbers for youngsters deprived of political interest. Specialists consider that they made possible that Obama become president of the United States, although it was considered inexperienced compared to his opponent and without chance because of his religious orientation.

In 2007, in his work entitled *New Media*, Dorina Guțu said that "the parties that will quickly understand the new social realities and appropriately adapt their messages will have the best chance of success. The explosive evolution of Web 2.0 and new technological and social realities require quickly identifying of differences that begin to occur within local elections, reevaluation of voting options considered traditional and outlining of electoral profiles specific to both media - online and offline" (Guțu, 2007: 105). The onset of the local blogosphere and the transition from passive to active in the field were made in the same year, blogs in which politics detached itself as the main topic were the ones of the politicians, political analysts and journalists.

Romania could not fail to register among the countries open to change, becoming a consumer of internet. If in the year 2013, the possibility of mobilizing the Internet was underestimated due to the lack of optic fiber connection that classed Romania on ranked 23 in Europe, 2014 has brought

about an increase of 80% of Romania's connection and ranked 5th in the European rankings, ahead of countries like Hungary and Bulgaria (Covaci, 2015: 86).

Parliamentary elections in 2008 used the blog as a primary tool of communication and transmitting political messages online. These have changed the flow of information on the Internet by supporting interaction between blogger with blogger-reader or blogger with other bloggers, format that favors those who are very active in posting information, dialogue-oriented and motivated to establish sustainable social relations. Considered as new opinion formers and the "fifth power in state", blogger politicians have mobilized their supporters and voters and were able to present themselves in a positive manner to the public (Pătruț, 2011: 59-60). Politicians in Romania understood that use of the Internet and blogs provide in the election campaign and beyond, notoriety, publicity, fairness presentation of their views, dissemination of political messages, but also a solid image. Although creating a political blog requires a relatively small investment and provides opportunity to all candidates to compete in the virtual environment in a democratic manner, in parliamentary elections in 2008 was used in a very low proportion (5.45%) by the candidates of political parties ranked on top. Overall, the online environment has resulted in the same situation as offline environment, preserving the relationships between political forces and discrepancies already existing (Pătruț, 2011: 60-62).

Social media involvement in electoral campaigns in Romania has become remarkable since the 2009 presidential campaign, when politicians communicated to potential electorate and even supporters places where could be seen, events they attended to, messages supporting their campaign and offered to supporters the opportunity to express their opinions on forums (Boșoteanu, 2009: 50). In line with the trend initiated in the US the year before, the campaign for the 2009 presidential election is the first presidential campaign in which local competitors have used Facebook site, along with websites and blogs campaign, but also sites video sharing, YouTube and other social networks such as Twitter. It was found that, in December 2009, in Romania there were 7.43 million Internet users, with tremendous growth in 2007. This was an electoral pool with extremely high potential that could not be avoided by politicians in our country (Momoc, 2011: 39).

Analyzing the election campaigns of Romania in the age of new technology, it can be easily noted their further progress in social media. Thus, the novelty of the November 2014 presidential election is given to us precisely by this innovative system. Having a major role in the campaign, social media has led virtually to the twists of situation between the two rounds of presidential elections in Romania. The effect was unexpected and worths to be considered for future elections. Diaspora voters turned out an unexpected potential after mobilization on the social network Facebook (Covaci, 2015: 85), and Klaus Iohannis is the first politician in Europe who managed to gather more than one million likes. Even in the first round had

about 500,000 likes, approximately 850,000 in the election day, managing to exceed Victor Ponta, immediately after the election, on November 28, Iohannis has reached a number of 1.2 million people who appreciated his page (Bărbieru, 2015: 142). Iohannis online campaign had a well thought out social media strategy, which offered to supporters in the virtual environment various quality materials and the target has been formed by young people between 18-35 years in urban areas. It was created a virtual campaign for this age group, his campaign staff being confident this was the only way the young could be mobilized to vote, many of them having no concerns and political sympathies.

Klaus Iohannis won the presidential election in Romania using social networks and Facebook proved to be the communications platform available for both candidates, social networking site where ideas of governance program were posted and where ideological battles were held to attract younger voters (Covaci, 2015: 90). Social networks have managed to exceed the traditional media, TV channels and newspapers. The convergence between the TV, Facebook and mobile telephony has had as a main consequence the massive mobilization of the exit at the vote and the transformation of a failure in success. Ioan Dan Niculescu, creative director of social media team of Klaus Iohannis, said after winning the election, that "The main objective was winning the election. To convey some political brand values need to resort to appropriate means, in our case we are talking about true, real, and effective means. We focused a lot on the online field that dominate our everyday lives and if I had to sent a message to a target audience, it was easy to see that a majority of Romanians are active in the online environment, we are talking of over seven million Facebook users" (Andriescu and Constanda, 2014).

If in the case of Presidents Kennedy and Obama, in addition to the innovative technology, we can take into account personal charm; in the case of Iohannis things have a different appearance. Without political experience relevant at national or international level, with speech difficulties, rigidity and displayed sobriety, although his political opponents thought that he cannot mobilize the undecided and the disappointed by politics and although it was not confirmed in a major election battle for right, Klaus Iohannis managed to reach the Romanian president position by carrying a primarily online campaign, and a secondly traditional one, and with a budget well below the one of his counter-candidate. According to some analysts, the Diaspora mobilized on social networks and transmitting images in real time had to say a very important word. Electronic solidarity has once again proved its propagation speed and the fact that media can amplify certain feelings, so millions of people can live synchronous the same emotion (Covaci, 2015: 91). The result of the presidential election in November 2014 makes us understand the importance of social media in increasing public participation of online audience and in dissemination of political messages through social networks users that can be used as the main vectors of communication during election campaigns. In future, election campaigns would give an

important role to social media which will be the main channels of electoral communication, with strategies created around them so that the result would be the one wanted.

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# THE ROLE OF THE FAMILY IN THE INTEGRATION OF CHILDREN INTO THE SOCIETY

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**Abstract:** *The family constitutes a distinct social reality. The characteristics specific for the family originate from its different function: physiologic, moral, educational, economic or emotional. It can also be added the juridical role, which is not always related to the other functions. Yet, the complexity of the family life overpasses all these aspects, reaching different levels of social development. If the moral role is, as well, fulfilled (love, affection, understanding and mutual respect), we can talk about a strong family, emotionally connected, which is translated into the reciprocal satisfaction of the two partners' needs and aspirations. This family generates a favourable climate, in which the children can be brought up and educated. For these reasons, the family is a special form of the human community, permanently related to the social reality, which cannot be separated from the numerous phenomena and processes that characterise the society at some point.*

**Key words:** *family; parental responsibility; family functions*

## Introduction

At social level, the structure of the traditional family, in which our parents and grandparents held well-defined positions, has faced a crisis. The family structure was based on the affective role of the mother. The participation of the woman at the professional life generated many social changes inside the family; such is the family planning and the possibility of the woman to carry out activities from the circle outside the maternity. Therefore, the fathers started to also integrate their affective component in their family position, which has not always been an easy thing for them.

The family is the place where the individuals evolve, where he builds up an important share of his relations, and that determinates him, eventually, as a social being. The human being spends the biggest part of their life inside the family. Consequently, here is the place where they learn to connect with the others.

Whatever the family organisation and ethnic, religious or political identity, it represents a dynamic organisation, which is specific to it and through which a wide network of interdictions assure a continuous mobility for it. The family is the first unit, which the children have continuous contact with, and the first context in which the socialisation patterns develop. It is a

world where nothing can be compared and, altogether, the most important “socialising agent”.

Generally, it is said that the family is the basic cell of our society. We do not certainly know if this assertion is still valid nowadays, but we can unquestionably say that any human being has a connection with the family life, and the desire to bring up and educate a child, or many children, is an innate feature, because the nowadays children will be the tomorrow educators.

The statute of natural or professional educator is a difficult one, requiring adequate training that can be obtained from the natural family, from the good upbringing and, later, from school. A simple notification should be made; the terms of natural or professional educator, along with that of parent – mother, father, grandfather, grandmother etc. – are not present in the dictionary of pedagogy. When they appear, they are explained through what they represent, inserted into the notions of family and education, although their place and importance have become inseparable. When we talk about the legal or parental status, it is specified that, regardless the category, it implies “the assembly of stipulations, rules, rights and obligations that are associated with the position that a certain person holds inside the family”(Mitrofan, 2008, p. 316).

It was defined in many ways, but *“the family, in any society, is a means of human communication, between at least two individuals, related through marriage and/or paternal connections, which imply, more or less, the biological and/or psychological aspect”* (Mitrofan, 2010: 17).

### **The family - a psychosocial subject matter**

Given the conditions of the modern life, especially in the big cities, the nuclear family builds its own lifestyle, characterised through affective, communicational and acting concentration, gradual and, sometimes, rapid separation from the entire kinship relation, conferring independence to it, with preponderant possibility for self-correction and self-development. The detaching of the conjugal family from the extended family, leads to a modification of its relations with the external environment, and especially with the natural family (of orientation or consanguine).

The consanguine family, in which the primary relations are between parents and children, is related, in a repetitive succession, to the procreation family, in which the roles are of the husband and wife, and the primary relations between spouses and children (Mitrofan and Ciupercă, 2003: 125).

Essential for the both forms of family is the endless transmitting of the cultural and social experience of the behavioural patterns-of gender, attitudes and mutual expectations of genders, on one side, and of the parents regarding their children, along with those of the children regarding their parents, on the other side.

The nuclear family is preferred by most people, in the highest share around the world, because it is able to assure at least four essential functions: the economic cooperation between spouses, sexual relations, reproduction and socialisation of children (Mitrofan and Ciupercă, 2008: 78).

From the psychological point of view, the nuclear family assures the emotional support, the satisfaction of the security, protection and belonging needs of each member, along with the needs of communication and developing of the personality. The interpersonal creativity in the marital couple becomes an indispensable condition for the development of the family capacity to cope with the external and internal stress, to solve with success the common issues of the daily life, here and now (Mitrofan, 2000: 325).

- *The consensual union* is the way in which the heterosexual couples live together, outside the contract of marriage. It is not very different from the nuclear family, because it includes the majority of the functions and faces the same problems that the married couples do (Mihăilescu, 2000: 235).

The people who cohabit might conclude an agreement of consensual union at a notary. The partner who severely injured the other, who caused invalidity or inability to work for the other, has to take care of that partner, according to the law, as it is stipulated in the legislation of the cohabitation, as form of living together. Between the two partners, there can be concluded a consensual union agreement in front of a notary public, signed by the two of them and registered in a special record, being also issued a registration certificate. The recording is made according to a fee pre-established by the local authorities. A new agreement of this type cannot be concluded again by one of the partners, but six months after the notification regarding the ceasing of the anterior relationship. These provisions can be enjoyed only by the people of full age, who are not legally married and whose relation was of at least a year long, uninterruptedly. The partners have to share, according to their income, the common expenses for maintenance of the dwelling place too, here being included the education of children in support. The goods obtained during the cohabitation, are not equally divided, if this was a special stipulation of the agreement.

The cohabitation tries to satisfy, through conjugation, the need for dependence and identification, along that of autonomy. The couple who decide for the consensual union chooses the quality of the relation, in spite of its durability, under any circumstances. Not long before legislated in our country, the consensual union emerged as a defending reflex for the people who join their destinies, against the social restraints, certain requests imposed by the tradition, often worn in time, and many times absurd. His and her option for such a form of cohabitation, as an alternative for the traditional family, represent an attempt to satisfy the need of independence, autonomy and liberalisation of the relation between the two, and, concomitantly, refusal of certain perceptions, rigid norms and requests, sometimes contrary to the direction in which the natural evolves, and burdens our existence (Petroman and Drăgan, 1998: 112).

While behind the image of marriage, some expectations regarding the mutual fidelity have become increasingly uncertain for the last decades, for both genders, the consensual unions promote the rule of free consented fidelity.

### **The family system and the education**

The family represents a form of organisation characterised by integrity, a moral and affective environment, a bio-psycho-social structure that generates continuity and complete affirmation of the human being, a way for the inter-shaping and synchronisation, unity in the personal interactions and inter-communications, a background that assures the creation and the maintaining of the psychic balance.

Similar to other major institutions, the family, regardless the way it is organised in the different cultures, represents a group of statutes, roles and values necessary for achieving important social purposes. These include the social control of reproduction, the socialisation of the new generation and their integration into institutions. Nevertheless, the ability of the family to fulfil these purposes is greatly influenced by the rapid social change. Consequently, as in other institutions too, the family has to continually adapt to these changes, to become acquainted with them, meet, stimulate or, on the contrary, avoid or manage them.

The family is the natural background in which the personality of the children is shaped, but also a factor for the perfecting of the parent's personality, even if its essential function is to provide security for its members and the education of the children, in this environment obtaining the language, habits and traditions of the group. They form their personality, their character and go from egoism to altruism, by imitating and identifying with their parents. The quality of the children's development depends on the values cultivated in the family, and its cohesion is an important factor in the ulterior evolution of its members.

Considered as the most profound space of the affective relationships, a refuge against the adversities, the family is the most active centre of aggressiveness, maybe because this is the place where each member can reveal their true personality. (Păunescu, 1983: 90) The authority is equally baneful as non-intervention: in the first situation there are created frustrating circumstances, from which repressed aggressiveness and anxiety can emerge, in the other case, people can experience insecurity, indolence and spoiling.

The familial atmosphere presents a special importance among the causes of the aggressive manifestation of a child, and, according to Andre Berge, the family environment satisfy the child as far as it can answer his basic needs, is it is an affective and protective environment, a double indispensable condition for the young individual to learn to create himself, and to position himself in relation with the others. (Berge, 1970: 28)

There are familial climates constantly agitated or constantly warm, of harmony or misunderstanding, climates of solidarity or hostility. There are calm climates, along with the permanently tensioned ones, which can be caused by children too, but that depend essentially by the general attitude of the parents, by their capacity to understand and correctly lead the children. A perpetually tensioned environment, deformed by the defects of the parents, by their vices or misunderstanding, by arguments, acts of violence, distorted by the mutual lack of affection of their members, constitutes a traumatising environment for the child's conscience. According to some specialists, in these circumstances, the children are transformed into over-saturated individuals, who pile up neuro-psycho-affective traumas that will generate, during his teenage period, and especially adulthood, a great quantity of inflammatory aggressive elements. (Păunescu, 1983: 93)

The coherent, equilibrated, secured climate satisfies the needs of security, love, affirmation, the needs for belonging and prestige. Certain stressing events, misunderstandings, failings, illnesses, put to test the unity, the balance and the harmony of the family life, but the resources of cohesion, emerged from the basic quality of the inter-personal relations; allow the surpassing of the dilemmas, and the re-establishing of unity and equilibrium.

The family is the nearest and the most adequate environment of intellectual, affective and connective structuring of the children's personality, the climate becoming the background of material, spiritual and moral features, in which the children will be brought up. Therefore, the material, moral and spiritual lack of this family environment influence negatively the psycho-behavioural and development of the children, especially when these deficiencies generate an unstable, increasingly tensional and conflictual atmosphere, presented scarcely in the legally organised families (problem families) and in severe forms, in the disorganised families.

Therefore, the family climate represents the intellectual and ethic atmosphere inside a family. The conditions that generate agreement, affective security, diachronic human relations, harmony and equilibrium, contribute to the increase of efficiency, maintaining and consolidation of family, unlike their antonyms corroborated with feelings of frustration and insecurity that gradually deteriorate everything and lead, most of the times, to the denuclearisation of the family.

As a rule, most of the children who do not obtain good school results live in a psychologically deteriorated atmosphere – misunderstanding between partners, hostile teachers, bullying colleagues etc. In consequence, regardless the nature of the family, the creation of the favourable climate for the maintaining and the consolidation of the couple, the procreation, the giving birth, the upbringing and education of the children is, and must be, the focus point of a family or of the counsellor. In the situations that lack understanding, collaboration, coordination in all the areas, it appears, or can appear, the danger of the affective climate deterioration and, eventually, the braking up of the family.

The deficiencies of the familial environment disadvantage the normal and equilibrated development of the children, even if, without determining exclusively negative consequences on the development of the social maturity, these deficiencies involve an imminent risk: the projected unfulfilment of the social and professional abilities and aspirations, the resort to delinquency and the imitation of the parents' faults and vices. Yet, most of the times, these situations are infirmed. In such circumstances, it is usually affected the psychical integrity of the partners too, who become unable to manifest according to their maximum potential. The repercussions are multiple, unpredictable and incalculable.

### **The influence of the familial climate on the development of the children**

The family constitutes the main factor for the development and socialisation of children; the first and the most important intermediary is the society. The family exercise the most persistent influence on the children's life, offering protection, affection and role models for the social integration.

The role of the parents is a decisive one, because each child can be educated in an environment of affectivity and love; the children who lack the love of their parents become more fragile and more vulnerable than those whose parents give them the entire affective support. The affective character of the family must be made complete by the protective one, which provides the security of the child against the dangers of the exterior world, preparing him for the living in collectivity. On the other hand, the exaggerated affective dependence can stop the process of maturity, autonomy and independence.

The wide majority of the abandoned children come from disorganised or supposedly organised families, the deviant behaviour being often a way of behaviour that hides the existence of serious educational deficiencies. Nevertheless, there are children and young people who enjoyed good educational conditions; they belong to the difficult to educate category for whom the average time and the environment for education and training were not sufficient, and, in consequence, the educative means were not adequately adapted. Coming all from abusive family relations, in which the physical and moral suffering constitutes a rule, the abandoned children develop provoking, perturbed and perturbing ways of behaviour, for the other people. They are aggressive, making use of the behavioural patterns that they had seen in their families, for solving the conflicts.

The contact between unity and culture, on one side, and child, on the other side, take place firstly with the parents and in their homes. From this point of view, one can assert that the features of the family environment act as a supplier and organiser of the child's physical personalities.

The possibility to observe, at home, people who read, listen to records, play the piano or garden, do the housework or gymnastics, is not an unimportant thing for the child, all these represent stimuli, activities which he

is more or less connected to, areas that reveal themselves in front of him, for exploration. It is not a thing to ignore, if the father decides to read a newspaper instead of dedicating to the child or, even better, doing an activity that he is keen on, either carpentry, pigeon keeping, rod fishing or archaeology; it is not also unimportant, if the mother is concerned only with the household, or she reads to the child, or teaches him to play an instrument.

Unquestionably, there are families that initiate their children only in the common activities or teach them how to behave properly, and the child will be, probably, well educated, but, in the same time, there are families where, at different levels, the child is put in touch with all kinds of sources for his satisfaction, sources of values and humanisation means, which is ideal.

A place of individualisation (the school) of the feeling, the individual relation, each of these terms imply by default the presence of a background, a system of values that the family introduce to the child, and that is, unavoidable, the expression of a culture. The family takes the child into the material world and, to the same extent, into that of objects, their handling, along with the world of the current human activities, teaches him to live, to connect with the surrounding environment. Without this considerable assembly of acquisitions and experiences – that includes, nevertheless, limitative and perturbing elements – is less likely that the school education can be operant. The family presents to the child human patterns that he will imitate and from which he will differentiate, becoming, gradually, not only human, but also a characteristic autonomous personality.

Even if the adults are the fundamental models that constantly show to the child the purpose itself of his bringing up, the world is not reduced only to adults. The child has to be initiated into other social relations, different from those with his role models, and in other changes than those practiced with individuals, whose superiority is unavoidably experienced; he has to know the relations with his peers. From this point of view, the help of his brothers and sisters, on addressing the child's education, is not less important than that of the parents. The fact that a child has other brothers and sisters makes him willing to develop richer and more diverse human relations, as comparing to the only child of a family, for example, to become acquainted with the experience of rivalry, competition, collaboration, solidarity and mutual help.

The family must orientate to child towards the exterior, towards society and it is important that the educated to have his own extra-family life too, usual mates, to get in touch and in competition with the people of his age and friends, whose existence he shares entirely. A reason for which children of close age are important, results from the fact that they provide the child with the feeling that he belongs to a certain group, they are an appropriate barometer of the aspects that include the way of living and that define the notion of belonging or not to that group.

The parents have to know, and most of them do, that they cannot satisfy all the initiating needs of their children; they recognize their limitations

and cannot be representative, in front of the child, for the entire human behaviour and the whole human culture; besides this, they realise that a child can develop his personality following other routes too, others than those offered by them. Therefore, they help the children to get in touch with their visitors, their friends, people from the extended family (grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins), who can bring what the parents are not able to, to the young person that is offered the possibility to extend his variety of human beings that he can meet, and gives him the opportunity to enrich the area of possible role models that he can have. Yet, it is also important for the parents to make sure that these possible models to have affective value and to take into account the fact that they can be valuable, even if they differ from the patterns offered by parents.

In order to promote the involvement into the community, the parents have to make sure that their son (daughter) are affectively involved in all the phases of the community life and, for that, it is necessary that the family participate together to all the cultural (films, concerts, conferences) and social events. There are too many situations in which a child, having familial characteristic for the wide majority of people (for example, a child in disabled trolley, who cannot talk, see, hear, does not participate to the family life outside the family). We might then ask the question, if the parents do not include their children in the events outside the family, how will the members of the society accept these children as equal?

Moreover, a way in which a child can be integrated into a group is to find someone to introduce him in that group. The oldest member of the group can make the way of the new member easier. It is always better to have someone who can introduce you into a new grouping, instead of trying to become a member, by coming from outside. When we help a child to become an integrant part of a group, we must automatically think to all the issues that this child might face and to find a way to solve them, as close to the needs of the child as we can.

During his development and growth as a human being, the child comes into contact with other forms of community organisation too, which are outside his family. If the family represents the starting point for the ulterior evolution, then the institutions and the organisations that he meets, define his social background, the limitations of his becoming and establish landmarks in his existence, by proposing him generally valuable norms. Inside a community, there are governmental institutions and organisations that offer the individual two different types of services: sanitary (hospital, polyclinic), educational (kindergartens, schools, high schools, universities), social protection, transportation etc. Furthermore, there are community organisations (for example, the church) and non-governmental and non-formal organisations that are constituted in groups of reference for the members of the community, offering community models, the security of the Self, the source of values, the valorisation of the personality.

The community offers a set of values to the child, that he will use as guidance, during the formation of his own personality, and that will help him

to integrate into the society. Consequently, the child must be encouraged to learn the difference between right and wrong, this creating in time the self-control, which enables him to tell the truth and to despise the lie. He has to always keep his promises, to take into consideration the others, to help the less fortunate and weaker, and to take responsibility for his deeds. Actually, this means that it must be invested effort for the child to develop his own set of values, along with the sense for the cultivation of these values. He has to learn according to the standards, about what it is and is not acceptable, and to think to the manner the other present themselves, not only the way in which he is.

The aspects and the stages for the creation and the defining of a child's system of values, start from the protection offered to the child, with the purpose to help him to avoid harming himself, getting to moment when his own autonomy and responsibilities can be seen, at the end of an evolution that includes as stages: the detachment, the example and responsibilities, the good communion, the explanation and the reproach, the correspondence between thinking and acting, the shared responsibility, the mutual affection and esteem, the family cohesion.

Although the successive and stimulating educative means that are used during the growing up converge, or should converge, towards the same purpose, that of the child's meeting with himself, of the meditation over his own person, representing the possibility of the child to contribute to his own education, to the development by himself.

The group or family talking, the watching of educative television shows are ways in which a child's beliefs can be developed, who has to understand that there are people with different values than his (for example, religious values) and, nevertheless, he has to respect them and try to understand them too.

The child must develop his moral sense that will stop him from cheating his fellow people, from discriminating against races and genders, or from being intolerant. Moreover, there is a set of notions that he has to define during his development and to realise the bad side of: alcohol consumption, smoking, drugs abuse, and to define his own path as regarding his sexuality, faithfulness in couple, abortion and divorce.

A major part in the interiorisation of these values, to a child, is held by the family pattern. Thus, the child, even if he finds out that it is not right to do something, if he sees his parents doing it, he will do the same in his turn, even if he observes that this thing is not accepted by the society.

For all the children, to have a community a family in which to be involved, are the component of their becoming as active citizens. What is more, it is for them to be involved in common activities, with common people, using all the chances for becoming a part of their community. This means to have contacts with the others, to try new activities, new things, but also to continue enjoying the old activities and situations. The community is not just a place for meeting new people, but it is also a circumstance to learn new things.

For a lot of reasons, we need the communities that include all the people. Indeed, a community that does not accept and does not actively look for diversity and the distinctions between its members, is not a community in the most desired meaning of this word. Not all the communities are perfect, but, first of all, they are reflections of the human existence. The inclusion into a community is not only the best aspect to work on, but it is also the eating heart of the human being.

Love represents a condition for the integration. But love is not always kind and tender. Sometimes, it is harsh and rough, without stopping from being love. As a parent, you love your child, but the same parental quality asks you to be harsh and merciless with those who infringe the moral rules of the family. In a marriage, there is not accepted the physical aggressiveness, infidelity, sexual abuse, alcoholism or drug addiction between the partners, but if the same adult wish to be consider true parents, they will be, for the same reasons, merciless as regarding their children. Only this way, their deeds, operations and actions are motivated by love. Only the person who has no love, accepts the repeated compromises as a principle in the children's education. Love must defy. This is the rough love, de facto, the true love (Chapman, 2001: 76).

## **Conclusions**

The stability and the actions of the family depend, in a great extent, on the relations of communication and the interaction of its members. Human interaction represents a fundamental process of reciprocal dependency, among individuals, through which, the actions of a member, have consequences of the other one's behaviour.(Ciofu, 1995: 173)

Due to the fact that the partners influence each other, each of them tries to adapt and identify the effects exercised on the other. Thus, in the familial interaction, the perceptive-cognitive confrontation is important, on it being based the evolution and the reciprocal assessment, through a correctional feed-back succession that have an inter-adaptive meaning. (Mitrofan, 1989: 52)

The parents-children interaction is an indispensable factor for a normal development of the child, the family being a system of communication and development environment, for the child, during his first years. This interaction, parents-children, must be analysed not only as regarding the intra-family relations that provide the functionality and the stability of a family. Even though the relation between mother and child is the most important, we must consider the other ones too, especially the relation between a child and his grandparents.

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## THE ROMANIAN MIGRATION TO CANADA

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**Abstract:** *The migration of the population is a complex process, influenced by many facts that determine the intensity of the migration flows, that lead to multiple effects , most likely unwanted , on that certain population. After the falling of communism, Romania and Poland were the biggest providers of migrants. In this more than twenty years after, Romanian migration has become a mass phenomenon, with huge involvements at the Romanian society level. Romanian migration knows different European directions, but also non-European ones. In Europe, Romanians first turned towards countries like Turkey, Israel, Hungary and Germany, then Italy and Spain. Non European countries that Romanians constantly oriented to are the United States of America and Canada. The study follows a presentation of the Romanian migration process in general, focusing on the migration to Canada, from a social wiew. Romanian migration is various and highlighted. If in the beginning it was predominant male, it now reaches the equality of the gender categories. There is also a orientation on activity fields. Men in building, agriculture and industry, women in taking care of people, housekeeping, agriculture and accommodation services. The reviews on the Romanian migrants start to appear after 2007.*

**Key words:** *Romanian migration; Canada; Romania; Romanian immigrants.*

America has always been seen as the promised land, where freedom and equality of chances were offering everyone the shelter they needed after the oppressive regimes (between 1871-1915 nearly 40 million people left the continent). America was the chance of a new beginning. The migration to America was a strong influenced phenomenon by the demographic, economical and political conditions of everyday life Balcan inhabitant, situated at the crossroad of the great empires.

The study shows the migration phenomenon to Canada , starting to define the used concepts , like "migration" and "immigrant" and continuing with the exposure of the identified steps , the numbers and directions. I will use observation in my study, historical method and comparison methods .

Migration is usually defined by the movement of a person or a group of persons from a geographic location to another administrative and politic border. They want to establish either temporary or permanent to another place beside the original one. Keeping in mind that the movement between two geographic locations does not have to appear directly, we can distinguish the welcoming region (OIM, 2003: 8). The movements inside a country are usually defined as internal migration, therefore, the ones across

the borders are named international migration. For this reason we are focusing only on the international migration.

The immigrants are the people that leave their birth places for economic reasons , seeking new better paid jobs or just to get rid of poverty. Of course, many others migrate as a result of political reasons . Eitherway, from all the facts that influence the migration flow the economic one remains the main: hunger, unemployment, lack of farmlands. It is understood that this flows are, by their nature, voluntary ones . But there also are involuntary, like the ones caused by wars , natural disasters etc.

The time period 2002-2006 points a change in the economic Romanian migration in a mass phenomenon, one that lasts in time.

In Canada, the first Romanian immigrants arrived in the last two decades of the XIX century. In the beginning they were in small numbers, but after the year 1900 the number becomes significant . We can remember that here, in 1898 two Romanians, Iachim Yurko and Elie Ravliuk from Boian, Bucovina bought land in the North East of Edmonton and built houses and farms. Until the beginning of the year 1901, more than 100 families established there.

From the statistics of that time regarding Romanian immigration to Canada we can see that in the year 1914 their number was 8.013 and in the year 1921 it reaches the number of 29.056. Most of them came from Bucovina, but in small numbers also from Transylvania, Banat and Dobrogea. Moving across Europe they reached Hamburg or other harbors from which they embarked in ships that were going to Halifax, St.John, Montreal or New York. From here they went to Saskatchewan and Alberta, where the land was cheap and in some areas even free.

The Canadian Government supported the immigration, having as a law document the "Dominion of Canada Policy". Each immigrant was offered 160 acres that means 65 hectares, for which they paid a tax of ten dollars. The obligation was to build a house and seed the land. After three years he became the so named homesteader. The arrival of Romanian immigrants in Canada was made of successive waves. The first one arrived in the new world before World War one, between the years 1907-1913, for economic reasons. Some of them migrated to Canada to establish there forever. They were given free land from the Canadian Government and their main choir was agriculture, same as home, in Bucovina, establishing in the region of the Saskatchewan fields, Alberta and Manitoba. They cut down forests, expanding the farmland region, they built roads, houses.

The period of the migration to North America happened at the end of the XIX century. The parts of the country that provided the first waves of immigrants to the USA and Canada are Bucovina and Transylvania (for Canada also adding Dobrogea). The reason for leaving was economic or demographic: poverty, lack of farmland. The new information about the new world made it soon a land of the promises. Romanians arrived in Canada were taken to the uninhabited areas that were going to be the biggest agricultural areas: Saskatchewan, Alberta, Manitoba. As pioneers of the East

European migration, the Romanians had a role in populating and civilization of central Canadian regions, that later became their properties. Another category of immigrants came to Canada in the hope of making money and then returning home, where they could buy land and live a better life, together with their families. They went to industrial centers such as Montreal, Hamilton, Windsor or Regina, where they could work in factories or in the Ontario mines. The war in 1914 stopped many of them from returning home ; after peace was made, some got used to life in Canada and they decided to stay here forever, but some returned to Romania. Between 1920-1922 a big number of people arrived in Canada, mostly to reunite with their families.

The Romanian community, composed by the first and the second wave of immigrants was made up in 1931 by 30.000 people. The Government then stopped the immigration and the number dropped in 1941 to about 25.000 people.

The ending of the second world war means also the beginning of a third wave of immigrants (1945-1955). Most of them had good school training, they were from the city and at first they were ready to take any job that was given to them and then to try and work in the fields they studied and also had experience. Their motivation was politic. If in the year 1925-1926 only in Canada emigrated 3652 people (some of which Romanian national minorities) But, for all the period between the two world wars , the number of Romanians that left to the two Americas did not go over 20000.

The first wave of immigrants after the second world war strenghten the basis of the first ones and also made them a part of the new Canadian society, multiplied the activity of the Romanian communities, making the conscions more aware of the reality drama in Romania. After "defreezing" period after Stalin, the comunist regim in Romania intensified, again, the oppressive side so, after 1970 (even to the end of the next decade) a new Romanian immigrants flow was noticed. Many of them had access to schools and were well informed of what was going on in the world. Persecuted if they dared to reach with their critics the official propaganda, they choose the exile way and the refugeee.

The number of Canadians with Romanian roots is discusable. After official statistics in 1980 there were only 45000 Canadian-Romanians, in the following cities: Regina, Windsor, Montreal, Toronto, Kitchener, Vancouver, Edmonton, Winnipeg, Calgary etc. After the events in december 1989, when the revolution wasn't able to remove the scars of the communism, we notice another wave of Romanian immigrants in Canada. The main feature is the diversity and heterogenity on ages 20-70 years old and jobs, most intelectual, but also some related to other fields. The impact of this las immigrant wave was still politics, but was also doubled by an economic one. Romania in crossing a great economic, socilal, political crisis.

Therefore a big part of the intellectuals, disapointed by the revolution's failure is trying to find another mother country and the feeling of freedom, which they did't knew before, not even after the communism. Nowadays, the Romanian Canadian centers can be cities like: Montreal,

Toronto, Regina, Calgary, Edmonton. Reviewing the general context of Romanian emigration to Canada we notice that, if the first wave had peasants from Transilvania, Bucovina or Dobrogea, the last ones had Romanians from all over the country, in particular from the Old Kingdom.

The first immigrants established in Canada; the ones that came after the war, were accepted as political refugees. From a personal point of view, the ones from the first two waves were very fond of their country, a very strange thing given their social nature, that was making them live a ghetto life, but they always intended to return to Romania as soon as they raised enough money. A special category is represented by those who don't care about the country, Romania or Romanians, people without a God, strays.

From the year 2001, thousands of Romanians decided to leave Romania, to countries from South Europe and West, searching for a better life. Given that a number of 1.5 mil is brought up, we can speak about a national phenomenon. This phenomenon led to the avoiding of a social crisis with serious follow ups on the society and a negative effect on Romania becoming part of the European Union.

The migration of workforce, was the foundation of social transformations in Romania. Working abroad means for most Romanians a temporary strategy, most of them choosing to come back to Romania. The national law regarding migration led to the rising of the illegal migration and exposure of people to the risk of violating the human rights. Until the year 2002 the main destinations for Romanians were Germany (half of the total immigrants), Hungary, Italy, Spain, USA and Canada.

If in 2003 most of the immigrants choose USA and Canada, In the year 2004 they choose central European countries and North America. In the year 2004 the permanent migration phenomenon from the beginning of the year 1990 was replaced with a temporary external migration, without the residence changing and based only on economic reasons.

The new arrived has no free time. In fact his staying is only based on work and he doesn't see it as a new lifestyle. That is why the notion of migration for work seems to suit this area of population that is established abroad only for a limited time. They do not come to stay (even though 55% will remain). (Badescu, I., 2014: 56)

Romania has another problem with the so called phenomenon of "migration of the brains", over a quarter of the emigrant workforce has university studies. The most common were workers, medical assistants, doctors, engineers, architects and IT specialists. (Tuglui, M., 2009: 467)

In the year 1920 the first immigrants number from Quebec, Alberta, Saskatchewan is getting bigger until the third decade, during the second World War and in particular after 1947 and the beginning of the 50, but also in the 60 and 70 we can talk about a second big wave. After December 1989, when emigration became legal, Canada became an accessible destination both for the ones that were disillusioned by the changes in Romania and for the ones that left the country because they had economic issues or other personal reasons.

Unlike the USA that applies the so called politics of the melting pot, in which all the cultures of the immigrants merge, and the only mother language is English, Canada recognizes English and French, without limiting the liberty of using the mother language, no matter what that is. In the Canadian view, control is better exercised upon certain group identities, than individual varied identities, that are flexible, slippery and open to random changes. According to the 2011 census, the number of Canadian citizens and permanent residents that had Romanian origins was somewhere around 204.625(Romanians in North America (aprox. 7500000), and the one in Canada was the second from North America, after the one in SUA (aprox. 1 million) (Otovescu, 2013: 24-28).

### **Conclusions**

A part of the Romanian emigrants from North America came back between the World Wars. With the money they saved up they bought land, cereal mills, they invested in local industry. Most of them, did not come back and reunited their families. Their followers today barely can imagine what hard times their ancestors had to endure living the American dream on the promised land. Some of them made it, some didn't, but for sure Romanians are a part of the North American mosaic. The number of the ones that reached Canada is 120.000. It is hard to tell how many live in North America.

In the first part of the XX century Romanian immigrants established in field areas, after the second World War they moved to Ontario and Montreal.

After the second World War immigrants from Canada divide in three categories: those from the year 1948, the new comers before 1989 and the ones after 1989. From the first category are the war victims that came from refugees camps in Western Europe. Another part left Romania illegally at the same time. Most of them were against communism and Romanian government.

Romanians played a great role in the development of Canada as a multicultural society . And even if the road was long and hard, the refugees brought with them their customs and traditions, giving them as a gift to the foster state, For example in Willington, the houses have the same style as in Bucovina, some of them making it in time to our days.

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## WORK-FAMILY CONFLICT IN RELATION WITH RESOURCE CONSERVATION THEORY AND EXPANSIONIST THEORY

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**Abstract:** *Initially, work and private life were conceptualized according to the model of two separate spheres. From mixing those spheres generally resulted problems, failures, stress, all united under the term "work-family conflict". This wording refers to the role conflict occurred when the requirements of the professional role are incompatible with the family demands (Greenhaus, Beutel, 1985). Later, the relationship between family and profession was seen as a bidimensional construct, the professional roles affecting private roles and vice versa. Although, initially research has paid attention to work-family conflict, it seems, however, that balancing family and professional life is an intriguing, multifaceted domain, which may take positive or negative aspects. The results of recent studies (Barnett and Hyde, 2001) about the benefits in terms of life quality when one is involved in several roles, prompted reconsideration of the issue and the tendency of deepening research, in order to identify variables that determine transforming what was originally lived as a conflict, into a life situation with positive effects for the individual and why not for the organization to which he belongs, his family and thus society.*

**Keywords:** *work-family conflict; resource conservation theory; expansionist theory*

### Introduction

The phrase „work-family conflict” started to make history at the beginning of the 1980’s, with the growing involvement of women in the labour market. These demographic changes among employees led to the reconsideration of those traditionalist conceptions according to which men have a duty to procure the resources needed for living, while women’s mission is to take care of home and children. As the proportion of women with professional activities increased significantly, while striving to achieve housework, the tasks of the two roles have become incompatible, causing the conflict between the two spheres.

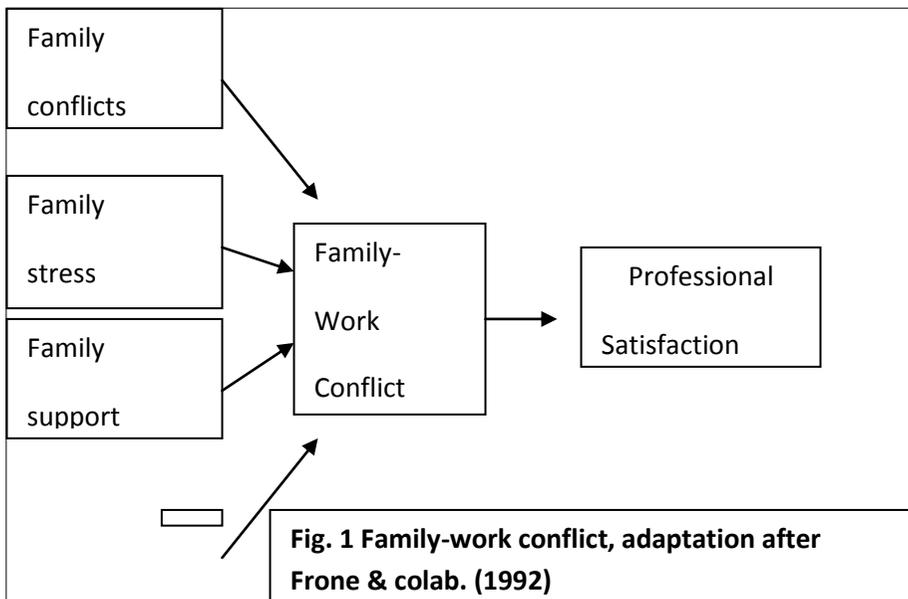
The conclusions of field research (Barnett, 1998: 125-182) are that in our society continues to dominate the idea that work and family are two different areas, competing for our resources of time, energy, attention or involvement.

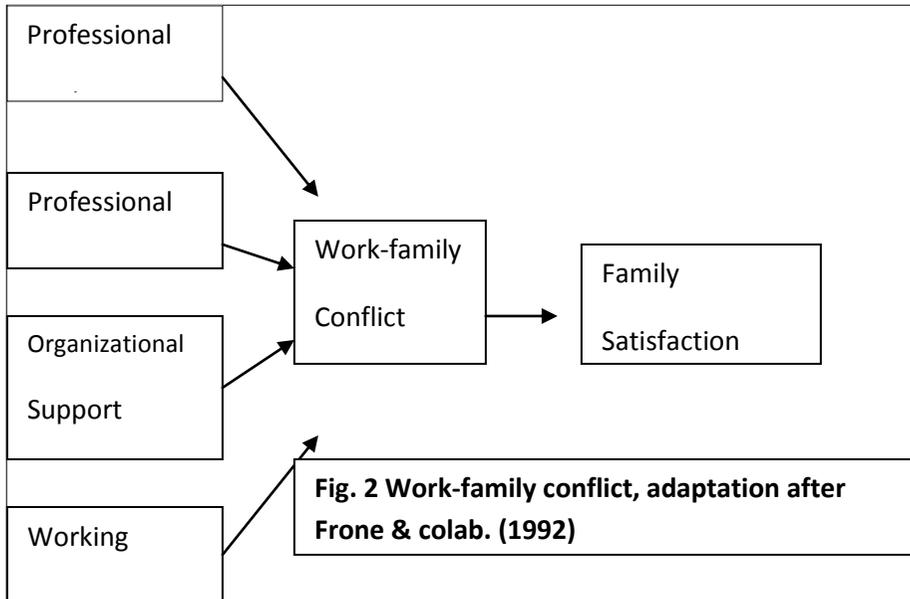
## Conceptualization

When work affects family we are talking about work-family conflict, and if private life interferes with the profession, exists the family-work conflict, the first direction of the conflict is the most frequently studied.

Frone (1992: 65-78) proposed a model according to which work-family conflict is both an outcome and a predictor of marital and professional satisfaction, the latter being influenced by particularities of work and private life. Thus, professional stress, family problems, family conflicts are the variables most often associated with the appearance of conflict between family and professional life, these factors having negative effects on work and family.

As a predictor, work-family conflict has undesirable organizational consequences that could take the form of absenteeism, resignations, personnel fluctuation (Hepburn and Barling, 1996:311-318; Kossek, 1990: 769-791). Health also suffers from the imbalance between job and family.





It is noted in these two figures how family satisfaction is influenced by a number of factors of the working environment and job satisfaction is in turn explained by specific family variables.

### **Resource conservation theory**

The theory of resource conservation (Grandey and Cropanzano, 1999; Hobfoll, 1999: 350-370) is often used as a starting point in the effort to conceptualize work-family conflict. According to it, people's aim is to get new resources, either as material (money, houses, and cars) or emotional, spiritual or energetic (more time, a certain social status, personal characteristics and various others). When these resources are threatened or lost, stress appears.

The resource conservation theory explains emerged stress from the concern on the reduction of resources in the future, a new point of view by referring to the classical theories (Lazarus and Folkman, 1984), according to which this tension is an individual's response to the challenges coming from the external environment.

Thus, work-family conflict occurs as a consequence of the resources consumed when the individual attempts to reconcile private and professional life. Deficit hypothesis, according to which human beings have limited, predetermined energy resources, supports this assumption, outlining a scenario whereby when a domain gets all attention, most resources are consumed in that direction, so that involvement in other life aspects is lesser, and the role is less well met (Gutek, Searle, Klepa, 1991: 560-568). According to the deficit hypothesis, the more roles a person handles, the more constraints and overloads will affect that person.

However, feelings of satisfaction arising in relation to fulfilling a certain role were seen by some authors (Grzywacz and Bass, 2003: 248-262) as fuelling the resources tank that contributes to counteract the negative effects of work-family conflict.

### **Expansionist theory**

Expansionist theory argues that involvement in multiple roles creates for the individual a greater variety of opportunities and skills that facilitate his personal development, thus contributing to a better functioning. (Pogan, 2014: 146).

Expansionist hypothesis starts from the hypothesis that energy or time can increase, they are not some fixed variables, limited to a predetermined value. In this way, when a person occupies various roles, energy reserves are developed; multiple roles are beneficial for physical, mental, relational and individual health. This theory is supported by the assumption that when acting in several positions, the individual is involved in various processes, such as "small conflicts, adding value, social support, opportunities for experimenting success, widening reference, growth of self-complexity, similarity of experiences and gender role ideology" (Barnett and Hyde, 2001:784) .

Studies that aimed the validity of the expansionist hypothesis (Baruch and Barnett, 1986, Barnett and Hyde, 2001: 578-585) have shown that filling several roles simultaneously has beneficial effects. For example, "researchers noted, especially in men, that job related stress is strongly countered by a quality marital relationship, since it appears that the opportunity to share the difficulties of the day to a sensitive partner works as a resource in overcoming obstacles " (Pogan, 2014:146).

For women who have abandoned traditional view studies also demonstrate that there are some situations when roles overlapping brings advantages. For women who are wives, mothers and employees the mental and physiological wellness level is superior to that of wives or mothers unemployed, but also compared to the single career females . So it seems that involvement in professional roles has positive results for women, and for men adding responsibilities in the family helps (Stevens, Minote, Mannon, Kiger, 2007: 242-262).

For operationalization and empirical testing of these new assumptions outlined in addressing work-family relationship, were introduced a number of terms that have a positive connotation, contrary to previous approaches. We intend to give a few examples in the following lines.

Work – family auto-enhancing is "the extent to which aspects of the family or work role provide resources to facilitate the performance of the opposite role" (Voydanoff, 2002:138-164). Work-family facilitation entails the "extent to which participation in work (or home) is facilitated by experiences, skills and opportunities gained or developed at home (the place of the work)" (Frone, 2003: 143-162).

Job - home positive interactions "describes how one's behaviour from a domain is influenced by the positive reactions built in the other field". (Geurts et al. 2005: 319–339).

Other authors speak of work - family enrichment as "the extent to which the experiences from one role improve the life quality of the other role." (Greenhaus and Powell, 2006: 72-92).

Positive family-work spill over represents the "transfer of emotions, skills, behaviours, and values with positive aspects from the original to the receiving domain, having beneficial effects on the receiving area" (Hanson et al., 2006: 249–265).

Work - family facilitation is "the extent to which the individual engaging in a life field (eg, work or family) bring gains (developmental, emotional, capital or efficiency) that contribute to the better functioning of the other area of life (family or work) ". (Wayne et al., 2007: 63–76).

Watching all these terms we can notice the mutual beneficial effects that these two major areas of existence of any human being have on individual functioning.

## **Conclusions**

Both perspectives, the resources conservation and expansionist thesis, have supporters who argue results empirically, which helps both to represent a valid starting point in addressing relations between private life and profession. Although when it comes to balancing family and professional life, the central concept is "work-family conflict," recent studies have noted positive correlation in terms of involvement in both kinds of roles (Marks MacDermid, 1996: 417- 432).

Expansionist theory can be seen in contrast with conventional approaches to the interface between work and private life, conceptualized as work-family conflict, perspectives according to which professional and family roles are negatively correlated. An additional argument which supports the expansionist theory is the benefits that the satisfaction of fulfilling a certain role has at psychological level, on the individual wellbeing. The quality of a role, measured by the satisfaction felt, has the merit to offset the difficulties posed by this . In other words, the difference between the stressful aspects of a role and the ones that bring satisfaction in achieving a role, represent the quality of that role. (Barnett et al., 2006: 209-221).

The quality of the professional role has been identified as being associated with the distress level (Barnett et al., 1993: 794-806), high levels of job satisfaction positively correlating with low rates of psychological distress.

Regarding the relationships quality, recent research (Hyde, DeLamater, Durik, 2001: 10-23) noted that involvement in work positively influences family involvement. In a study on the benefits of marriage for employed women (Oppenheimer, 1997: 431-453) the highest marital stability

was seen in couples where both partners undertake professional activities. This can be highlighted by reference to the classical theory of roles homophily proposed by Simpson and England, according to which "roles solidarity within the family leads to increased solidarity and reduces marital conflict" (Simpson; England, 1981:180-204).

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## THE COMMUNITY OF THE ROMANIANS WHO WORK IN THE INSTITUTIONS OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

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**Abstract:** *The 1990s experienced the real emerging of the first wave of Romanians in the world of the European Brussels. How many Romanians are presently working in Brussels? Is there a request of the specific market on addressing the Romanians? What qualities and skills do we need to have, in order to succeed in our attempts to work in the community capital? There are two labour markets in Brussels, Brussels-Belgium and Brussels-The European Union that, due to geographical superposition, create confusion. There is a Brussels-Belgium, with all the specific features of an occidental capital, and there is also a Brussels-The European Union, with totally different opportunities and approaches. It is hard to imagine the multi-cultural mosaic formed around Schuman Market, but it is very important to decipher it, in order to find personal opportunities for working here. The quality of the Romanian presence in the European Union is mostly given by the quality of the Romanian administration presence, in the relation with the European administration. The administration is the first interface with the European institutions.*

**Key words:** *European institutions; Romanian delegation; community capital*

### Introduction

In Brussels, the capital of the European Union, there has been developed a true community, now existing over 100,000 people, who, through their political and financial power, have totally changed the positioning of “the Brussel region”, classified, nowadays, on the third place, after the City of London and Luxembourg, in the classification of “wealth”, for the 268 regions of the European Union.

The European Brussels is a conglomerate of European institutions and communities created around them, which led to the forming of a separate segment called “the actors of the European Union”. Among the 100,000 people who work in the European Brussels, only 50% do this in the European institutions. Besides the institutions, it is also about the powerful private sector, represented by the European and international companies, industrial federations, European press and non-governmental sector. Brussels is the main pole of the world media, with thousands of accredited journalists.

Approximately 400 multinationals, which we can meet, most of them, in Romania, have also a permanent headquarters at Brussels, an “embassy”

of that corporation near the European institutions. The same way that Romania has an embassy in Belgium, being responsible with all the bilateral relations between Belgium and Romania, a permanent Representation near the European Union, correspondingly, Microsoft has a department that takes care of “the sales market of its products” in Belgium, but also in the European legislative dynamics.

For a permanent or temporary job in the community institutions, there is a very complex procedure, not impossible, but it requires many years, most of the times, until the success. The EPSO competitions (offered through the European Personnel Selection Office), are already noticeable in Romania. There are a lot of training sessions of the European Personnel Selection Office, offered by dozen of entities from Romania. They are paid with few hundred euros, but the chances for success are not exactly very high. There are just few positions distributed for the countries as Romania, and the competition is very strong.

Europe has already dealt with a part of the internal policy for Romania. The analyses say that three quarters of the legislation that is applied in Romania originates from Brussels. This legislation can be noticed in various fields of activity, in our private and professional life, no matter the sector we work in, or the county we live. Policies as the civil justice, environment, consumers’ protection, the rights of the companies, small and medium-sized enterprises, do not constitute sensational headlines. Yet, they produce sensational changes in the lives of citizens, society, family, professional associations, companies, majority of people.

### **The importance of the Romanian presence in the European Union’s institutions**

The Romanian members of the European Parliament are at Brussels and Strasbourg. They are transmitted the fundamental positions of their legitimate interest groups from Romania, on addressing the adopting legislation. Besides them, we promote them too, at their offices from Brussels and Bucharest. They need specialty input on the various technical matters that the specialty Committees discuss, and which are regulated. Not all the health, finances, environment etc. specialists are politicians, holding honourable European positions, for our advantage. There are representatives of all the Europeans, yet the saying that “charity begins at home” is their “circumscription” – Romania.

The Romanians who are involved in European businesses at Brussels, in the public or private sector, in that of institutions, can confirm this availability of the European Parliament Romanian members. Many of them are young, they are not politicians with important positions in our country and, therefore, they prefer the direct and efficient dialogue, beyond the protocol requests. They regret themselves the fact that they receive insufficient clear taking of positions from the Romanian side, that these come rather late and would like that, besides the written opinions that they receive

from time to time, to discuss more specifically with the representatives from Brussels, or in their offices from the country. They also receive protests from them, yet too late, after the legislation had already been adopted at Brussels, having irreversible consequences for some sectors from Romania.

The governmental representatives noticed the importance of the Romanian members, and so did the European parliamentarians (<http://www.euractiv.ro>), as regarding the common community decision and to assure support in the European Parliament for the promoting of the governmental positions. The Permanent Representation of Romania at Brussels puts itself into coordination with the Romanian European members of the Parliament, on addressing some records – most of the time outside the range of “the great policy”. The success of anchoring a legitimate Romanian interest in the European legislation depends on its representation in the both legislative instances, in the European Council, where the Government has the leading position in the negotiations for Romania, but also in the Parliament, where the stakeholders from Romania, the beneficiaries of the European policies and legislation from our country, should be the preferred source for consulting and lobby (in European, based, legal and correct meaning)

The culture of consultation and constructive dialogue are making their first steps in our country. Yet, it constitutes a rule in the “old” states members of the European Union. The consulting of stakeholders has started to take place regularly, at least in certain fields. The initiative usually belongs to the line ministries, which manage and formulate the national position about a certain sectorial topic, from the political-legislative European actual issues. The internal background is, therefore, the first that must be checked by the Romanian legitimate groups of interest. Beyond this background, or in case the promoting of the specific interest fails to occur internally, the stakeholders can resort to the help of the European parliamentarians from their country.

Nowadays, in the European Commission, there are 800 Romanian officials and, probably, three times more contractual agents. In the entire community institutions, the number of the permanent or temporary Romanian employees must be over 2,000. Basically, Romania reached the number of officials inside the European Commission for all the categories, starting with the generalists, employed for the AD5, until AD14, where there are the directors (Hotnews.ro, accessed on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July 2013).

### **Institutional modifications on addressing the admission of Romania into the European Union**

The European Union Council adopted, on the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2007, a series of decisions that entered into force at the same date, through which there are realised all the institutional modifications that result after Bulgaria and Romania joined the European Union.

These decisions aimed for:

- The naming of new members, Romanian and Bulgarian, in the European institutions;
- The actualisation of the official numbers regarding the population of the European Union and the list concerning the holding of European Union Council President positions (Romania is enjoying this privilege between July and December 2019);
- The modification of the necessary numbers for the vote through qualified majority. These decisions were then amended by the European level evolutions.

As regarding the manner of decision with qualified majority, in the European Union Council, it is maintained by the Treaty of Lisbon, along with the Treaty of Nice, until the 31<sup>st</sup> of October 2014. This system implies that, for the adopting of a decision by the European Union Council, through qualified majority, there are necessary 255 votes, from the total of 345.

The votes must come from the majority of states members and to represent at least 62% from the European Union's population. Romania has 14 votes in the European Union Council. Thus, in the votes share, Romania holds the seventh place, after Germany, Great Britain, France, Italy, Spain and Poland.

Starting with the 1<sup>st</sup> of November 2014, the system of voting, in the Council, has been modified, the majority being defined as representing at least 55% of the states members, including 15 states members and 65% of the Union's population. In case the Council decided differently than the proposal of the Commission or the High Representative of the Union for the external affairs and security policy, the necessary percent for the representation of the states members, becomes of 72%. Nonetheless, between the 1<sup>st</sup> of November 2014 and the 31<sup>st</sup> of March 2017, the system of voting modified, at the request of a state member, the decisions being adopted according to the in force system, until the 31<sup>st</sup> of October 2014.

The admission of Romania into the European Union determined the Permanent Mission of Romania to the European Union to be transformed into the Permanent Representation of Romania to Brussels, which is the main intermediary of the communication between the institutions of the European Union and those of Romania, both on central and local level.

Permanent Representation of Romania, along with the authorised national institutions, elaborates the documents regarding the position of Romania, which are then presented and promoted among the European institutions.

For the fundamental and inclusive representation of the interests from Romania at Brussels, it is necessary the joining of two factors: the intensification, on one side, of the stakeholders' consulting, from the institutional field, and, on the other side, the understanding, the creation of a reflex of them, for following the European legislative actuality, for identifying and communicating, in due time, their positions and to promote them actively at Bucharest and Brussels. The Romanian members of the European Parliament ought to be the priority recipients of opinions, positions and

arguments of the Romanian interest representatives. The suggesting arguments, the transmitting documents that support the expressed opinions, the direct dialogue with them and with the members of their offices, and the maintaining of a professional relation, are beneficial for the two parts: the stakeholders, because the adopted European legislation will be closer to their direct and specific interest, and to the European parliamentarians, because they will have strong arguments for defending a Romanian position, being able to position themselves actively, competently and efficiently as regarding the files they work on, and because they will be offered motivation as regarding the activity carried out at Brussels, for the citizens that they represent.

### **The Romanian representation in the European Parliament and the other institutions of the European Union**

The European Parliament published the data of the Euro barometer, as regarding the perception of Romania about it (according to <http://www.euractiv.ro/uniunea-europeana/>, accessed on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July 2013). The Eurobarometer realised during 2007 – 2011, shows important data concerning the Romanians' level of knowledge in relation to the way in which the European Parliament functions, the degree of information, through the Romanian mass-media, about the European procedures, along with the policies and values that the population from Romania consider priority in its activity. Thus, according to the Euro barometer, a substantial majority of respondents from Romania has solid knowledge on the European Parliament's activity: 45% of them know the fact that the appointing of the deputies in the European Parliament depends on the political affinities, as comparing to the European average of 39%. The Romanian respondents are also better informed, then the rest of the Europeans, as regarding the way in which the deputies are appointed in the European Parliament: two thirds know that the deputies are directly elected in the Parliament by the citizens of the different states members (66%), compared to 55%, in the European Union, in general. Only 10% answered incorrectly (unlike 27%, in the entire European Union).

The data published by the Euro barometer, place the Romanians in the classification of the best informed Europeans, as concerning the procedures of the European Parliament. The results of the Euro barometer represent a new proof for the preoccupation of the Romanians to be informed and to understand precisely, the meaning of the received information.

As regarding the information through mass-media, approximately two thirds of the Romanian respondents remember that they have recently read, seen or heard a piece of news about the European Parliament (65%, compared with the 52%, in the entire European Union), according to the data supplied by the Euro barometer.

On addressing the policies that have to be supported especially in the European Parliament, the results of the Euro barometer show that “the fight against poverty and social exclusion”, “a security and defending policy, to allow the European Union to face the international crisis” and “the improvement of the consumers’ protection and public health”, are the three policies that should be considered a priority, according to the respondents from Romania (<http://www.euractiv.ro/uniunea-europeana/>, accessed on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July 2013). The last two are mentioned more frequently in Romania, than in the European Union, in general.

Related to the values that should be firstly protected: “The Protection of Human Rights” is the first option of both Romanians and Europeans, in general (58% in Romania, 58% in the European Union). The second choice refers to “the solidarity between the states members of the European Union”. This value is mentioned more frequently in Romania, than in the European Union, in general, (43% in Romania, 33% in the European Union). On the third place, almost a third of the Romanians mention “the equality between men and women” (32%, compared with 35% in the European Union). Totally, five of the eight values are mentioned less frequently by the Romanian respondents, than by the European respondents, on average, especially: “the freedom of expression” (26%, on the fifth place, compared to 33%, in the European Union, in general, on the third place).

Finally, the Euro barometer shows that the Romanians want the European Parliament to play a more important role than at present (59%), confronted with the Europeans who share the same idea, but only 49% of them (*Idem*).

In the European Parliament, we are represented by 32 parliamentarians from Romania, 13 of them members of European Popular Party Group, a number of 16 parliamentarians are in the Progressive Alliance of Socialists Group, and 3 parliamentarians are in the Liberal and Democrat Alliance Group (according to [http://europa.eu/about-eu/institutions-bodies/european-parliament/index\\_ro.htm](http://europa.eu/about-eu/institutions-bodies/european-parliament/index_ro.htm)).

In an interview taken by RomBel, Ștefan Tincă, the ambassador of Romania in the Kingdom of Belgium declared: “Belgium has been, during our history, a source of inspiration for the modernization of Romania and I think, further on, that here there are sectors of activity, principles and social practices that can inspire us for improving the things at home.

Today, we have the best premises for Romania and Belgium to participate together to the European construction. We can resort to the support and the vast experience of Belgium, as concerning our full integration in the European Union, by reaching the convergence with the western states of the Union. In our turn, we can open our perspectives for the involvement of Belgium in this strategic space, which in the Balkan – Black Sea – Caspian Sea Arch” (<http://www.euractiv.ro/uniunea-europeana/>, accessed on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July 2013).

As regarding the activity of the political parties in the European Parliament, the Romanian Euro-parliamentarians do not leave the

impression of being reluctant when taking the floor. As national delegation, we are on the 5<sup>th</sup> place, from the 28<sup>th</sup> states members. The analysis on national parties shows a very interesting fact, that the Euro-deputies from the Social Democrat Party, Conservatory Party and Liberal Democrat Party are almost as talkative, and more talkative than those of the National Liberal Party, the latter preferring a more moderate approach. On the other side, the members of the Liberal Democrat Party agree more than their colleagues from Social Democrat Party, Conservatory Party and Liberal Democrat Party the signings of the draft resolutions of the European Parliament.

On addressing the significant activities, the Euro-parliamentarians of the Social Democrat Party and Conservatory Party hold the first position at the positions drafted reports (slightly in front of the National Liberal Party) and the amended reports (slightly in front of the Liberal Democrat Party). The liberals are situated on the first position for drafting the notifications (slightly in front of the Social Democrat Party and Conservatory Party). The members of the Liberal Democrat Party delegation have lower average positions for these indicators, an aspect that can be explained through the fact that the share of the Romanian deputies in the European People's Party (EPP) group, which is, by far, the highest, it lower than the share of the Romanians in the Social and Democrat Alliance (S&D) and Alliance of Liberals and Democrats (ALDE) groups, the assigning of the reports and notifications, inside the political groups, being influenced by the size of the national delegation (according to *Europarlamentarii la Raport*, Legislation 2009-2014, Volume III, Bucharest - Brussels, September 2011).

Obviously, for an even more profound evaluation of the Romanian influence in the European Parliament, we should evaluate its importance too, not only the number of the reports drafted or amended by our Euro-deputies, compared with the other national delegations. Nonetheless, according to the data that we are provided at this moment, and the monitoring experience from the last years, the influence of Romania in the European Parliament is growing. In order to use it at its maximum potential of Romania, it is necessary a higher working volume from our Euro-Parliamentarians, such is the degree of consulting between them and their social and institutional partners from the country.

The Euro-deputy Corina Crețu was appointed by the elected president of the European Commission, Jean-Claude Juncker, the commissioner of the European Commission for Regional Policies. As a Euro-Parliamentarian, Corina Crețu was a member of the next commissions and delegations: *Committee on Employment and Social Affairs*, *Delegation for relations with the United States* and *Delegation for relations with Republic of Moldova*. Moreover, between 2009 and 2014, she held the position of vice-president of the *Committee on Development*.

In the other European institutions, almost 1,200 Romanians were working, at the beginning of 2014, placing Romania on the eighth place in the hierarchy of the countries with the most numerous officials or contractual agents for the European Union, assigned preponderantly at Brussels,

according to a report realized by the European Commission at the start of this year (according to the informations from <http://www.zf.ro/zf-24/peste-1-000-de-romani-lucreaza-pentru-institutiile-europene-pe-salarii-care-pornesc-de-la-2-500-de-euro-net-pe-luna-11733511>, accessed on the 4<sup>th</sup> of September 2014).

The Romanians who work for the European institutions represent only 3.6% of the total number of 33,000 European officials, and their basic pays are similar, for deputies, or even seven times bigger than the average income of the Belgians, reaching 2,500 Euro net a month. Therefore, the salaries of the debutant European officials' start from about 2,650 euro net a month and can reach 18,500 euros, according to the category of employment and the different levels of hierarchy. The biggest salaries are of the officials who hold important positions, which, in case of Romania, represented, at the beginning of October 2014, 642 people.

The most desired jobs, for the Romanians who want to become employed in the European institutions, are those in the departments that require specialists in the European public administration, juridical sciences, translators, interpreters, linguists, the economic or financial field, audit, or those that require archivists and documentarists. The most Romanians that work for the European Union have preponderantly bureaucratic jobs, carried out by the European institutions.

The categories of employees who work in the European institutions are divided into: managers, officials and temporary agents working as administrators (AD), temporary officials and agents working as assistants (AST), contractual agents, special consultants, local agents and agents under the jurisdiction of the country they are from. The AD and AST categories have each 12, and respectively 11 groups of hierarchy of the employed. The agents from the category AD have administrative, consulting, linguistic responsibilities, and carry out the researching activity of the actions at law from the European institutions, while those from the AST category hold the executive, technical and communicational positions.

Niculae Idu, former leader of the European Commission Representation at Bucharest, said that "Romania is in the position to exceed the share of representation, seen from the perspective of the Romanians who are employed in the European institutions, and that the highest impact of them in the European system can be noticed in connection with the commissioner and the members of the Parliament" (*Ziarul Financiar* from 02.12.2013)

<b>ROMANIA IS ON TOP, BUT ON THE EIGHTH PLACE</b>					
<b>Top ten countries with the biggest number of officials in the European Institutions</b>					
Country	No of employed	Country	No of employed	Country	No of employed
Belgium	5,733	Germany	2,236	Greece	1,163
Italy	3,616	Poland	1,468	Portugal	859
France	3,246	Great Britain	1,246	SOURCE: a report of the European Commission, at the beginning of 2003	
Spain	2,292	Romania	1,183		

Source:<http://www.zf.ro/zf-24/peste-1-000-de-romani-lucreaza-pentru-institutiile-europene-pe-salarii-care-pornesc-de-la-2-500-de-euro-net-pe-luna-11733511>

The Euro-parliamentarians have one or two accredited Romanian assistants in the staff from Brussels, plus other few subordinated people, who hold the positions of local agents.

### **The recruiting of Romanians in the institutions of the European Union**

The desire of the Romanians for a job in an office from one of the European institutions, have become more and more present in the last years, especially for those who were already working in the local public administration and who, in 2010, experienced the situation of cut wages, removed wage increases and some jobs that had previously been doubled, were menaced by reorganisation. As a matter of fact, the competition for an announced vacancy from a European institution is of 20-30 people. They compete for a job on a waiting list (reserve) for the candidates who might hold a vacant or a new created position. The validity of the lists is of two years and the applicants are rigorously tested and interviewed, in order to be enlisted on the waiting list. They need to use the EPSO recruiting service for recruiting (European Personnel Selection Office), a site through which there are centralised all the applications and all the available jobs from the European institutions, which has three annually series of recruiting, for all the areas. Generally, this process takes almost a year, and the candidates have to know proficiently the language of a country, member of the European Union (for example, Romanian and French, for the citizens from Romania and France) and English, French or German, at the level that assures them the drafting of papers and a fluent conversation.

The Romanians are disadvantaged in the recruiting process, as confronted by those of other nationalities, who graduate prestigious foreign universities. There are Romanians who graduated a foreign university too, who succeeded in working in European institutions, but there are also Romanians who graduated Romanian universities.

The salary package that the European officials receive monthly includes the basic pay, along with allowances for their families. Moreover, if they have to travel on a business trip, in a country member of the European Union, the European institutions that they work for, must provide them a maximum amount of money between 100 and 180 euros (depending on the destination) and a daily fee between 52 and 104 euros a day. The salaries can be subjected to increase, according to the economic context of the country where they stay, in case the cost of living rises.

On average, the rent of an apartment with one bedroom is of almost 750-800 euros a month, according to the specialised Belgian sites, and a meal with three courses and drinking can reach to almost 20 euros, for the European officials.

Most of the European officials are Belgians (approximately 7,740 people), among which over 4.300 have an official position. Most of the European officials (almost 21,500 people from the approximately 33,000 of employers and contractual agents) live in Brussels.

From the total number of people who work for the European institutions, about 1,500 hold managing positions, and the highest number of them (over 21,000) are officials of the administrative departments (AD) and the assistance departments (AST) (*Ziarul Financiar* from 02.12.2013).

## **Conclusions**

On the resources that the Romanian administration manages to attract, on the expertise of the people who work, on their ability to convince their European partners depends greatly the capacity of Romania to perform its role of great country, in the European Union. The highest risk of exclusion, from the European structure, comes rather from an auto-exclusion, from political incertitude, from lack of interest. There are intellectual and expertise resources in Romania, and at the Romanians outside it, undoubtedly. What is important is that they should be engaged in an integrated system of expertise and national interest, beyond the momentary, partisan interests. It is then when we will know to increase the value of Romania, as country and state member of the European Union, more than the sum of its representations.

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## SOCIAL ACTIVISM: THEORIES AND METHODS\*

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**Abstract:** *Social activism is a corollary for social change. Social activism is about doing, acting, mobilizing the resources and supporting leadership to bring change in society. The paper tries to define the concept of the social activism, to reveal the theories about social activism and social movements and to bring to attention some methods for the study of the social activism.*

**Key words:** *social activism; social change; social movements; online activism; collective actions*

### Introduction

Social activism is an instrument for social movements. It shows how people can organize themselves, how they can participate to protests, the degree of involvement in decisions and in social life. It reveals the degree of the participatory democracy.

Activism is present in every society and political system, but it never received enough attention from historians, social scientists or political scientists. There are many forms of social activism, from writing letters to massive protests.

The paper wants to demonstrate the importance of the social activism as an instrument of social change and to discuss upon relevant methods for the study of this process. The theme is very important for the state of the society and its future, showing the dynamic of the social change in time.

First, the article tries to define the concept of social activism, then it underlines the theories of the social activism. Finally, the paper proposes a discussion about the methods for the study of the social activism and recommends a methodology for the future researches on this issue.

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## What is Social Activism?

According to Oxford Dictionary, social activism means „the policy or action of using vigorous campaigning to bring about political or social change: growing activism on the abortion issue”<sup>1</sup>.

Urban Dictionary shows that „activism, in a general sense, can be described as intentional action to bring about social, political, economic, or environmental change. This action is in support of, or opposition to, one side of an often controversial argument”<sup>2</sup>.

When we talk about social activism, we talk about social change. In a presentation from Amherst College about „Social Activism. Careers in Social Activism-An Introduction”, it is underline the fact that social activism is „an intentional action with the goal of bringing about social change”.

There are different types of activism:

1) “Demanding solutions to contemporary problems through the taking of oppositional stances to mainstream policies. These includes short-term actions like strikes, protests, demonstrations;

2) Undertaking activism which manifests itself through the creation of alternatives to the dominant system through the construction of new ways of social behaviour;

3) This type of activism seeks to create new alternatives within societies. We can talk about social centres, cooperatives of workers etc;

4) Revolutionary activism that is concerned with fundamental change of society and its major institutions”<sup>3</sup>.

Activism is about doing, acting, making an action that brings change in society. It provides mobilization, supporting leadership and bringing direction of the social action.

Social activists are implicated in collective actions. For these actions, they need a good organization, but especially resources.

Oliver P. and Marwell G. (1992) define social activists as „people who care enough about some issue that they are prepared to incur significant costs and act to achieve their goals”.

The activists believe in change, in doing social good. Oliver and Marwell show that the activists use planification, predictions, prognosis and elaborate backup plans. Through planification and prognosis, social activists define „technologies of productions” as being „sets of knowledge about ways of achieving goals, such as lobbying, demonstrations, strikes, or attending a public hearing” (Oliver and Marwell, 1992).

For the achievements of the goals, the activists are appealing for „ask those you know” techniques, meaning a list of persons which the rate of succes is very large (Ibid.). They use different methods: promovations through media, publicity, social networks for a better mobilization.

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<sup>1</sup>Oxford Dictionary, <http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/activism>

<sup>2</sup>Urban Dictionary, <http://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=Social%20Activist>

<sup>3</sup>„Introduction to activism”- Permanent culture now  
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## Theories and methods

The Social Activism Theory emerged as a product of Constructivism school of thought. The Social Activism Theory was defined on the belief that “learning takes place in social environments where there are collaborative activities. Through these activities, learners communicate, interact, and learn from each other, as a result, constructing their own world of knowledge” (Tan, 2006: 4-5).

The scholars regarded to be the founders of the social activism theory were John Dewey, considered to be „the grandfather of Constructivism” (Roblyer and Doering, 2010: 41), Jean Piaget and Lev Vygotsky. John Dewey, also known as a radical activist, developed his studies on education. He formulated some principles of education who maintained the fact that „education must engage with and enlarge experience” (Smith, 2011). „Learning should be experienced- based”, concluded Dewey (Roblyer and Doering, 2010). “Experience is a foundation for learning which would then be transformed into knowledge and skill” (Conole et al., 2004: 20). Jean Piaget had also a significant influence on Constructivism from educational perspective. Piaget considered that “there are three mechanisms for learning: assimilation, accommodation, and equilibrium” (Leonard, Noh, and Orey, 2007). His work was focused on cognitive development. Lev Vygotsky’s work was concentrated on „social interaction in the development of cognition” (Leonard, Noh, and Orey, 2007).

Constructivism approach considers that „social interactions and context are necessary for learning to occur” (Matthews, 2003: 57).

Social activism is concerned on the social interactions and collective behaviour.

Most of the authors are referring to social participation, mobilization, social movements when they are speaking about social activism.

There are some theories that describe social activism and also social movements. The Marxist theory tried to explain social movements through economical factors. The Marxist sociology described that „the organization of the products has generated conflicts of interests” (Sava, 2013: 98). Later, Wallerstein has used the materialist theory on the world economy to explain the relationship between the capitalist, developed core and the underdeveloped, peripheral countries. The anti-systemic, anti- globalist movements are explained through the Marxist theory.

The liberal perspective underlines that „the collective action is the result of the rational choice of the individuals interested in the support of an objective associated with economical and civil liberties” (Ibid.: 100). It were developed some frameworks including resource mobilization, political opportunity structures, constructivism etc.

Taking into account the economic and political aspects of social movements, McCarthy and Zald formulated the resource mobilization theory.

The authors noted that the social movements are rational actions. They used for the explanation the rationalist theory or rational choice theory of collective decisions.

The theory of resources mobilization was predicted by the theory of rational choice. On this perspective, Mancur Olson published „The Logic of Collective Action” (1965) in view of the economic outlook of the social movements. According to this theory the association of similar minded individuals could lead to the organization of the collective actions.

The rational action theory considers that participation in collective action is the result of a rational cost-benefit calculation.

Concerning Snow and Oliver (1995): „1. people try to benefit at minimum cost and 2. they cognitively process the information about the likely costs and benefits of various options for actions and then they make a conscious choice regarding their behavior” (Snow and Oliver, 1995 apud Sava, 2013, p. 76). Granovetter (1978) concluded that there is a threshold that the individual passes assessing risk and benefit involved.

In the 80's, resource mobilization theory was completed by network theory. Social organizations and existing networks provide a flow mobilization of resources. McAdam (1986) states that solidarity networks assures solidarity and provide membership for organizations rather than the individuals, leading to a coalitions of communities..

In the United States the framework of political process replaced the resource mobilization theory in the late 80s.

Morris A. and Herring C. (1984) revealed that in the political process theory, collective action and their tactics are provided to promote group interests.. When we talk about collective action, we are referring to groups, not individuals. Organizations support the claims and mobilization.

Ionel Nicu Sava stresses that political competition defines opportunity, mobilization and collective action. Therefore, constructivists have challenged the political process model. Useem B. (1998) states that "to argue that collective action is all a part of the political struggle is to exaggerate the centrality of power and imposing an ideology of social change where there is none" (Useem, 1998 apud Sava, 2013: 86).

But these theories can really explain social activism? How these theories can help the activists, how can they become a guide for them?

The resource mobilization theory claims that movements needed to obtain resources- money, skills, even time etc. to conduct collective activities. It is a step forward concerning the organization of the manifestations, but the activists know already that the resources are very important.

The political process model underlines that movements are constrained by political opportunities. Sometimes, some political opportunities may bring progress in society. As Brian Martin says, "the political opportunity structure approach is more helpful in explaining the trajectory of movements, afterwards, than in helping activists to be more effective" (Martin, 2010: 22-41).

Brian Martin uses „the idea of framing”. „Framing refers to sets of ideas. The ideas that people use to think about an issue that often influence their attitudes towards it. Frame analysis offers a powerful tool for activists to think through the way they construct an issue” (Ibid.). For example, if some people use Marxist theory, they see the world in terms of class struggle. So, the attitudes of the activists are conducted by the frame analysis.

Besides these, if we are talking about social activism, how the researches in social movements can help the activists?

James Jasper says that the researches on social movements couldn't guide the activists. „My research on social movements showed me just how little social scientists have to say about strategy. Over the years many protestors have asked me what they might read to help them make better decisions. I had nothing to suggest, beyond Saul Alinsky. We knew about the political effects of strategic choices, especially effects on the state's reaction, which most scholars assumed to be the key issue. This was the most structural way of looking at strategy. We knew almost nothing, I discovered, about how activists (and others) make strategic decisions, much less how they might make good ones”(Jasper, 2006, pp. xii- xiii ).

As Jasper claims, the researchers are more concerned about the „effects on the state's reaction” (Jasper, 2006) rather than the reactions of the actors of the social movements. „Scholars often analyse the agency of the state, namely the state's strategic options” (Ibid.).

Brian Martin suggests that it is necessary to learn how the social movements can be more effective than to understand them. „It might be worthwhile figuring out how movements can be more effective, even without fully understanding the dynamics” (Martin, 2010: 22-41).

Some scholars tried to describe how it's really happening with the social movements and not to rely on „unrealistic expectations”.

Moyer discovers a model of eight stages through which a typical movement passes: „(1) normal times, (2) prove the failure of official institutions, (3) ripening conditions, (4) take-off, (5) perception of failure, (6) majority public opinion, (7) success and (8) continuing the struggle” (Moyer, McAllister J. et. Al, 2001). It's useful for activists to know how their action is, so they can pick the useful strategy.

Moyer made a classification of social movement participants: citizen, rebel, change agent and reformer. Moyer says „each role has something to offer, but certain roles are more relevant in particular stages, for example rebels in the take-off stage” (Ibid.). He pays special attention to "negative rebels," such as "personal opportunists" who seek personal goals. The model explained by Moyer was useful and practical for activists. It helps activists to think strategically.

Another theory is that of Gene Sharp's „dynamics of nonviolent action” (Sharp, 2013: 47).

Sharp stipulates that „nonviolent action is based on a very simple postulate: people do not always do what they are told to do, and sometimes they act in ways that have been forbidden” (Sharp, 2013: 17). Nonviolent

action, as Sharp underlines is referring to all methods of protests in which the protesters maintain the conflict refusing to obey to some rules without using violence. „Nonviolent action is a technique by which people who reject passivity and submission, and who see struggle as essential can wage their conflict without violence” (Sharp, 2013: 18).

Sharp classifies nonviolent action into three main types. The first actions are symbolic methods like speeches, petitions, rallies, mock awards, vigils, teach-ins and renunciation of honours. The second actions refer to methods of noncooperation, such as ostracism, suspension of sports activities, stay-at-home, rent strikes, refusal to sell property, withdrawal of bank deposits, embargoes, peasant strikes, general strike, boycott of elections, administrative stalling, and mutiny. The third actions provide methods of intervention such as fasting, sit-ins, alternative communication systems, occupation of work sites, alternative markets and parallel government (Sharp, 2013).

In the second part of his book, „How Nonviolent Struggles Works”, the author shows the methods of nonviolent action. He classifies the methods in three groups: protest and persuasion, noncooperation and nonviolent intervention (Sharp, 2013: 23). In the next chapters, Sharp describes the methods of each group.

The author underlines the fact that there are no studies of strategy or techniques on how to conduct the conflicts or how to organize the people. That’s why Sharp considers that is not surprising that the violence have most often erupted. Despite all these, Sharp shows some possibilities for activists by transforming them into agents of changes.

### **Methodologies proposed for the study of the social activism**

Those who wanted to do researches about activists said that one of the most suitable theories is „grassroots theory”: „ideas come out of practice, with contributions from lots of people” (Sharp apud Martin, 2010: 22-41). The researchers were very interested on ideas from the activists to study their reactions. But, as Martin underlined, there is a gap between the activists and their ideas about researches.

So, how could it be developed a methodology for the study of social activism?

According to the research in the activists’ field, more productive techniques are so called workshops – small group interactions where people can analyze their case studies. This technique is very efficient in the USA.

Nowadays, when technology is advanced, there is a new way to promote case studies and to study activists’ messages: online activism. The Internet is the main resource for activists’ messages, especially for those against the main current.

Internet activists use electronic petitions (e-petitions) that are addressed to governments and organizations to cause positive changes in politics. Many non-profit organizations and charities organisations use these

methods. Internet technologies are used for charity, lobbying organizations, fundraising, for e-campaigning.

Online network sites are also very important instruments for activists. The Internet allows the communications between nongovernmental organisations and their members. Lobby is easily done through the Internet, with online messages sent in media.

Sandor Vegh (2003) related three forms of social activism: awareness/advocacy, organization/ mobilization, or the planning and deliberation as a result of the information, and action/reaction, or the result of the planning and deliberation. Vegh analyzed the case for cyber-protest against the World Bank using the analyses of websites. He created a catalog of websites representative in which the case occurs, and then he examined the content. He tried to reveal, as Van Aelst and Walgrave (2004) illustrate a „link topology”. Devin Gaffney (2010) defined this „a method without using any of the data creation/collection techniques that typify Web 2.0”.

Devin Gaffney (2010) used in his study concerning Iran election „Web 2.0’s automatic collection method” which consists in direct analysis of the communication, using Twitter Search API. The method consisted practically in „collecting tweets carrying the most seemingly popular “hashtag,” in this case, #IranElection” (Gaffney, 2010), storing the data associated with the tweet: the time it was posted, the characteristics of the persons who posted, the number of followers etc. The data were collected on a dataset and then the author processes the data into three categories: „histogram-based analysis of the Users and Tweets, network-based analysis of the re-tweets called “re-tweet influence maps” (Gaffney, 2010). The re-tweet influence map is a useful instrument in analyzing the most influential users of the social networking sites. „A network map of every re-tweet that occurred in the entire data set would inform us as to who the most influential users were, as well as the general flow of re-tweets from those influential users to “hubs” of people who tend to re-tweet frequently, and then throughout the network” (Gaffney, 2010). Gaffney underlines another interesting analysis for Iran election tweets: „language-based analysis to analyze the qualitative nature of all Tweets” which consisted in a word frequency analysis.

The social activism methodologies should take into account new Web technologies. There are a series of programs which can identify new approaches in the study of the online activism. The techniques underlined below showed the possibility to study online activism. Besides online activism, there is another form of activism: offline activism. Interviews, participatory observations, survey or questionnaires on the street are some of the methods used for studying offline activism.

Some studies (Summer and Harp, 2012) showed that online activism is followed by offline activism. Manifestations streets are those who bring sometimes the real change. So, the most efficient way to study social activism and its dimensions is to be there, in the streets, with the activists and to watch and analyze the situations through their views. Other studies (Hirzalla and van Zoonen, 2009) claimed that online activism converge with

offline activism. Another research (Mercea, 2012) underlined that those who participated in online networks were involved in offline protests. The researches mentioned below used online surveys, questionnaires, websites studies, and ethnographic data to reveal the importance of the online activism and its link with offline activism.

There were some critics concerning online activism. Some proponents of the slacktivism theory concluded that „internet activism is thought to be inadequate at reaching political goals in comparison to traditional forms of activism” (Vargas, 2013: 16). Slacktivism is defined as „political participation that lacks a strong commitment by the participants” (Ibid.: 11). Even Putnam (2010) suggested that the Internet could diminished the possibility of social interaction and could have a negative impact on citizen’s political participation. In spite of these, Bennett (2012) sustained that the internet is an important tool for people who had been participating in political activities offline to also participate in online activities.

Anyway, in the last years, the possibilities of the study of social activism have increased. New forms of social media (Facebook, Twitter) have raised the possibilities of sharing the information, recruiting new members and mobilizing people.

A methodology for the study of social activism should reconsider the methods for the study of the emergence of the social networks, the membership in online networks and the characteristics of the members, the possibility to recruit another users and in the same time, the capacity to mobilize people in collective actions

## **Conclusions**

The paper tries to emphasize the social activism and to propose some methods to study this process. The theories about social actions and social movements show different perspectives and reflect the researcher’s positions. But, the researches about social movements could really reflect social activism? There are few authors who try to show that the researches on social movements couldn’t guide the activists. As Jasper claims, the researchers are more concerned about the „effects on the state’s reaction” (Jasper, 2006) rather than the reactions of the actors of the social movements. It is necessary to develop some methods that are concerned more about the activists strategies, to guide them and to offer some steps in tackling strategic decisions.

Nowadays, when the internet becomes the most influential instrument in the study of the activism, the researches should take into account the study of the online networks and websites. There are many techniques for the study of the messages, network sites or groups who encourages for mobilization, online petitions etc. The studies about online activism are increasing and the methods used are improving. A methodology for the study of the social activism should reconsider the process of social activism from online and offline perspective.

More detailed techniques for studying online networks or offline activism are among the limits of the paper.

The future researches should concentrate on the methodologies for studying online and offline activism, the emergence of the online networks, the membership of networks, the characteristics of the network's members and their possibility to recruit another members and if online network's members are participating in offline activities.

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