

**ISSN 2069 – 4008 (online: ISSN 2069 – 4016)**

**Annals of “Ștefan cel Mare” University of Suceava**

**PHILOSOPHY, SOCIAL AND HUMAN  
DISCIPLINES SERIES**

**2017**

**VOLUME II**

**Co-editors:**

**Bogdan POPOVENIUC**

**Marius CUCU**

**Founding Editor:**

**Sorin-Tudor MAXIM**

**“Ștefan cel Mare” University of Suceava Press**

**Annals of “Ștefan cel Mare” University of Suceava  
Philosophy, Social and Human Disciplines Series**

Bogdan Popoveniuc; Sorin-Tudor Maxim; Marius Cucu;  
© Suceava : “Ștefan cel Mare” University Press, 2017  
ISSN 2069 – 4008 (online: ISSN 2069 – 4016)

**Analele Universității “Ștefan cel Mare” din Suceava  
Seria Filosofie și Discipline Socio-umane**

Bogdan Popoveniuc; Sorin-Tudor Maxim; Marius Cucu;  
© Suceava : Editura Universității “Ștefan cel Mare”, 2017  
ISSN 2069 – 4008 (online: ISSN 2069 – 4016)

ANNALS  
of  
*Philosophy, Social and Human Disciplines*

(Annals of “Ștefan cel Mare” University of Suceava, PHILOSOPHY,  
SOCIAL AND HUMAN DISCIPLINES SERIES)

**Advisory Board:**

- Professor Anton **Adămuț**, *Al. I. Cuza University of Iași*  
Associate Professor Alexandru **Baumgarten**, *Babeș-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca*  
Professor Alexandru **Boboc**, Member of the Romanian Academy  
Professor Ionel **Bușe**, *University of Craiova*  
Associate Professor Gheorghe **Clitan**, *West University of Timișoara*  
Associate Professor Aurelian **Crăiuțu**, *Indiana University, USA*  
Professor Teodor **Dima**, Corresponding Member of the Romanian Academy  
Professor Marius **Dumitrescu**, *Al. I. Cuza University of Iași*  
Associate Professor Miyoko **Enomoto**, *Tokyo International University, Japan*  
Professor Luciano **Floridi**, *University of Hertfordshire, St. Cross College, University of Oxford*  
Lecturer Ph.D. Harumi **Higashi**, *Waseda University, Tokyo, Japan*  
Senior researcher Ionuț **Isac**, *Institute of History “G. Barițiu” of the Romanian Academy, Cluj-Napoca branch*  
Researcher, Ph.D. Ruxandra **Mărginean Kohno**, *Waseda University, Tokyo, Japan*  
Professor Basarab **Nicolesco**, Honorary Member of the Romanian Academy  
Professor Florea **Lucaci**, *Aurel Vlaicu University of Arad*  
Professor Vladimir **Petercă**, *Sfânta Tereza Roman Catholic Theological Institute of Bucharest and Roman Catholic Theological Institute of Chișinău, Republic of Moldova*  
Professor Lia **Pop**, *University of Oradea*  
Professor Alexandru **Surdu**, Member of the Romanian Academy  
Professor Keiji **Sawada**, *Waseda University, Tokyo, Japan*  
Professor Victor **Voicu**, *Dunărea de Jos University of Galați*  
Professor Jean-Jacques **Wunenburger**, *Jean Moulin Lyon III University, France*

## **Editorial Board:**

### **Executive Editors:**

Associate Professor PhD. Bogdan **Popoveniuc**, “Ștefan cel Mare” University of Suceava

Lecturer PhD. Marius **Cucu**, “Ștefan cel Mare” University of Suceava

### **Editors:**

Professor Colin T. A. **Schmidt**, *Le Mans University & ENSAM-ParisTECH*, France

Professor Kuruvilla Joseph SJ **Pandikattu**, *Jnana-Deepa Vidyapeeth*, Pontifical Institute of Philosophy and Religion, Pune, India

Professor Ana **Pascaru** University of the Academy of Sciences of Moldova

Associate Professor Cristina Emanuela **Dascălu**, *Apollonia*, Iași and “Free International University” of Moldova

### **Scientific Secretary:**

Professor Sorin Tudor **Maxim**, “Ștefan cel Mare” University of Suceava

### **English Language Assistant:**

Silvia-Oana **Ubassy**

### **Book Review Editor:**

Lecturer PhD. Marius **Cucu**, “Ștefan cel Mare” University of Suceava

### **Copy Editor:**

Laura Nicoleta **Niță**

ANNALS

ANNALS

of  
University "Ștefan cel Mare" of Suceava  
University "Ștefan cel Mare" of Suceava

PHILOSOPHY, SOCIAL AND HUMAN DISCIPLINES SERIES

Technologies of Time and Language

2017

Volume II



# Contents

## RESEARCH PAPERS

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Elements of Philosophy of Language in Constantin Noica's Texts .....   | 5  |
| St Augustine's Contemplative Philosophy in Virginia Woolf's <i>To the Lighthouse</i> :<br>The Cases of Time and Self-Examination ..... | 17 |
| Six Important Tips for Beginning and Ending the Lesson.....  | 41 |
| Means of Providing Feedback to the Learners .....  | 47 |
| Why we Fail in a Technological World .....   | 53 |
| International Migration of Qualified Human Resources in Social Assistance. Value<br>Dimensions and Professional Dilemmas.....          | 65 |

## ESSAYS, PRESENTATIONS, REVIEWS

|                           |    |
|---------------------------|----|
| The Atlas of Beauty ..... | 77 |
|---------------------------|----|



# RESEARCH PAPERS



# Elements of Philosophy of Language in Constantin Noica's Texts

Dorel Mihael FÎNARU

*Department of Letters and Communication Sciences  
"Ștefan cel Mare" University of Suceava, Romania  
dorelfinaru@yahoo.com*

## Abstract

*Various notions of philosophy of language are present constantly in the whole work of Constantin Noica. His concerns are directed towards the language as a pivotal human ability and as a fundamental form of culture, towards the philosophy and the hermeneutics of the poetic language (especially of Eminescu's language), as well as towards some linguistic and philosophical concepts related to the Romanian language as a historical language.*

**Keywords:** *philosophy of language, philosophy of speech, philosophy of the text, hermeneutics of meaning, poetic language.*

A fundamental component of Constantin Noica's thinking is represented by the elements of philosophy of language, a constant presence in his texts. The main aspects are those relating to the philosophy of language (as a pivotal human ability and fundamental form of human culture), to the philosophy of speech (especially the philosophy of the word, the nuclear element of the historical language) and those relating to the philosophy of the text (especially of the poetic text). On many occasions, the elements of philosophy of language interfere with those of general linguistics, but also with elements of history of the language, etymology, grammar, etc.

If the theory of language and the general linguistics try to answer the question *how* does the language function in general but especially the language under the historical and social form of the language (of the languages) or under the individual form of the text/discourse, whereas the philosophy of language asks *what* is the exact notion of language, *what* is the meaning of the language in itself or of the language as a discourse and as a text.

Certain exegetes believe that Noica's philosophy represents the Romanian answer to the classical Greek tradition and that it has the capacity to perpetuate the

drama of the modern reason, that has lost its original unity. As examples of the concern for the reason's drama, are mentioned "the idea of One and Multiple; the idea of initial holomer, in which the General and the Individual, as terms of the Being, are in ontological indistinction; the idea of a final holomer, in which the Individual and the General find each other, through a reciprocal fulfilment; the difference between the cultures of the spirit and those of the soul; the radiograph of spiritual diseases – as an expression of the reason's drama, but also of the non-fulfilled being, who always searches for a term."<sup>1</sup> This is the origin of the permanent aspiration towards the identification of the original unity of the logos, probably the most important feature of Constantin Noica's philosophy.

By inverting the gradual scale *concept – thinking – reasoning* and, implicitly, the linguistic equivalent *word – clause – sentence*, Noica believes that "in the usual logical speech, we should not say: *concept – thinking – reasoning*, but the other way around: *reasoning – thinking – concept*, as if truly (as Hegel suggested) the concept were the last one, as an extreme deepening of the logical field, with the three terms overlapping, «interpenetrating»."<sup>2</sup> In other words, the word concentrates the speech, such as the acorn that Eminescu was talking about was carrying within itself an oak wood. The priority of the lexical level over the grammatical one is been also stated on some other occasions: "the philosophy of language, where the word represents anyway the existence of the speech or its core, compared to which the grammatical forms and its structures are only the flesh of that particular fruit."<sup>3</sup>

Many pages constitute veritable odes dedicated to the Romanian language as a mother tongue:

*It is only through words in your mother tongue that you can remember things you have never learned. Since every word is an oblivion and almost in each and every word there are meanings that you do not remember anymore. Otherwise we could not give a real meaning to words. But if within every word there is a part of oblivion, that is however our oblivion and it becomes our own memory. And this is an act of culture: learning new things as if they were stemming from your own being.*<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Ion Hirghiduș, "Filosofia lui Constantin Noica între suflet și spirit," in *The Annals of the University of Craiova*, Series: Philosophy 24 (2/2009), 81-82.

<sup>2</sup> Constantin Noica, "Șase tipuri fundamentale de rostire," in *Scrisori despre logica lui Hermes* (Bucharest: Cartea Românească, 1986), 76.

<sup>3</sup> Constantin Noica, "Interpretare la *Cratylos*" (Interpretation at *Cratylos*), in Platon, *Opere III*, edition supervised by Petru Creția, *The interpretation of dialogues of Constantin Noica*, translation, preliminary details and notes for *Euthydemus*, Gabriel Liiceanu; *Cratylos*, Simina Noica (Bucharest: Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1978), 148.

<sup>4</sup> Constantin Noica, *Rostirea filozofică românească* (Bucharest: Științifică, 1970), 5.

Just like Aristotel, Humboldt or Coșeriu, Noica perceives the language as *enérgeia*, as a perpetual dynamics. The historical language keeps within itself hundreds and thousands of years of life experience, of ways to consider the outer and inner world, to regard ourselves and the others. The phenomenon of linguistic change also manifests through the fact that in the course of time, a lot of semantic meanings and nuances are buried within the meanings of the word. But the forgotten meanings can be actualized, the oblivion can turn into memory. Pairs of words such as *sinele* and *sinea*, *rost* and *rostire*, *infini*t and *infinire*, or words such as *întru*, *fire* and *ființă* are considered to be real emblems of the Romanian language.\*

Talking about the neologism *natură*, but also about the maintaining of its synonym *fire*, much more ancient, Noica questions himself concerning the utility of maintaining an “incontrollable” semantic area present in the oldest word. This happens because, as stated by Eminescu, we are not the masters of the language, but the language is our master, and the Romanian language simply “did not want to get rid of these words and continues to do so”. The remarks of philosophical nature constantly overlap with those related to the ethno-, socio- and psycholinguistics: “When you’re wandering through nature – claims Noica paraphrasing Heidegger – you’re wandering through the word *natură*. But could it not be the other way around? When you’re wandering through the word *fire*, you’re not wandering anymore through devastated nature, you’re really getting ready to be wandering through the character.”<sup>5</sup> The technical revolution in the second half of the twentieth century did not destroy the *Romanian nature*:

*some stranger comes to tell us that he is amazed at the way in which we have managed to conciliate the new with the old, in which we have managed to keep the folk traditions or simply the traditions, while becoming up-to-date; we would say: the way in which we have managed to stay authentic while surrounded by the great novelties of the current era.*<sup>6</sup>

---

\* It is very difficult (or impossible) to have an accurate translation in other languages for some of them. For example, “Sinea” is the feminine principle related with the nocturnal and germinative regime of the philosophical imaginary, while “Sinele” (the Self) belongs to the masculine principle, to the diurnal regime which “as an expression of the deepened human consciousness, comes to project light in the darkness of the first (sinea)” (“Sinele și sinea” in Noica, *Idem*, 19). “Infinire” is a term created by Eminescu, in addition to the common pair infinite-infinity, and would mean, according to Noica, “the finite without the end as an endless perpetration” (“Infini

<sup>5</sup> Constantin Noica, “Despre natură în graiul românesc” (On Nature in Romanian parlance), in Constantin Noica, *Introducere la miracolul eminescian*, eds. Marin Diaconu and Gabriel Liiceanu (Bucharest: Humanitas, 1992), 177.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibidem*, 178.

*To name things* means, beyond the materialization and freedom of the thought, to introduce an order in the universe, in the material dimension, but also in the spiritual one: “Beyond the alleviation brought by speech, as an emancipation of the thought or as a confession and a projection of one’s own suffering on the screen of literary art, there is a direct and immediate comfort, through simple and pure words. To name the thing, to call the passion «passion» and the ugly «ugly» means, from the beginning, to tame and to master, somehow, the unbearable. The ugly acquires a shape, becomes *formosus*, almost «frumos» in our language.”<sup>7</sup> Another great Romanian philosopher of language, Eugeniu Coșeriu, is at the origin of the same theories as Noica: “The language is the one that confers *existence* to things: it is not a nomenclature for types of things recognized as such beforehand. Of course, the language does not create *the entities*, but it creates their *existence*: it makes them to be *in some way or another*, it makes them to be *this* or *that*. Thus, the language does not create trees, but it creates *being a tree* (and not, for example, plants in general or representing another species). This is the way in which the language leads us towards a methodical world of things. By delimitating modalities of the *existence*, it allows us to observe or to recognize in the world *entities* corresponding to these modalities, offering us, in this way, the possibility to research things within themselves.”<sup>8</sup> Noica was getting across the superficial dichotomy *arbitrary – motivated*, observing that

*We need to be searching for a deeper rightfulness of the word than the simple motivation, be it exterior or interior. There are words that generate things. If we did not talk that much about love, as stated by Pascal (that is if we did not name this concept), we would not have so much of it in the world. There are definitely determined realities, tree, star or being, for which the name can only be something exterior, if not their code, their intimate law is regarded as a name. There are, however, undetermined realities (the elements of the character, or the thought processes) to which only the word gives a real form, just as clouds named by the man. But there are also words that determine the realities, such as gods, states, certain works and, definitely, the technical objects.*<sup>9</sup>

Taking into account the untranslatable words, the words specific to a language, Noica adopts the positions of a poetic, philosophic and linguistic naturalism:

---

<sup>7</sup> Constantin Noica, “[Urîtul sufletului și frumusețea cuvintelor]” (The Ugliness of the Soul and the Beauty of the Words), in *Introducere la miracolul eminescian*, 217.

<sup>8</sup> Eugeniu Coșeriu, “Zece teze despre esența limbajului și a semnificației” (Ten theses about the essence of language and meaning), in Eugeniu Coșeriu, Dorel Fînar, Dumitru Irimia, *Mic tratat de teorie a limbii și lingvistică generală* (Iași: Demiurg, 2016), 532.

<sup>9</sup> Noica, “Interpretare la *Cratylus*,” 148-149.

*What is wonderful concerning the natural languages is that, in the end, everything is translatable in no matter what language: we can translate books, we can translate poems, thoughts, we can even translate typical expressions. But we cannot translate only one word.*

*A word is a tree. Whether it saw the daylight on your land or whether it fell like a seed from another world, a word is, in the end, a specific being. It came to stay in the land of your country, it was nourished by its rains, it grew and developed under a sun that is never the same in different places, and the way in which we can see it cannot be removed, transferred or translated.<sup>10</sup>*

The problem of polysemantism and of the semantic nuances is not only specific to the poetic language, but to the language as a whole. The man has to remain the being who approaches, entangles and disentangles the nuances. The loss of this capacity would mean a downfall, an intellectual involution:

*Nuances are essential to the man. If one day we only saw the seven fundamental colours, and not the infinity of colours and mixtures that do not have a name (what colour does a rock have? What colour does the human face have?), we would have died from an artistic point of view. If, one day, as Romanian speakers, we did not make the difference anymore between cătire and spre, we would betray the spirit of the language. Nuances of meaning are essential to the man. Words are essential to him. [...]*

*If the man is a being of nuances, we need this richness of word meanings. It is not only about knowing ourselves, it is not only a philosophic issue; it is also one that regards the following day. To immerse in the past of an expressive language, like ours, means to be thinking about the future of the human word. Because how will future generations talk, if they do not understand to defeat the breach of the logos in natural languages? Will they bring into play a simplified and mechanized logos?<sup>11</sup>*

Eminescu, for example, is a being of nuances, of the most subtle semantic nuances:

*"It is a man who presents things, a semădău, according to his own expression. He presents the language.*

*If there are boundaries in the language, somewhere there are also absences of boundaries:*

*A pus în tine Domnul nemargini de gândire... (The God put within you limitless of thinking...) writes the poet in Feciorul de împărat fără stea (The Emperor's son without star). Such limitless thoughts exist in his language and in any other language. They have to be limitless, as long as any language is the speech in itself, which has to be able to express anything. But what is weird is that the limits come from outside, whereas the absence of limits comes from inside. If you know a language from the exterior, you can only see its limits. You can get familiar to its limitless possibilities from inside. You are a semădău*

---

<sup>10</sup> Constantin Noica, "Despre a doua comoară a limbilor" (About the Second Treasure of the Languages), in Constantin Noica, *Cuvînt împreună despre rostirea românească* (Bucharest: Eminescu, 1987), 201.

<sup>11</sup> Noica, *Cuvînt împreună despre rostirea românească*, 202 and 204.

*of the language only from the inside. This is what Eminescu was trying to be, making inventories of all the meanings of one word, even those of the word samă.*"<sup>12</sup>

Explaining etymologies and meanings that seemed lost, the poet can also use semantic virtualities that the system of the language allows, even if in this way he sometimes does not observe the rules. The boundary between the *said* and the *unsaid*, between *the impossible to say* and *the possible to say* is a flexible boundary, that only can be overcome by an *addict* of language: "This human language represents as well *an unusual world*. It is a *disunion* that it brings in nature, and, through poetic culture and creation, the disunion sometimes becomes a plentiful *disunion* with his own self of the man. *The disunion from my soul*, says Eminescu."<sup>13</sup> The passing over to the absence of limits is made not only to a lexical level, but also to a grammatical one, for example through the use of inverse forms of compound verb tenses.

*In the end, what do you need in order to be able to give a name to the unutterable? – asks Noica, while creating the new word unutterable. A simple freedom, almost a game of the thought and of the word with themselves. But the ones who play are those who are addicted to language, until they become its master, instead of being its slaves. One has to test numerous wanderings through the world of thinking and of the word, in order to know what are their limits and their absence of limits. It is only then that one can make out of them a sort of bridges that can be thrown upon the nothingness in front of you, like that bridge over the Danube of the king, a rock thought wandering from bow to bow. And it is only then, after having learnt it all, with its bitterness, that you can say, through a simple unusual inversion for the topics of your own language, that only know days that are long and long days:*

Ai milă și stinge lungi zilele mele (Have mercy and extinguish my days long).<sup>14</sup>

The solace through the appeal to the language as such does not equal the intensity of the poetic language, but it comprises this latter:

The spider spins as well, but we cannot make clothes out of its cloth, *says a Romanian proverb. We talk as well, but we do not really array our thoughts, as long as we employ words deprived of their deepest and most moving meanings. Maybe we often do not even really think our thoughts. We are lucky that our soul is not haunted by the same passions and either by a feeling of ugliness as strong as those experimented by Eminescu. But even within ourselves, the passions of the ugliness lie in ambush with the aim to destroy us. Our language, one of those which did not take words for granted, but which gave birth to them and changed them all by itself, helps us to give shape to the*

---

<sup>12</sup> Constantin Noica, "Margini și nemargini ale limbii" (Margins and non-margins of the Language), in *Introducere la miracolul eminescian*, 140.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibidem*, 142.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibidem*.

*shapeless. It is beautiful. If this could cheer up Eminescu for a second, let us turn our faces confidently to the Romanian language.*<sup>15</sup>

The writer has to grub up the precious deposits deposited in the language. Just like Coșeriu, Noica believes too that the poetic language and its values are comprised in the language as such and the writers and the poets, just like miners, have to bring them out to light:

*Each and every writer punished to be using the Romanian language, as Cantemir was still stating (but in the sense to educate, in order to punish), has to ask himself every time, in every field of creation in which he might work, and especially in the literary or philosophic creation: do I hold in my hand sand mixed up with gold? Or do I only have sand? I can also extract the gold from there, just like those goldsmiths from the Apuseni mountains [...]?<sup>16</sup>*

In Noica's opinion, the so-called *fundamental speeches* have the capacity of leading to a trans-stylistics, *another* stylistics than the formal one, the one which is exterior to things. In order to give some examples, Noica makes appeal to a Romanian example from literature which, in his opinion, highlights upon the stylistic features of the fundamental speeches. It is about the poem *Eminescu* by Marin Sorescu:

*What does the poem express that could be anthological? It expresses the "application" of some determinations – all the aspects of the Romanian reality that we cherish – on an individual reality: Eminescu. No need to remind the poem; it is enough to give it its structure back. One can make a poem even using the fundamental speech meant to lead to simple aspects of civilization. Since the poem passes through all the speeches of the man and related to things, just as the logics has to be formally interpreted.<sup>17</sup>*

Coșeriu will sustain also from the perspective of the philosophy of language the essential identity between the language as such and the poetry (literature):

*This essential identity can be sustained by very good arguments in the area of the philosophy of language. Actually, as unity of intuition and expression, as pure significant creation (that corresponds to the "way of being of things") – if we will consider the creative subject as absolute (that is only in its relationship with what is created) – the language is the equivalent of the poem, given the fact that the poem also corresponds to the intuitive understanding of the human being. Just like the language, the poem ignores the distinction between the true and the false, between existence and non-existence: both the language and the poem are "anterior" (preliminary) to these distinctions. On the other hand, the poem, just like the language, is an apprehension of*

---

<sup>15</sup> Constantin Noica, "Despre natură în graiul românesc," in *Introducere la miracolul eminescian*, 219.

<sup>16</sup> Noica, "La ce bun limba română?" sau "Caietele lui Eminescu," in *Introducere la miracolul eminescian*, 225.

<sup>17</sup> Noica, "Șase tipuri fundamentale de rostire," 80.

*the universal in the individual, an objectivation of the intuitive contents of the consciousness.*<sup>18</sup>

All that Eminescu creates in the language is already, as a virtuality, in the Romanian language. Noica asks himself, after having reminded a series of lexical and grammatical creations of Eminescu, among which unusual inversions and very beautiful rhymes: „What taste of mastery and of the language can incite him to all these exercises? Eminescu feels that the inversions bring something new in the thought and in the heart, not to say in grammar.”<sup>19</sup> Analyzing a series of verbal expressions and inverted verbal forms, the philosopher senses semantic modalities while expressing temporality:

*All these would deserve being researched and assembled by a grammarian with philosophic attributes,<sup>20</sup> like some who exist in our culture. Because our language in itself make you philosophize, when you refuse to be only a structuralist. Within these forms of speech and of modulation of the speech we should not only see one of the roots of our artistic sense and of a bend – that sometimes we enjoyed exaggerating – for the poetry. We could talk not only about a bend for the reflection of wisdom – which is also too much praised in our country –, but about a bend for a more technical reflection, the logical one, for example.*

*In general, our thought seems to have made investigations in the semi-darkness of the thought and, more specifically, in the areas that prepare a clear thought. To the level of lucidity the current culture has reached, in our country and abroad, we can dare to join to the logic area some more subtle areas and to search for its roots.*<sup>21</sup>

Talking about the great poetry, Noica gives a beautiful poetic and philosophical definition: “Do you want to know what is the great poetry? It is the sadness that the coming into being is not always the lot of the world. That everything falls apart, in the hours of becoming of the devouring time, as in the *Sonnet 19*<sup>22</sup> and in almost all the sonnets of Shakespeare, as in Hölderlin’s work,

---

<sup>18</sup> Eugeniu Coșeriu, “Teze despre tema *limbaj și poezie*,” in *Omul și limbajul său*, Studii de filozofie a limbajului, teorie a limbii și lingvistică generală, Anthology, argument, notes, bibliography and indices by Dorel Fînaru (Iași: “Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University, 2009), 164-165.

<sup>19</sup> “Despre iscusitele răsturnări și Eminescu”, in *vol. cit.*, 313.

<sup>20</sup> This is how Dumitru Irimia states in the vol. *Limbajul poetic eminescian*. We also need, nevertheless, a philosopher with a grammatical sense of the language, a real philosopher of the language, like Noica.

<sup>21</sup> Noica, *Introducere la miracolul eminescian*, 314.

<sup>22</sup> *Devouring Time, blunt thou the lion's paws,/ And make the earth devour her own sweet brood;/ Pluck the keen teeth from the fierce tiger's jaws,/ And burn the long-liv'd phoenix, in her blood;/ Make glad and sorry seasons as thou fleet'st,/ And do whate'er thou wilt, swift-footed Time,/ To the wide world and all her fading sweets;/ But I forbid thee one most heinous crime:/ O! carve not with thy hours my love's fair brow,/ Nor draw no lines there with thine antique pen;/ Him in thy course untainted do allow/ For beauty's pattern to succeeding men./ Yet, do thy worst old Time: despite thy wrong,/ My love shall in my verse ever live young.* (William Shakespeare, *Sonnets. Sonete*,

as in Eminescu's work."<sup>23</sup> In the quarrel between the time that devours the beauty of the world and the time of the poetic work defeats, through its duration, the latter.

The tutelary figure of a literature, the trainer, the architect from the dawn of culture, is embodied in an archetype:

*Every culture has in its hour a complete man, an archetype: Homer – Dante – Shakespeare – maybe Cervantes – Goethe. In our country, there is Eminescu.*

*It is the sole hour in which the language is not fully formed, the history of the community is open, the spirit of the culture is not yet defined. That particular hour will not come again. We will not have another Eminescu, just like the other cultures did not have another Dante, another Shakespeare, or another Goethe.*<sup>24</sup>

Talking about Eminescu's manuscripts, especially about the *manuscript* 2287, Noica says: "Just like the words in our language, Eminescu says more than he expresses. He keeps a rest. This rest is to be found in his manuscripts, among which some of them would be regarded as a real Archæus of our culture."<sup>25</sup> Are further quoted excerpts in which the great poet meditates upon the creative fantasy, upon the talent and the genius, on "the moonshiny moments of the poetry, in which the man sees the bright shadow of things, without them exciting his will", upon "the circle of shapes" of the world.

The poet is really poet through fantasy, language, thought and speech, as Eminescu was stating, that is through imagination, substance and shape. As regards the language, Noica was stating:

*The poetry corresponds to the word. The philosophy corresponds to the word. The whole world has become, nowadays, a word, from the genetic code to the electromagnetic signals. The poet has to bring into play a word that, on its level and in its own way, has to animate the heart and the soul, just as the words belonging to scientific languages have ended up putting in an organized process the still life.*<sup>26</sup>

Because the young poet, according to Eminescu, is not a complete master of the language and does not know how to graduate "the part of nature, that is of transmission and happening in the process of getting to know the word, and the part of culture,"<sup>27</sup> Noica states:

---

Parallel texts, trans. Radu Ștefănescu, Contemporary Literature Press, The University of Bucharest, Bucharest, 2015, 33).

<sup>23</sup> Constantin Noica, *Jurnal de idei* (Bucharest: Humanitas, 1990), 102.

<sup>24</sup> V. Martin Heidegger, *Originea operei de artă*, trans. Thomas Kleininger and Gabriel Liiceanu, Introductory study by Constantin Noica (Bucharest: Humanitas, 1995), 234.

<sup>25</sup> *Introducere la miracolul eminescian*, 361.

<sup>26</sup> Constantin Noica, "Poesia junilor," in *Introducere la miracolul eminescian*, 138.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibidem*.

*There is in the language, as in the things of the concrete universal, a material of nuances and subtleties, without which people do not talk, but rather peep like birds. But where the real word starts and what is the function of the word, beyond the transmission of meanings, here is an issue that could be first attached to the one who dares being a poet.*<sup>28</sup>

The young Romanian poets have to re-establish the whole experience of Eminescu, “an experience that was both one of the *word* in all the major languages, as well as one of the word in our language; one of the *thought* in almost all types of philosophies; one of the *fantasy* in almost all the terrestrial and celestial worlds.”<sup>29</sup>

### **Bibliography:**

1. Coșeriu, Eugeniu, Dorel Fînaru, and Dumitru Irimia. *Mic tratat de teorie a limbii și lingvistică generală* (Small Treatise of Language Theory and general Linguistics). Iași: Demiurg, 2016.
2. Coșeriu, Eugeniu. *Omul și limbajul său, Studii de filozofie a limbajului, teorie a limbii și lingvistică generală* (Man and His Language, Studies of Philosophy of Language, Language Theory and General Linguistics). Anthology, argument, notes, bibliography and indices by Dorel Fînaru. Iași: „Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University Publishing House, 2009.
3. Heidegger, Martin. *Originea operei de artă* (The Origin of the Work of Art). Translation and notes by Thomas Kleininger and Gabriel Liiceanu. Introductory study by Constantin Noica. Bucharest: Humanitas, 1995.
4. Hirghiduș, Ion. “Filosofia lui Constantin Noica între suflet și spirit” (Constantin Noica’s Philosophy between Soul and Spirit). In *The Annals of the University of Craiova*, Series: Philosophy, no. 24 (2/2009): 81-101.
5. Irimia, Dumitru. *Limbajul poetic eminescian* (Eminescu’s poetic language). Iași: Junimea, 1979.
6. Noica, Constantin. *Cuvînt împreună despre rostirea românească* (Word together about the Romanian utterance). Bucharest: Eminescu, 1987.
7. Noica, Constantin. *Introducere la miracolul eminescian* (Introduction to the Eminescian miracle). Edition supervised by Marin Diaconu and Gabriel Liiceanu. Bucharest: Humanitas, 1992.
8. Noica, Constantin. *Jurnal de idei* (Journal of Ideas). Bucharest Humanitas, 1990.

---

<sup>28</sup> *Ibidem.*

<sup>29</sup> *Ibidem*, 139.

9. Noica, Constantin. *Rostirea filozofică românească* (Romanian Philosophical Utterance). Bucharest: Științifică, 1970.
10. Noica, Constantin. *Scrisori despre logica lui Hermes* (Letters about the logic of Hermes). Bucharest: Cartea Românească, 1986.
11. Platon. *Opere III*. Edition supervised by Petru Creția, Interpretations of dialogues of Constantin Noica, Translation, preliminary details and notes for *Euthydemos*, Gabriel Liiceanu; *Cratylus*, Simina Noica. Bucharest: Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1978.
12. Rosetti, Al. *Filosofia cuvântului* (The Philosophy of the Word). Bucharest: Minerva, 1989.
13. Stuparu, Lorena. "Funcția ontologică a limbajului poetic eminescian la Constantin Noica" (The ontological function of Eminescu's poetic language at Constantin Noica). In *The Annals of the University of Craiova*, Series: Philosophy, no. 24 (2/2009): 72-80.
14. Vasiliu, Emanuel. *Elemente de filosofie a limbajului* (Elements of philosophy of language). Bucharest: Romanian Academy Publishing House, 1995.



# St Augustine's Contemplative Philosophy in Virginia Woolf's *To the Lighthouse*: The Cases of Time and Self-Examination

Professor PhD Salah BOUREGBI

Department of English, Badji Mokhtar University

Annaba, Algeria

salihbourg@yahoo.fr

## Abstract

*The aim of this contribution is to examine and unveil the Augustinian time process and self-examination in Virginia Woolf's "To the Lighthouse." The latter is a successful (re)presentation of the interrelation between human consciousness and time "control". The self cannot be defined without time dimension. Woolf seems to confirm that time is more interior than exterior and is an essential part of human being: it is through it that human being is felt as a part of the world. There are some powerful statements of her characters that show strange similarities to Augustine's doctrine of time, memory and existence. This triad characterizes his works, mainly "Confessions." Woolf's characters are so contemplative. We find them looking outward in order to discover their inside. The internal and the external are the focus of time knowledge and self-discovery. They are dialogically interrelated and define one another. The self is an ever "IS" within the presentness of the present: the "was" (past) is only a memory ("the no-longer") and the "will be" (future) is only the "not-yet" that has to come in order to become a present. In Augustine's doctrine, the past and the future do not exist because they are absent in the present. Yet, their only existence is the present – the NOW. Consciousness preserves one's past within itself. The individual meets and examines himself through consciousness. Mrs. Ramsay in "To the Lighthouse" experiments these dimensions and tries to define herself through time.*

**Keywords:** *St Augustine, Virginia Woolf, Self-examination, Time Dimension, Contemplative philosophy.*

## Introduction

This modest contribution discusses two significant notions in St Augustine's philosophy: Time dimension and Self-examination. In his work, *Confessions*,

mainly Books IX, X, XI, and XII, Augustine relates time “control” to human nature via linearity and contemplation. The self cannot be defined without these intertwined poles. These internal and external aspects of time are essential parts of human being: it is through them that human being is felt as a part of the world. These twin poles are the wheel of knowledge and self-discovery. They are dialogically interrelated and define one another. The self is an ever “IS” within the presentness of the present: the “was” (past) is only a memory (“the no-longer”) and the “will be” (future) is only an expectation (the “not-yet”) that has to come in order to become a present. In Augustine’s doctrine, the past and the future do not exist because they are absent in the present. Yet, their only existence is the present – the NOW. Consciousness preserves one’s past within itself. The individual meets and examines himself through consciousness.

This philosophy of St Augustine of Hippo has got a great impact on philosophers, as Henri Bergson and Paul Ricoeur, and on writers, as William Faulkner, James Joyce and, mainly Virginia Woolf. This study singles out Virginia Woolf among her contemporaries and tries to see the type of impact, similarity or influence, St Augustine has with/on her. In other words, my paper sheds light on what Augustine claims in his philosophy and what Virginia Woolf constructs in her artistic creation. Two cases are put under study: the use of time with its three dimensions in Woolf’s work and the strange similarities that exist with Augustine’s horizontal and vertical times. The second case is self-discovery through inward and outward contemplation and its keen relation with Augustine’s self-examination. These two cases, time and self-discovery, are interrelated and define one another. That is, the self is only known through its/the dimensions of time, and no time is ever felt, or comes into existence, if there is no mind or memory to feel it, or at least record it, when it falls into forgetfulness.

*Augustine’s Horizontal Time: Between “Distension,” “Now” and “Extension”:*

How does Augustine conceive time? In his *Confessions*, he raises the following questioning: “What, then, is time? Provided that no one asks me, I know. If I want to explain it to an inquirer, I do not know. But I confidently affirm myself to know that if nothing passes away, there is no past time, and if nothing arrives, there is no future time, and nothing existed, there would be no present.”<sup>1</sup> So, as the quote notifies, there must be a motion “that goes away,” a motion “that

---

<sup>1</sup> St Augustine, *Confessions*, trans. Henry Chadwick, 1991 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), XI, 14, 17.

*St Augustine's Contemplative Philosophy in Virginia Woolf's To the Lighthouse: The Cases of Time and Self-Examination*

will come” and a motion that exists within the stillness – the instant. In other words, there must be Distension (distensions), Now (nows) and Extension (extensions) to make time possible. It is the instant that makes the past a past, the present a present and the future a future. According to Augustine, no time is ever possible if the now does not activate it. He extends further claiming that it is this now – the presentness – that makes the three dimensions of the horizontal time possible. He says:

*Take the two tenses, past and future. How can they “be” when the past is not now present, and the future is not yet present? Yet, if the present were always present, it would not pass into the past: it would not be time but eternity. If then, in order to be time at all, the present is so made that it passes into the past, how can we say that this present also “is”? The cause of its being is that it will cease to be. So indeed, we cannot truly say that time exists except in the sense that it tends towards no-existence.<sup>2</sup>*

In the words of M. B. Pranger: “The presence of time is related to the presence of the NOW (The Instant): the presentness of the present. Changes backward and forward stem from this common ground. What changes are the dimensions of past, present and future that originate in the concept of time as the presence of the now.”<sup>3</sup> Put otherwise, what exists is the presentness of time, which makes the three dimensions happen: that is, we get the present-past, the present-present and the present-future.

John Spencer Hill compares time to a riddle, which has no practical solution; that is why according to him, St Augustine sees time as an imponderable mystery. A mystery he tries to solve and decipher. He writes: “Time is a riddle. The past does not exist, because it is no more. The future does not exist, because it is not yet. And the present, when we think about it, shrinks to an infinitesimal point, for only the smallest indivisible instant of duration can properly be called present.”<sup>4</sup> Hill develops his quest within the Augustinian philosophy pointing out that Augustine wants to tell us that there is only one time: the present. This (mental) present, which occupies no space, because it has no duration, or has only a duration in the mind, incorporates the past (which is no more) and the future

---

<sup>2</sup> *Ibidem*, XI, 14, 17.

<sup>3</sup> M.B. Pranger, *Eternity's Ennui: Temporality, Perseverance and Voice in Augustine and Western Literature* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2010), 5.

<sup>4</sup> John Spencer Hill, *Infinity, Faith, and Time: Christian Humanism and Renaissance Literature* (London and Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1977), 80.

(which is not yet), drawing them together into a trimodal unity and giving them a continuing existence in what Augustine calls his “attentive faculty.”<sup>5</sup>

Time is an issue that is embedded in the mind. It is felt more than defined. “The mind expects and attends and remembers, so that what it expects passes through what has its attention to what it remembers.”<sup>6</sup> Memory is tied to the instant, which triggers the three dimensions of the horizontal time. “Just as remembrance and expectation are tied up to the present,” Pranger points out, “so memory in its purest disguise is the actualization of the present.”<sup>7</sup> Memory, then actualizes the present and reactivates the past in relation to the attentions (that represents the lost, forgotten objects) of the present. Even time is measured within the mind: it is psychological, not scientific. St Augustine wonders: “But how do we measure present time when it has no extension? It is measured when it passes, but not when it has passed, because then there will be nothing there to measure.”<sup>8</sup>

Hill thinks that Augustine uses the mind as the source of this measurement, whose reference is the instant. He states: "Time measurement is a psychological phenomenon: it occurs only in the mind itself and consists in the present regard of a comparing consciousness that looks forward (expectatio) as well as backward (memoria)."<sup>9</sup> Brian Stock adopts the same claim of Hill. He points out that time cannot be measured because it is in an on-going movement, whether the future that is to come or the instant that exists or the past that has gone. He writes:

*Each division of time contains within itself a smaller division, and, within each, one part is past and another is to come. Intervals can be compared, but time can be measured only while it passes: once it is past, we cannot measure it, because it no longer exists. By this reasoning, the past and the future can be said to exist in the present. But that present affords no opportunity for measurement.*<sup>10</sup>

Augustine seems to tell us that it is only the event that has beginning and end that could be measured, because it passes to the past. We do not measure time but the duration this event, or movement, takes place. He says: “I measure the duration of the movement, from the moment it begins until it ends.”<sup>11</sup>

Time has a cosmological dimension and the measurement of rotation of a body is a measurement of the body, but not of time: we measure how length of its

---

<sup>5</sup> *Ibidem*, 80-81.

<sup>6</sup> Augustine, *Confessions*, XI, 17, 34.

<sup>7</sup> Pranger, *Eternity's Ennui*, 50.

<sup>8</sup> Augustine, *Confessions*, XI, 14, 17.

<sup>9</sup> Hill, *Infinity, Faith, and Time*, 81.

<sup>10</sup> Brian Stock, *After Augustine: The Meditative Reader and the Text* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001), 236.

<sup>11</sup> Augustine, *Confessions*, XI, 24, 31.

movement from the time it begins to the time it ceases.<sup>12</sup> And this measurement cannot be done if there is no “now.” In the words of W.J. Torrance Kirby: “It is the «present consciousness» of memory which measures the «stream of past events.»”<sup>13</sup> These streams of the past are past and do no longer belong to the “now.” George Frank argues that when the “now” is no longer “now,” it goes to the past and remains within the object or the things that happened. He says: “Anything actual is present. Hence, there is no way of measuring the speed with which time passes. But that is not all. The speed with which time passes even seems to defy consistent definition.”<sup>14</sup>

This is for horizontal time; but what about vertical time? Augustine associates this kind of time with forgetfulness, mysticism, and transcendentalism. This time is felt through contemplation, which is a self-vindication and confession to God. Hill claims that St Augustine’s vertical time is within the soul more than the body. He writes: “Augustine’s exploration of time is an ‘inclination of the soul’ – an *intentio animi* – toward God as being at once the subject and source of all true knowing.”<sup>15</sup> This kind of time is in itself a kind of timelessness because the present is contemporaneous. In the words of Augustine: “In the eternal, nothing is transient, but the whole is present.[...] Who will lay hold on the human heart to make it still, so that it can see how eternity, in which there is neither future nor past, stands still and dictates future and past?”<sup>16</sup> In other words, this vertical time is a time of chaos and annihilation. It is an ascension to God and an escape from the sensation of life and the material world. Explaining Augustine’s doctrine of time and eternity, Hill maintains that: “God, who created time, is beyond time. God exists in simultaneity, an undivided reality where past, present, and future are all-at-once and inseparable.”<sup>17</sup>

Man does not only bring the past and the future together, but extends his vision and intentions towards eternity: he meditates. At this level, time becomes vertical: it transcends the horizontal three durational dimensions. John Peter Kenny

---

<sup>12</sup> Algis Mickunas, “Self-Identity and Time,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Augustine*, ed. Eleonore Stump et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 123.

<sup>13</sup> W.J. Torrance Kirby, “Praise as the Soul’s Overcoming of Time in The Confessions of St Augustine,” *PRO ECCLES* VI, 3 (Summer 1999), 347.

<sup>14</sup> Georg, Frank, “Time, Actuality, Novelty and History Some Facets of a Phenomenon Still Awaiting Comprehension,” in *Life and Motion of Socio-Economic Units*, ed. Andrew U. Frank et al. (London: Taylor & Francis, 2001), 2.

<sup>15</sup> Hill, *Infinity, Faith, and Time*, 79.

<sup>16</sup> Augustine, *Confessions*, XI, 11, 14.

<sup>17</sup> Hill, *Infinity, Faith, and Time*, 80.

insists upon the present and claims that it is related to the soul mainly during the moment of meditation. He writes: “The present is also time in its most compressed form within the soul, an intense moment of contemplation (*contuitus*). In that respect the momentariness of the present within the soul resembles the simultaneity of eternity. In its fallen state, the soul is thus attenuated into time fully with its anxiety about the future and the burden of its past.”<sup>18</sup> This is what Augustine claims in his Book XI. He brings into account the soul as the source of contemplation and the core of vertical time. He says:

*What is by now evident and clear is that neither future, nor past exists, and it is inexact to speak of three times – past, present, and future. Perhaps it would be exact to say: there are three times, a present of things past, a present of things present, a present of things to come. In the soul there are these three aspects of time, and I do not see them anywhere else. The present considering the past is the memory, the present considering the present is immediate awareness, the present considering the future is expectation.*<sup>19</sup>

This state of being (contemplation) makes the soul move and transcend beyond “the elements of temporal succession” and all what is temporal and transitory.<sup>20</sup> Reaching this contemplation, the soul is elevated to the peak of contemplation and “enter(s) the everlasting present of unfallen time.”<sup>21</sup> In other words, there is a kind of transmutation, where the body is not felt as matter and substance and where the soul is driven out of time and reaches the stage of timelessness – the annihilation of the horizontal time. This kind of transcendence can only exist and be promoted by love.

The love Augustine seeks for is the love of God, not of the body. The love of the body is but an imprisonment of the soul bounded by instincts and earthly desires; whereas the love of God liberates the person from the “karmas” of the natural time and allows him ascend to Divinity. In his Book III, Augustine addresses God as follows: “As yet I had never been in love and longed to love; and from a subconscious poverty of mind I hated the thought of being less inwardly destitute. I sought an object for my love; I was in love with love, and I hated safety and a path free of snares.”<sup>22</sup> Simo Knuuttila acknowledges that when the motion is absent, horizontal time ceases to exist, or at least ceases to be felt. So, we get timelessness. He says: “Necessary beings are *omni temporal*, but if there were only

---

<sup>18</sup> John Peter Kenny, *Contemplation and Classical Christianity: A Study in Augustine* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 158.

<sup>19</sup> Augustine, *Confessions*, XI, 20, 26.

<sup>20</sup> Kenny, *Contemplation and Classical Christianity*, 159.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibidem*, 159.

<sup>22</sup> Augustine, *Confessions*, III, 1, 1.

*St Augustine's Contemplative Philosophy in Virginia Woolf's To the Lighthouse: The Cases of Time and Self-Examination*

such beings without motion, they would not be called 'omni temporal' because there would be no time in a world without motion."<sup>23</sup>

So, contemplation is not an end in itself, but a means that conducts the soul to a new time beyond the horizontal time and a new life beyond what constitutes this horizontal time. In other words, the soul accesses to transcendence, which leads it to "unmediated knowledge of divine wisdom."<sup>24</sup> This kind of meditation for transcendence is very illustrative in the following quote from *Confessions*:

*But now, "my years pass in groans" (Ps. 30:11) and you, Lord, are my consolation. You are my eternal Father, but I am scattered in times whose orders I do not understand. The storms of incoherent events tear to pieces my thoughts, the inmost entails of my soul, until that day, when, purified and molten by the fire of your love, I flow together to merge into you.*<sup>25</sup>

David Ven Dusen suggests that Augustinian time is not only a matter of interiority residing within the mind, but, besides, it gives the soul a way out, an outing where it searches its identification with eternity to reach oneness through love. He points out: "Augustine's identification of tempus with a «distentio animi» does not resolve into an «interiority of the mind», but rather, into an outness of the soul. This «outness» is, indeed, co-given in and indicated by Augustine's selection of the term distentio, which depicts not a contraction, intension or recoil, but a dilation, refraction and spatialization of the soul."<sup>26</sup> Dusen extends further explaining that this dilatation is first of the mind then refracts itself to the soul: time distances to the soul through consciousness. This is actually what Augustine raises in his *Confessions*. He says:

*Who therefore can deny that the future does not yet exist? Yet already in the mind there is an expectation of the future. Who can deny that the past does not now exist? Yet there is still in the mind a memory of the past. None can deny that present time lacks any extension because it passes in a flash. Yet attention is continuous, and it is through this that what will be present progresses towards being absent. So, the future, which does not exist, is not a long period of time. A long future is a long expectation of the future. And the past, which has no existence, is not a long period of time. A long past is a long memory of the past.*<sup>27</sup>

---

<sup>23</sup> Simo Knuuttila, "Time and Creation in Augustine," in *The Cambridge Companion to Augustine*, ed. Eleonore Stump et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 110.

<sup>24</sup> Kenny, *Contemplation and Classical Christianity*, 163.

<sup>25</sup> Augustine, *Confessions*, XII, 29, 39.

<sup>26</sup> David Ven Dusen, *The Space of Time A Sensualist Interpretation of Time in Augustine, Confessions X to XII*, 6 (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2014), 17.

<sup>27</sup> Augustine, *Confessions* XI, 28, 37.

The extension of the soul beyond the present is very significant: it shows the verticality of time, which is beyond causality and past experiences. For Augustine, then, time “is not only a content of consciousness that abides when things with the temporal flux pass away, but also an activity in virtue of which we move from one state of consciousness to the next. This implies that time is a mental state that is both in and of the soul simultaneously, where the temporal content within the soul comes to be there because of an activity in which the soul is engaged.”<sup>28</sup>

Roland J. Teske adopts similar position in his explanation of Augustinian time. He draws a tight relation between the mind in which time is embedded and the soul, which “verticalizes” it and makes it beyond the “now.” Time dilates from consciousness / mind to the soul / self. He states: “One might view the definition of time as distension of mind-soul as a definition of human or psychological time as opposed to physical time. On the other hand, when Augustine speaks of time as beginning with God’s creating heaven and earth, one might regard him as speaking of physical or objective time.”<sup>29</sup> This eternal time is the world-soul “by which God gave form to the world and with which individual souls are somehow one.”<sup>30</sup> For Michael Marder, Augustine’s doctrine of time is quite double: One is outer, the other is inner. He says: “The ambition of the Augustinian attention is double: to leap out of time, defined as distension, on one’s way to God and, stated somewhat heretically, to undo the intra-temporal and multiple order of creation.”<sup>31</sup>

Memory is based on forgetfulness. The latter makes the present things a past. These past things are kept and wrapped within a storehouse called memory. Augustine considers memory as a citadel where moments and durations, with their beginnings and ends, are preserved. He says: “Memory preserves in distinct particulars and general categories all the perceptions which have penetrated, each by its own route of entry. [...] Memory’s huge cavern, with its mysterious, secret, or indescribable nooks and crannies, receives all these perceptions, to be recalled when needed and reconsidered.”<sup>32</sup> According to Antonio Colcogno, forgetting is the constitutive element of memory. It is “understood as a kind of annihilation,[and] allows differences to emerge – differences between self and

---

<sup>28</sup> Mickunas, “Self-Identity and Time,” 119.

<sup>29</sup> Roland J. Teske, “Augustine’s Philosophy of memory,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Augustine*, ed. Eleonore Stump et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 230.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibidem*, 233.

<sup>31</sup> Michael Marder, “Phenomenology of Distraction, or Attention in the Fissuring of Time and Space,” *Research in Phenomenology* 41 (2011), 410.

<sup>32</sup> Augustine, *Confessions*, X, 8, 142.

*St Augustine's Contemplative Philosophy in Virginia Woolf's To the Lighthouse: The Cases of Time and Self-Examination*

God, self and others, self and world, self and self. Forgetting is certainly one way to achieve the splitting that characterizes the two-in-one of thinking.”<sup>33</sup>

So, forgetting and remembering are the cornerstone of memory, and no memory is ever possible if there is no now: the presetness of the present. It is the now that activates these two components.

*Inwardness and Self-Discovery: The Other “I”*

Inwardness and self-examination are developed and embedded within Augustine's narrative mode of his confessions. To confess is to reveal the inward reality to an outward Reality, to Divinity, to God. This is what characterizes almost all his inward examination. The latter is a kind of self-discovery and revelation through narrative expression: the word. In his Book X, Augustine writes:

*The objects themselves do not enter, but the images of the perceived objects are available to the thoughts recalling them. But who can say how images are created, even though it may be clear by which senses they are grasped and stored. I would not have spoken of them unless the mountains (which I have seen) and the ocean (which I believe on the reports of others) I could see inwardly with dimensions just as great as if I were actually looking at them outside my mind.*<sup>34</sup>

The critic Pranger maintains that: “Both narrative and «religious» structures hinge on the fact that voice is arrogated vis-à-vis an inscrutable and elusive God who is part of Augustine's «narrative» from the beginning till the end. That linear storytelling does not work if one character violates all the rules is true enough.”<sup>35</sup> This inward-outward verticality steps beyond the bond of human time, mainly with its past and future: It breaks time of linearity and adopts time of transcendence in order to ascend to timelessness: Eternal time. Pranger adds that by “breaking that bond, having become excusable as part of the inner errancy of the soul, would no longer be a break, a promise would cease to be a promise as much as the giver of the promise would cease to be accountable.”<sup>36</sup>

But the more we turn upward, the more we get deeper inward to discover and examine one's inner world. “We now have to turn to the immense world of the senses and have it sink down as it were into the cluster of memory and time, the

---

<sup>33</sup> Antonio Colcagno, “The Role of Forgetting in our Experience of Time: Augustine and Hannah Arendt,” *PARRHESIA* 3 (2011), 10.

<sup>34</sup> Augustine, *Confessions*, X, 18, 23.

<sup>35</sup> Pranger, *Eternity's Ennui*, 17.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibidem*, 59.

present and eternity. Even the wholeness of passion and the sense of belonging as suggested by the world of vision, hearing, touch, smell and taste could no longer conceal the reality of a fake existence.”<sup>37</sup> This inwardness is a kind of self-knowledge, which is based on inner examination. It is a kind of soliloquy where the first person narrator is frequently used and where the confessor tries to reveal his interior to the other, who is, in Augustine’s doctrine, God: “This do I, Father, for this is all I know: but how to make my way to Thee I know not. Do Thou suggest it, make it plain, equip me for the journey.”<sup>38</sup> Stock considers this mode of revelation a discourse used in autobiographies and allows the speaker to speak out what is inside him: his interior. He writes: “[It is] a type of discourse in which a person and his rational spirit entered into debate in the interior of the soul on the preconditions and limitations of self-knowledge. In *Confessions*, the characters in the dialogue were changed, but the philosophical objectives remained the same.”<sup>39</sup>

Augustine’s starting point in his self-examination is his own subjective experience. In other words, knowing one’s self through one’s existence is the source of his investigation in the nature of his self. “This proof,” Stock points out, “provided him with a firm foundation for inquiring into other aspects of his self-knowledge. He also reevaluated the role of personal memories in establishing the continuity of this knowledge.”<sup>40</sup> This self-knowledge is found in many instances in his prayer and soliloquies. In Books II of *The Soliloquies*, for example, he says: “Cause me, O Father, to seek Thee; let me not stray from the path, and to me, seeking Thee, let nothing befall in place of Thyself! If I desire nothing beside Thyself, let me, I implore, find Thee now; but if there is in me the desire for something beside Thyself, do Thou Thyself purify me, and make me fit to look upon Thee!”<sup>41</sup>

The self we know is different from the self that exists. The “now” or the present-present in narration verbalizes the self and makes it examine itself. Augustine claims that: “Those who narrate past history would surely not be telling a true story if they did not discern events by their soul’s insight. If the past were non-existent, it could not be discerned at all. Therefore, both future and past events exist.”<sup>42</sup> Stock maintains that: “If the intentional role of narrative is to be realized,

---

<sup>37</sup> *Ibidem*, 92.

<sup>38</sup> St Augustine, *The Soliloquies*, trans. Rose Elizabeth Cleveland (Boston: Little Brown, and Company, 1910), I, 4, 8-9.

<sup>39</sup> Stock, *After Augustine: The Meditative Reader and the Text*, 11.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibidem*, 12.

<sup>41</sup> Augustine, *The Soliloquies*, I, 6, 9.

<sup>42</sup> Augustine, *Confessions*, XI, 17, 22.

*St Augustine's Contemplative Philosophy in Virginia Woolf's To the Lighthouse: The Cases of Time and Self-Examination*

the present is everything, since the anxiety about the possible unreality of the self is felt and relieved in the present. For Augustine, this is a meditative present, that is, a presence that absorbs and dissolves all fragmenting time zones.”<sup>43</sup> According to Stock, self understanding and knowledge is both temporal and non-temporal. It is within the scope of horizontal time with its three dimensions, but it is also within vertical time and the absence of conscious time. He says:

*In Augustine's view, self-understanding is similarly based on the temporal, insofar as it uses language and the no temporal, insofar as it arises from our awareness that we are thinking. Through the cogito, we can say that there is something that we know for sure, whereas through the knowledge that arises from language, there is very little if anything that is not subject to doubt. Augustine, thus, agrees with previous thinkers who maintain that the mind is incapable of knowing itself in full. Yet, viewed positively, this limitation is proof that our minds have capacities that are not bound by the rules of our own thinking.*<sup>44</sup>

Augustine acknowledges that: “When a narrative of the past is related, the memory produces not the actual events which have passed away but words conceived from images of them, which they fixed in the mind like imprints as they passed through the senses.”<sup>45</sup> The critic Algis Mickunas acknowledges this fact and asserts that the self is permanent and recognizes itself in this permanence. He writes:

*The self must recognize itself at present and as no longer at present, and this “no longer” at present is a temporal distance that is immediately bridged by the identity between the present self and its being the same in memory. The sameness is a guarantee that the self is permanent and that the memories of what the self was, did, and thought are all present as belonging to the same self.[...]Indeed, strictly speaking, the soul avoids time altogether: the soul cannot see ‘images’ of time because time has no visible or audible characteristics.*<sup>46</sup>

Examining oneself for the sake of purification makes the self forget about the world of horizontal time and embark on an upward direction of transcendence. This act is contemplation in itself. In the words of John Peter Kenny: “[This] contemplation is achieved to the extent that the rational soul can extract itself from the scattered world of time and space, moving resolutely into what transcends the lower world. It is then that a person is truly learned and is able to seek out divine things, not just as things to be believed, but as truth to be contemplated,

---

<sup>43</sup> Stock, *After Augustine: The Meditative Reader and the Text*, 34.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibidem*, 56.

<sup>45</sup> Augustine, *Confessions*, XI, 18, 23.

<sup>46</sup> Mickunas, “Self-Identity and Time,” 115.

understood, and retained.”<sup>47</sup> This ascendance is a travel beyond sense experiences to the contemplation of the upward matters, where the soul meets its knower, God, who is the Pure, the Absolute. In his Books VII of *Confessions*, Augustine writes:

*With you as my guide, I entered into my innermost citadel, and was given power to do so because you had become my helper. I entered and with my soul’s eye, such as it was, saw above that same eye of my soul the immutable light higher than my mind—not the light of every day, obvious to anyone, nor a larger version of the same kind which would, as it were, have given out a much brighter light filled everything with its magnitude. It was not that light a different thing, utterly different from all our kinds of light.*<sup>48</sup>

In the words of Kenny: “[The ascension allows the soul to] acquire abstract understanding of concepts such as pure nothingness, formless matter, body, spatial and temporal location, eternity, what is beyond time, etc.”<sup>49</sup> He details further Augustine’s doctrine of self-knowledge arguing that the senses of the soul are like the eyes, which are illuminated by God. He says:

*It is God who illuminates the soul, for Reason is to the mind as sight is to the eyes. But having eyes is not the same as looking nor is looking the same as seeing. The soul needs, therefore, to have healthy eyes, and it must look towards God, and finally it will see God. But for the soul to see God with the eyes of its mind, the mind must be cleansed from the stains of the body, that is, from the lusts for mortal things. [Souls] do not yet desire the light that they might come to see. Only love can supply a desire for that light to the soul.*<sup>50</sup>

This visionary contemplative power that emanates from the inherent soul capacity finds its path to the Divine power that enlightens the darkness and the fall in/of the human time. “What could be hidden within me, even if I were unwilling to confess it to you? I would be hiding you from myself, not myself from you.”<sup>51</sup> Or in another instance, “We derive our light from you, so that we ‘who were once darkness are light in you (Eph. 5: 8). If only they could see the eternal to be inward!”<sup>52</sup> In the words of Roland Teske: “Augustine attempts to move beyond his memory in his search for God, though he is faced with the paradox that, if he finds God apart from memory, he is unmindful of him.”<sup>53</sup> Gareth B. Matthews maintains that reaching the light of God is ascending for illumination. He writes: “The doctrine is appropriately called a doctrine of divine illumination because

---

<sup>47</sup> Kenny, *Contemplation and Classical Christianity*, 49.

<sup>48</sup> Augustine, *Confessions*, VII.10.1.

<sup>49</sup> Kenny, *Contemplation and Classical Christianity*, 71.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibidem*, 78.

<sup>51</sup> Augustine, *Confessions*, IX 2, 2.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibidem*, IX, 4, 10.

<sup>53</sup> Teske, “Augustine’s Philosophy of Memory,” 152.

*St Augustine's Contemplative Philosophy in Virginia Woolf's To the Lighthouse: The Cases of Time and Self-Examination*

Augustine tells us that it is the light of Christ, or the light of God, by which the mind is said to be able to discern the objects of intellectual vision.”<sup>54</sup> This light, who is God, is a referent to the soul, which wants to transcend to Divinity.

*Virginia Woolf's Pattern of Time*

Shifting backward and forward in time is the basis of Virginia Woolf's narrative structural conception. This time shifting, which goes to past from present and from present to future, seems to be similar to that of St Augustine's doctrine of the notion of time. No doubt, Woolf got acquainted with the stream-of-consciousness, a term coined by William James. Its use in fiction is to imitate the complete mental life as it manifests itself in the ongoing present.<sup>55</sup> Stream-of-consciousness presents the operations of consciousness and enables the reader to analyse, through the verbal expression, “the trace of an absence [...] about what is not there.”<sup>56</sup> This ‘what is not there’ is beyond language.

Woolf's representation of the mind is an interweaving of pasts and presents. It is the permanent transcendence of the present – the now that makes this representation possible. Woolf declares: “Let us record the atoms as they fell upon the mind in the order in which they fall, let us trace the pattern, however disconnected and incoherent in appearance, which each sight or incident scores upon the consciousness.”<sup>57</sup>

Hermeneutically speaking, the object of perception is never naked. It is backed by the perception of the mind. The latter modifies it according to its own state of being. For Woolf, time is interior and part of human being, and it is through human being that it is felt, however, as a part of the world. That is, time is incorporated in experience, and experience is stored in the ego. In doing so, she confirms her sense of time and its effect on the individual. This new conception of time keeps pace with Augustine's perception that time cannot be explained, but it is felt by the self. Furthermore, it is the self that activates (horizontal time) “what is to come” and “what has gone” within the instant. In Book IV of *Confessions*, he writes: “Time is not Inert. It does not roll on through our senses without affecting

---

<sup>54</sup> Gareth B. Mathew, “Knowledge and Illumination,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Augustine*, ed. Eleonore Stump et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 118.

<sup>55</sup> Bruce F. Kavin, *The Mind of the Novel: Reflexive Fiction and the Ineffable* (Princeton and New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1982), 233.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibidem*, 235.

<sup>57</sup> Virginia Woolf, *The Common Reader, Second Series* (London: The Hogarth Press, 1965), 105.

us. Its passing has remarkable effects on the mind.[...], and by its coming and going it implanted in me new hopes and other experiences to be remembering.”<sup>58</sup>

Her view of the psychological basis of time frequently makes her draw on the possibility of making a minute seem a year. This notion is made explicit, when she writes that: “an hour, once it lodges in the queer element of the human spirit, may be stretched to fifty or a hundred times its clock length; on the other hand, an hour may be accurately represented on the time piece of the mind by one second.”<sup>59</sup> Augustine claims that perception is the basis of measurement: time’s longer or shorter duration is psychological, and the way it is perceived is dialogically related the state of mind during the moment of its perception (perception of time).<sup>60</sup> Woolf realizes that the present moment is fleeting and there is a desire within the individual to preserve it and make it permanent. In her book *Moments of Being*, she writes:

*The past only comes back when the present runs so smoothly that it is like the sliding surface of a deep river. [...] In those moments I find one of my greatest satisfactions, not that I am thinking of past; but that it is then that I am living most fully in the present. For the present when backed by the past is a thousand times deeper than the present when it passes so close that you can feel nothing else.*<sup>61</sup>

Woolf’s claim is similar to that of Augustine whose essential doctrine of time is based on the present: the now. The past comes because the present recalls it back: remembering of the forgetting. The wheel of time, fixed in its permanent now, makes the future and the past exist: distension – permanence – extension are the three major dimensions of this wheel.

Seemingly, Woolf focuses on the apparent dichotomy between two kinds of time of two differing worlds: on the one hand, the world of the linear time (External/Horizontal/Human): time of past, present, and future, in which we are subject to unremitting and uncontrollable flux; on the other hand, the world of the mental time (Internal/Vertical/Non-human), an inner world of thought and imagination, in which the chaotic flow of experience, derived from our life in linear time, is reduced to order and unity and in which we are therefore liberated.

Woolf steps further claiming that time does not exist. By annihilating the existence of time, Woolf confirms the concept of time as eternity. This is also similar to Augustine’s transcendental time, where time of ascension escapes time

---

<sup>58</sup> Augustine, *Confessions*, IV, 8, 13.

<sup>59</sup> Virginia Woolf, *Orlando: A Biography* (London: The Hogarth Press, 1978), 98.

<sup>60</sup> Augustine, *Confessions*, XI, 16, 21.

<sup>61</sup> Virginia Woolf, *Moments of Being: Unpublished Autobiographical Writings*, 1976, ed. Jeanne Schulkind (London and New York: The Hogarth Press and Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1985), 98.

of the fallen body. He says: "Your Today is eternity"; "If they (times) were permanent, they would not be time. [...] If the present were always present, it would not pass into the past; it would not be time but eternity."<sup>62</sup>

This notion of eternity, or timelessness, is frequently manifested in the moments of vision in Woolf's novels. In their moments of being, Woolf's characters feel that they are in some sort of timeless state – or they are outside natural time living in a world of never-never time and never-never land: eternity. This timelessness, according to Hartocollis, is "the defensive purpose of suppressing the awareness of the passage and the breaking image of death,"<sup>63</sup> and "a defence against the overwhelming instinctual drives and the danger of ego disintegration."<sup>64</sup> Hill underlines this point and claims that time is subjective. He states: "Time was a subjective reality and its value depended on what one made of the opportunity, on how one chose to employ the duration afforded for self-discovery."<sup>65</sup> Augustine's prayer illustrates this concern: "What could be hidden within me, even if I were unwilling to confess it to you? I would be hiding you from myself, not myself from you."<sup>66</sup>

Woolf's use of time as an element of self-examination and discovery resembles that of Augustine. For Augustine, time and mind are inseparable: they define one another. "The mind expects and attends and remembers, so that what it expects passes through what has its attention to what it remembers."<sup>67</sup> Existence in this human time must be confirmed through motion and activity, i.e., duration. In the words of Chen:

*Augustine's emphasis on the human mind is a significant point at which the mind and its understanding of time are both highlighted and required for the further pursuit of the understanding of the self. Augustine's valuable contribution to the study of time is his clear implication that indicates that the conjoining nodal point of time and mind constitute the core of one's sense of self.*<sup>68</sup>

Woolf's return to time within, or memory, is a kind of movement from the external to the internal. In other words, it is a movement to the inner life, which

---

<sup>62</sup> Augustine, *Confessions*, XI, 12, 16/ 14, 17.

<sup>63</sup> Peter Hartocollis, *Time and Timelessness* (New York: International Universities Press, 1983), 73.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibidem*, 80.

<sup>65</sup> Hill, *Infinity, Faith, and Time*, 96.

<sup>66</sup> Augustine, *Confessions*, IX, 4, 10.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibidem*, XI, 27, 34.

<sup>68</sup> Hsiu-Yu Chen, "Romantic Dialogues: Writing the Self in De Quincey and Woolf" (PhD thesis, Department of English Studies, Durham University, 2013), 102.

contradicts and contrasts the fluctuations and vicissitudes of reality. Chen states that: “Human understandings of reality follow our perception of time. An overthrow of the supremacy of external reality results in a different interpretation of what reality is on an individual level. Woolf overlooks the factual report of reality and shows more favour over individual imagination and meditation.”<sup>69</sup>

Woolf’s time seems to be more inner, less patriarchal and historical. Time as history is predominated by men, who control it. Chen points out: “The sense of reality is always related to historicity; women in this instance do not have their reality because women do not have their history – not the measurement of time nor the language of communication. However, women’s time is eternal, repetitive, immortal and continuous, due to women’s uneventful and repetitive social upbringing and domestic lives.”<sup>70</sup>

The inner intense perception of time makes Woolf remember past events and moments that make her out of time. In *Moments of Being*, she writes: “I often wonder – the things we have felt with great intensity have an existence independent of our mind; are in fact still in existence?... I see it – the past – as an avenue lying behind... There at the end of the avenue still, are the garden and the nursery.”<sup>71</sup> Though Woolf rejects the “true” time, the time that exists outside human being, her novels, mainly *To the Lighthouse*, support Augustine’s claim that subjective structure of human beings functions differently from that of eternal time.<sup>72</sup> Though Woolf is labeled by critics as agnostic, her thoughts are full of the relics of religion. B. Erica Willis assumes that: “Although atheism was popular among the modern writers, they had not removed God from their discourse; rather, they seem to have been just as obsessed with the idea as Augustine. Though Woolf’s use of the God concept opposes Augustine’s, the use of theology to advance ideas is a strong commonality between the two.”<sup>73</sup>

### *Time versus Identity in “To the Lighthouse”*

Woolf fuses, artistically, between time as a process of change and narrative mode as a process of movement of events. Lived time goes away sliding as in a dream. Trance is everywhere and is complement to the conscious time. Her protagonist, Mrs Ramsay, slips from the natural real time of everyday life to the

---

<sup>69</sup> *Ibidem*, 144.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibidem*, 152.

<sup>71</sup> Woolf, *Moments of Being*, 81.

<sup>72</sup> Erica B. Willis, “The Philosophy of Time in *Mrs. Dalloway*, *Orlando*, and *The Waves*” (MA Thesis, Department of English, the State University of New York College at Brockport, 2006), 9.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibidem*, 10.

*St Augustine's Contemplative Philosophy in Virginia Woolf's To the Lighthouse: The Cases of Time and Self-Examination*

conscious/internal one. That is, there is a complete elimination of time as a dimension of experience. Such escape, from the factual, natural time, is a remedy to the hopeless and lamentable life she spends. In other words, *To the Lighthouse* is an attempt to differentiate between time we live in and time we live with. Edwin Muir explains further such point. He maintains that: "The time she evokes has hardly anything to do with individual human life at all, except accidentally like evolution, for example, it is so much too powerful that it seems to have no effect at all, like an electric charge with, multiplied a thousand times, passes through one's body without one's feeling it, whereas, reduced to the right voltage, it would act devastatingly."<sup>74</sup>

Linear/natural time has done its effect. It has devastated and dilapidated houses, because of rain, wind and dust. Its powerful act has destroyed everything: "What power could now prevent the fertility, the insensibility of nature? [...] It had wavered over the walls like a spot of sunlight and vanished. She [Mrs McNab] had locked the door; she had gone. It was beyond the strength of one woman, she said.[...] The place was gone to rack and ruin."<sup>75</sup>

Woolf's characters appear to be more thoughtful and serious, when they respond to the effects of time — its effects of change. When time passes, tragedy comes; there is death and devastation: Mrs Ramsay dies, Prue dies in childbirth, and Andrew dies at war. Life is changing continuously; there is no stability. There is experience and human being goes on living, despite the tragedy of such experience. All the characters of the story are trying to make sense to life through its contradictory elements:

*"And even if it isn't fine tomorrow," said Mrs Ramsay, raising her eyes to glance at William Bankes and Lily Briscoe as they passed, "it will be another day..." she said.*<sup>76</sup>

Time is seen as a tragedy. It affects not only human being, but also Nature. Such tragic events, time has brought about, go to the past and remain in the memory of living. Thus, when these events become past, they no longer remain in the present. Though Mrs Ramsay passed away, she remains alive in the minds of people. She is immortalized in Lily's art and lives in the hearts of children. "Human hopes," Hooper assumes, "are renewed: individuals may be gone, but

---

<sup>74</sup> Edwin Muir, "Virginia Woolf," in *The Truth of Imagination: Some Uncollected Reviews and Essays*, ed. P. H. Butler (Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press, 1988), 22.

<sup>75</sup> Virginia Woolf, *To the Lighthouse*, 1964 (Harmondsworth and Middlesex: Penguin, 1970), 157.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibidem*, 31.

their values, spirit and strengths are eternal. They are part of the pattern of time as a whole.”<sup>77</sup>

Woolf’s characters develop through time; and time progressively develops in them. The more they grow up, the more they become conscious of their lives, their past, present and future. People are no longer prisoners of their present or past; they are able to go at will, with their thoughts, from past to present to future without any constraint. Mrs Ramsay frequently goes to the past with her thoughts. The scenes and events of the past are more secure and more ordered, probably for her. It is the unknown future that holds fear and threat for her. The past is passed; thus, it becomes familiar, whereas the future is full of the unexpected, and therefore, it enfolds anxiety and restlessness:

*[As] she sat with the children the words of some old cradle song, murmured by nature “I am guarding you — I am you support”, but at other times, ...like a ghostly roll of drums remorselessly beat the measure of life, made one thing of the destruction of the island and its engulfment in the sea. [...] This sound which had been obscured and concealed under other sounds hiddenly thundered hollow in her ears and made her look up with an impulse of terror.*<sup>78</sup>

#### *Artistic Image and Self-Representation in “To the Lighthouse”*

The artistic image is a representation of a sensation, a sensibility or a reality. The image, according to Austen Warren and René Welleck: “is a sensation or a perception, but it also «stands for», refers to, something invisible, something «inner».”<sup>79</sup> In the words of Augustine: “We do not draw images through our senses, but discern them inwardly not through images but as they really are and through the concepts themselves.”<sup>80</sup>

Virginia Woolf’s novels flow with images through metaphors and symbols. She fuses objects and subjects together in a close relation aiming at expressing her self, and poetically her inward, to the external world. In “The Preface” of his book *Virginia Woolf: The Inward Voyage*, Harvena Richter writes: “The character’s inner world is externalised through mental processes, which abstract, concrete, or

---

<sup>77</sup> Perdita V. Hooper, *Notes on Virginia Woolf’s “To the Lighthouse”* (London and Sydney: Pan Books, 179), 201-21.

<sup>78</sup> Woolf, *To the Lighthouse*, 9-20.

<sup>79</sup> René Welleck and Austen Warren, *Theory of Literature*, 1956 (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin, 1985), 188.

<sup>80</sup> Augustine, *Confessions*, X, 10, 18.

*St Augustine's Contemplative Philosophy in Virginia Woolf's To the Lighthouse: The Cases of Time and Self-Examination*

compress feeling into image, metaphor, and symbol, and so explore areas of submerged emotion usually glimpsed only by the dreaming mind.”<sup>81</sup>

The light of the lighthouse is central and significant to Mrs Ramsay. The more she looks at it, the more she forgets her linear time and reacts with joy to the beams of the third stroke of light. Her fascination with light, the lighthouse generates, makes her become that light: “Often she found herself sitting and looking... until she became the thing she looked at – that light.”<sup>82</sup> This is actually what Augustine assumes eternity is: it is the light, God, who is the sense of order that annihilates the natural time – time of the fallen body. He says: “When, then, light did not yet exist, the presence of darkness was the lack of light.”<sup>83</sup> Or in other instances: “As I speak, so is my heart. You, Lord, «will light my lamp.» Lord, my God, «you will lighten my darkness.» (Ps 17: 29)”, “Heal my eyes and let me rejoice with your light.”<sup>84</sup>

Both Mrs. Ramsay and the lighthouse form a unity. Mrs Ramsay responds more acutely to the lighthouse beams. She accords and even shapes her innermost sense of identity through the beams of light it emits.

Being a source of generation and power, L.A. Polesky associates the lighthouse to God. Such revitalization, that the three strokes give to the spirit, is paralleled to the within power that the self generates as a response to the beams of light of the lighthouse. In the words of Polesky, the lighthouse “represents God within the self.”<sup>85</sup> This is equally similar to that of Augustine, who finds pleasure in praising God. He says: “You stir man to take pleasure in praising you, because you have made us for yourself, and our heart is restless until it rests in you.”<sup>86</sup> Or in Books X: “Light itself is one, and all those are one who see it and love it.”<sup>87</sup>

The third stroke emitted by the lighthouse is very significant. Mrs. Ramsay identifies herself with it. She sees her self through it. In other words, the lighthouse stimulates Mrs. Ramsay. It makes her introspect. She, unlike her husband, has the capacity to see what lies behind the darkness. She can see the core of her self and the depth of her identity. This is also very similar to Augustine’s confession to

---

<sup>81</sup> Harvena Richter, “Introduction,” *Virginia Woolf: The Inward Voyage* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970), VIII.

<sup>82</sup> Woolf, *To the Lighthouse*, 96.

<sup>83</sup> Augustine, *Confessions*, XII, 3, 3.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibidem*, XI, 25, 32/31, 41.

<sup>85</sup> Louise A. Polesky, *The Elusive Self: Psyche and Spirit in Virginia Woolf's Novel* (Toronto and London: University of Delaware's Press, 1981), 129.

<sup>86</sup> Augustine, *Confessions*, I, 1, 1.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibidem*, X, 34, 52.

God. In Book IX, He says: “You pierce my heart with the arrow of your love, and we carried your words transfixing my innermost being.”<sup>88</sup> This identification with the third stroke makes Mrs Ramsay illuminate the core of darkness and, symbolically, the self within such core:

*[T]here she looked out to meet that stroke of Lighthouse, the long steady stroke, that last of the three, which was her stroke, for watching them in this mood always at this hour one could not help attaching oneself to one thing especially of the things we saw; and this thing, the long steady stroke, was her stroke. [...] It will end, it will end, she said. It will come, it will come, when suddenly she added, We are in the hands of the Lord.<sup>89</sup>*

This quote echoes Augustine’s submission and praying to God: “My weakness is known to you. I am a child.”<sup>90</sup>

This third stroke, which has a great effect in Mrs. Ramsay’s self, could be associated with the Divine Light of the Holy Spirit. The absorption of this light revitalizes Mrs. Ramsay’s soul: “She looked upon over her knitting and met the third stroke and it seemed to her like her own eyes meeting her own eyes, searching as she alone could search into the mind and her heart, purifying out of existence that lie, any life.”<sup>91</sup> So, this third stroke, with which Mrs. Ramsay is identified, becomes an element of strength and purity. Light, which penetrates her self, sanctifies her of any sin and gives her courage of searching what is within herself: what is beautiful and right: “She praised herself in praising the light, without vanity, for she was stern, she was searching; she was beautiful like that light.”<sup>92</sup>

So, this third stroke is the third step of ascending up to eternity. It does not depart from past, present and future, this is, the linear time, but it comes from the depth of the innermost and goes up to the Absolute. This cannot be done without the element of the pure love, which is bodiless and immaterial. Augustine’s doctrine of ascension to the Divine cannot be possible without the light of God, and no light is ever possible without the real love of Divinity. He says: “Come Lord, stir us up and call us, kindle us and seize us, be our fire and our sweetness. Let us love, let us run. Surely many return to you from a deeper hell of blindness than Victorinus. They approach and are illuminated as they receive light.”<sup>93</sup>

---

<sup>88</sup> *Ibidem*, IX, 2, 3.

<sup>89</sup> Woolf, *To the Lighthouse*, 96-7.

<sup>90</sup> Augustine, *Confessions*, X, 4, 6.

<sup>91</sup> Woolf, *To the Lighthouse*, 97.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibidem*, 97-98.

<sup>93</sup> Augustine, *Confessions*, VIII, 4, 9.

*St Augustine's Contemplative Philosophy in Virginia Woolf's To the Lighthouse: The Cases of Time and Self-Examination*

Woolf's characters seem to be in eternity and experience a kind of enlightenment they could not explain. They seem, by the annihilation of time, to be living in a mystical world: "a token of some real thing behind appearances."<sup>94</sup>

Renunciation of what the body desires is associated with the pure perception that distances from all what is desirable – all what belongs to human time. Renouncing this type of time is making you ascend to a world where the past and the future are annihilated. Kirby points out that: "In the divine vision of such temporal occurrences as the natural motions of the physical world or the actions and lives of men there is no before and after or, as Augustine terms it, no «distention» of time. From the viewpoint of eternity there is no succession but only an everlasting «now.»"<sup>95</sup> In the words of Augustine: "No time is wholly present. It will see that all past time is driven backwards by the future, and all future time is the consequent of the past, and all past and future are created and set on their course by that which is always present."<sup>96</sup> Or: "It is not in time that you precede times. Otherwise you would not precede all times."<sup>97</sup>

Being and Living are not the same; yet, they are interconnected: the self learns from living, from human time. But it equally learns from insights and inner examination. Such mode of self-discovery makes the self transform into eternal life, out-there beyond desires and bodily instincts. In this never-never time world, there is a "complete transformation into eternal life. Temporal life is forgotten and the soul passes into the perfect form, which is made in the image and likeness of God. [It is a] moving from the externally focused soul through increasing levels of interiority to complete transcendence."<sup>98</sup> In the words of Augustine: "You are so high among the highest, and I am low among the lowest. A mean thing. You never go away from us. Yet we have difficulty in returning to you. Come Lord, stir us up and call us back, kindle and seize us, be our fire and our sweetness."<sup>99</sup>

Mrs Ramsay tries to transcend the earthly world, which does not satisfy her, due to its desirability. She is absent-minded looking out-there at the lighthouse, till she becomes the light it generates.

The hesitation and the inability to confirm oneself in the horizontal, linear time hints to the presence of a power that we are in need of – A power beyond the

---

<sup>94</sup> Woolf, *Moments of Being*, 72.

<sup>95</sup> Kirby, "Praise as the Soul's Overcoming of Time in The Confessions of St Augustine," 336.

<sup>96</sup> Augustine, *Confessions*, XI, 11, 14.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibidem*, XI, 13, 16.

<sup>98</sup> Kenny, *Contemplation and Classical Christianity*, 109.

<sup>99</sup> Augustine, *Confessions*, VIII 3, 8/4, 9.

human one: the power of the absolute: God. This idea echoes St Augustine's prayers to God to ascend out of the chaos of earthly time. In *Confessions*, he writes: "In seeking him they find him, and in finding they will praise him. Lord, I would seek you, calling upon you – and calling upon is an act of believing in you."<sup>100</sup>

Woolf rebels against the rigid structures of time, as recognized by society and made up by patriarchy. Mrs Ramsay constructs her own time through memories and consciousness. The mode of time, chosen by Woolf, is rather philosophical and keeps pace with Augustine's.

### *Conclusion*

Both, St Augustine and Virginia Woolf, are obsessed by time and its ebbs and flows in ordinary life. The only way to leave its linearity is to travel and transcend physicality. The permanent impression of loss in *Confessions* and *To the Lighthouse* signals their awareness that time causes irreparable damage not only to what human beings construct, but also to their psyches – moral defection.

Woolf's horizontal time is the one that makes events significant and possible through its duration. These events are moments of being, where Mrs Ramsay exists in making sense to her presence confined within a space. But in the way Augustine does, her response to these events makes her more inner and absent from time duration. This is what Woolf considers as internal time, which encloses memory. This inner time, as Augustine's, alters consciousness toward mysticism / Light. These moments of transcendental reality are the outcome of the pressure of everyday constraints. They unite and harmonize what time has already fragmented and dissipated. Mrs Ramsay's fusion with the light of the lighthouse is a kind of travelling, which liberates her soul from the karmas of desirability. In St Augustine's philosophy, it is a travel from the city of men to the city of God.

### **Bibliography:**

1. Augustine, St. *The Soliloquies of St Augustine*. Translated by Rose Elizabeth Cleveland. Boston: Little Brown, and Company, 1910.
2. Augustine, St. *Confessions*. Translated by and Intro. Henry Chadwick. 1991. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998.

---

<sup>100</sup> *Ibidem*, I, 1, 1.

*St Augustine's Contemplative Philosophy in Virginia Woolf's To the Lighthouse: The Cases of Time and Self-Examination*

3. Chen, Hsiu-Yu. "Romantic Dialogues: Writing the Self in De Quincey and Woolf." PhD. Thesis. Department of English Studies, Durham University, 2013.
4. Colcagno, Antonio. "The Role of Forgetting in our Experience of Time: Augustine and Hannah Arendt." *PARRHESIA* 13 (2011):14-27.
5. Dusen, David Ven. *The Space of Time A Sensualist Interpretation of Time in Augustine, Confessions X to XII* 6. Leiden, and Boston: Brill, 2014.
6. Frank, Georg. "Time, Actuality, Novelty and History Some Facets of a Phenomenon Still Awaiting Comprehension." In *Life and Motion of Socio-Economic Units*. Edited by Andrew U. Frank et al., 111-23. London: Taylor & Francis, 2001.
7. Hartocollis, Peter. *Time and Timelessness*. New York: International Universities Press, 1983.
8. Hill, John Spencer. *Infinity, Faith, and Time: Christian Humanism and Renaissance Literature*. London, and Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1977.
9. Hooper, Perdita V. *Notes on Virginia Woolf's "To the Lighthouse."* London and Sydney: Pan Books, 1979.
10. Kawin, Bruce F. *The Mind of the Novel: Reflexive Fiction and the Ineffable*. Princeton and New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1982.
11. Kenny, John Peter. *Contemplation and Classical Christianity: A Study in Augustine*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.
12. Kirby, W. J. Torrance. "Praise as the Soul's Overcoming of Time in The Confessions of St Augustine." *PRO ECCLES* VI, 3 (Summer 1999): 333-350.
13. Knuuttila, Simo. "Time and Creation in Augustine." In *The Cambridge Companion to Augustine*. 107-126. Edited by Eleonore Stump et al. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.
14. Marder, Michael. "Phenomenology of Distraction, or Attention in the Fissuring of Time and Space." *Research in Phenomenology* 41 (2011): 396–419.
15. Mathew, Gareth B. "Knowledge and Illumination." In *The Cambridge Companion Augustine*. Edited by Eleonore Stump et al., 171-185. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.
16. Mickunas, Algis. "Self-Identity and Time." In *The Cambridge Companion to Augustine*. Edited by Eleonore Stump et al., 103-115. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.

17. Muir, Edwin. "Virginia Woolf." In *The Truth of Imagination: Some Uncollected Reviews and Essays*. Edited by P. H. Butler, 19-25. Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press, 1988.
18. Poleskey, Louise A. *The Elusive Self: Psyche and Spirit in Virginia Woolf's Novels*. Toronto and London: University of Delaware's Press, 1981.
19. Pranger, M. B. *Eternity's Ennui: Temporality, Perseverance and Voice in Augustine and Western Literature*. Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2010.
20. Richter, Harvena. "Introduction." In *Virginia Woolf: The Inward Voyage, I-VIII*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970.
21. Stock, Brian. *After Augustine: The Meditative Reader and the Text*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001.
22. Teske, Roland J. "Augustine's Philosophy of memory." In *The Cambridge Companion to Augustine*. Edited by Eleonore Stump et al., 148-158. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.
23. Welleck, René, and Austen Warren. *Theory of Literature*, 1956. Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin, 1985.
24. Willis, Erica B. "The Philosophy of Time in Mrs. Dalloway, Orlando, and The Waves." MA Thesis, Department of English of the State University of New York College at Brockport, June, 2006
25. Woolf, Virginia. *The Common Reader, Second Series*. London: The Hogarth Press, 1965.
26. Woolf, Virginia. *To the Lighthouse*. 1964. Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin, 1970.
27. Woolf, Virginia. *Orlando: A Biography*, 1928. London: The Hogarth Press, 1978.
28. Woolf, Virginia. *Moments of Being: Unpublished Autobiographical Writings*. 1976. Edited by Jeanne Schulkind. London and New York: The Hogarth Press and Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1985.

# Six Important Tips for Beginning and Ending the Lesson

Veneranda HAJRULLA

University “Ismail Qemali” of Vlora, Albania  
Department of Foreign Languages  
venerandahajrulla@yahoo.com

Marsela HARIZAJ

University “Ismail Qemali” of Vlora, Albania  
Department of Foreign Languages  
marselaharizaj@yahoo.com

## Abstract

*The University of Vlora “Ismail Qemali” takes great pride in its student teaching program. It has outstanding partnerships with schools throughout the South west region of Albania. In all cases, student teachers have the opportunity to work with outstanding experienced teachers in a cooperative relationship.*

*The student teaching experience, in most cases, is both intense and exhilarating. After many years of learning, students get a chance to test their teaching skills in a comprehensive way, in an active classroom and with real students. During the process, students will realize their areas of teaching strengths and weaknesses, before heading out to look for a full-time school employment. Generally teacher courses often include a unit on “lesson planning”, which relates mostly to the selection of the lesson components, and how these will be ordered. So when planning the activities, for a lesson, it is important to do them in a sequence that indicates a gradual progression from simple to more complicated tasks<sup>1</sup>. On the other hand, effective teachers strive for a balance among whole-class work, pair work, and individual work.*

*But it’s important also to think about how teachers, especially student teachers or novice teachers, will “frame” the lesson with effective beginnings and endings. It is a fact that in the early years of teaching, teachers feel a bit scared of the students and they try to be tense and serious at the beginning of the lesson. Novice teachers think that being serious at the beginning, will help them gain authority later?! It may take too long to learn to relax and smile. They forget that a serious or neutral expression on teacher’s face, does*

---

<sup>1</sup> P. Ur, *Grammar practice Activities* Second Edition (Cambridge University Press, 2008).

*not convey a neutral message to the students, it conveys a negative one, which can be easily changed by a smile, that is the first important tip for the beginning of the lesson.*

*This paper suggests some practical piece of advice, for pre service teachers, to help them overcome emotions, establish a warm and friendly atmosphere, and begin and end clearly.*

**Keywords:** *lesson planning, tips, novice teachers, frame, pre service teachers, beginning, ending.*

### *Introduction*

English teachers in the course of their teaching careers accumulate a wealth of practical *know-how* about classroom teaching. But some of them feel a bit scared of the students in the early years of teaching and they try to be tense and serious at the beginning of the lesson. Novice teachers think that being serious at the beginning, will help them gain authority later ?! It may take too long to learn to relax and smile. They forget that a serious or neutral expression on teacher's face, does not convey a neutral message to the students, it conveys a negative one (*"I'm here because I have to be, not because I have a slightest pleasure in teaching you!"*), which can be easily changed by a smile, *that is the first important tip for the beginning of the lesson.* Teachers can teach if the learner has some desire to learn and is motivated. Thus, in order to be an active educator<sup>21</sup> our students should know to:

- be systematic teachers;
- know and apply appropriate models;
- be aware of non-school influences;
- inform others.

This paper suggests some practical piece of advice, for pre-service teachers:

- to help them overcome emotions;
- to establish a warm and friendly atmosphere;
- to begin and end clearly;
- to be professional in dress, manner, and attitude from the first minute they enter the classroom;
- to act professionally in public;
- to use language appropriately (and avoid using slang);
- to speak clearly and loudly enough to be heard;

---

<sup>2</sup> J. Cox, *Classroom Management Tips for Novice Teachers*, Teachhub.com (2016).

### *Six Important Tips for Beginning and Ending the Lesson*

- not to be late to class;
- not to come late to staff meetings;
- to know when to compromise;
- to state their opinion - let others know where they stand;
- to have a positive attitude;
- to establish a good rapport with parents and administration.<sup>3</sup>

#### *Six important tips*

It's important to think about how teachers, especially *novice teachers*, will “*frame*” the lesson with effective beginnings and endings. The six important tips that we suggest are:

1. *Start with a smile and use a normal, natural voice;*
2. *Begin and end clearly;*
3. *Give an advance overview and have a well-designed, engaging lesson;*
4. *Teach new material first: review later;*
5. *Don't give homework at the end;*
6. *End with something nice.*

#### 1. START WITH A SMILE AND USE A NORMAL, NATURAL VOICE

If you are like me when teaching a new class, I find myself with butterflies in my stomach, worrying how the learners will develop as well as whether I will get on well with the learners. Scrivener attempts to defuse potential problems arising when teaching a new class.<sup>4</sup> Every teacher can remember from his/her first year of teaching in the classroom: spending those first months talking at an above-normal range until one day, we “lose” our voice. Raising our voice to get students' attention is not the best approach.

If we want students to talk at a normal, pleasant volume, we must do the same. Sometimes we want to differentiate our tone. If we are asking students to put away their notebooks and get into their groups, we should use a declarative, matter-of-fact tone. If we are asking a question about a character in a short story or about similarities between cultures we should use an inviting, conversational tone. On the other hand, it is important to make eye contact with our students and smile as we greet them at the beginning of the lesson. Nonverbal communication,

---

<sup>3</sup> Teaching Strategies: 5 Questions You Should Be Asking - TeachHUB [www.teachhub.com/teaching-strategies-5-questions-you-should-be-asking](http://www.teachhub.com/teaching-strategies-5-questions-you-should-be-asking).

<sup>4</sup> J. Scrivener, *Classroom Management Techniques* (Cambridge University Press, 2016).

including facial expression, body language and gesture, plays a key role in maintaining our relationship with the students in the class.

2. BEGIN AND END CLEARLY

There should be a definite moment when the lesson begins: a dividing line between “not lesson” and “lesson”. And surely there should be a clear point when it ends. If we want our students to listen more attentively, then we must incorporate *active movement* into our lessons. We should try and integrate movement into our lessons. We can do this quite easily with any lesson. For example, if students are learning their spelling words we can have them stand up and snap, clap or sing. If we do not like the ideas of *active movement* in our lessons, then we can try having *brain breaks*. Brain breaks are essentially energizers that get our students up and moving while connecting their mind and body at once.

3. GIVE AN ADVANCE OVERVIEW AND HAVE A WELL-DESIGNED, ENGAGING LESSON.

This tip is most important. Perhaps you’ve heard the saying, “if you don’t have a plan for them, they will have one for you”. It’s better to run out of time than to run short on a lesson. Bored students equals trouble! If the lesson is poorly planned, there is often way too much talking and telling from the teacher and not enough hands-on learning and discovery by the students. We all know engaging lessons take both serious mind and time to plan. Particularly with teenage and adult groups, it is important to provide the class at the beginning with information about what’s planned for the lesson. Students like knowing the plan: it gives them a reassuring sense that they know where they are going and helps to keep the lesson process orderly and purposeful.

4. TEACH NEW MATERIAL FIRST: REVIEW LATER

In principal, teach new or more difficult material early in the lesson, when students are at their freshest. Then go back and do a quick review of it at the end of the lesson, after we have spent time doing other things. (*Does it happen so, in our school contexts?! Of course not, in the majority of cases. Teachers start with homework checking, then reading or questions, and only at the middle of the hour, they start explaining the new material.*)

5. DON’T GIVE HOMEWORK AT THE END

If we know we have a homework assignment to give, we should explain it in the middle of the lesson and make sure students have noted it down. We shouldn’t leave it until the last minute. From my long teaching experience, I also suggest my student teachers to write the homework given, on the blackboard. Students see it with a different script (*teacher’s script*) and it’s easy to be remembered.

## *Six Important Tips for Beginning and Ending the Lesson*

### 6. END WITH SOMETHING NICE

Just before closing the lesson, try to find something pleasant to do or say so that our students leave the classroom with a smile: a funny story, a compliment on what students have managed, or on their behavior, an interesting fact about English, a new website that might interest them etc.<sup>5</sup>

### *Conclusion*

Through this paper we provided some very important tips for student teachers, pre-service teachers and novice teachers. Most of them look easy when are read, but hard to be realized. Experienced, veteran teachers and teacher trainers will always smooth the way for student teachers. The areas of classroom teaching being tackled in the paper include the opening session of the lesson, teachers presentation and ending of the English lesson, but for teachers the best “recipe” is the classroom experience and his own teaching style. To be really good at teaching they need to find their own teaching style, and choose the methodology that suits them.

### **Bibliography:**

1. Cox, J. *Classroom Management Tips for Novice Teachers*. Teachhub.com, 2016.
2. Scrivener, J. *Classroom Management Techniques*. Cambridge University Press, 2016.
3. Scrivener, J. *Learning Teaching*. Macmillan Publications - Books for teachers, 1994.
4. Teaching Strategies: 5 Questions You Should Be Asking – TeachHUB at [www.teachhub.com/teaching-strategies-5-questions-you-should-be-asking](http://www.teachhub.com/teaching-strategies-5-questions-you-should-be-asking).
5. Ur, P. *Penny Ur's 100 Teaching Tips*. Cambridge University Press, 2016.
6. Ur, P. *Grammar practice Activities*. Second Edition, Cambridge University Press, 2008.

---

<sup>5</sup> P. Ur, *Penny Ur's 100 Teaching Tips* (Cambridge University Press, 2016).



# Means of Providing Feedback to the Learners

Marsela HARIZAJ

*University “Ismail Qemali” of Vlora, Albania*

*Department of Foreign Languages*

*marselaharizaj@yahoo.com*

Veneranda HAJRULLA

*University “Ismail Qemali” of Vlora, Albania*

*Department of Foreign Languages*

*venerandahajrulla@yahoo.com*

## Abstract

*Feedback is one of the crucial components of teaching and learning processes in EFL classes. Providing feedback to learners throughout the teaching process is very important. Why should teachers use feedback? How many types of feedback may be used in a foreign language classes? Which are the advantages of using it? These are some of the research questions that this paper deals with, from theoretical to practical point of view. Feedback affects learners’ proficiency at any level. Reviewing goals, techniques, strategies and teaching perception helps efficient teaching. Without feedback, students do not know where their difficulties are. What should they have to improve? Where to focus? Sometimes it may be neglected without knowing its importance. Effective teaching depends even on effective feedback given to learners. In this paper, we will consider some means of providing feedback to learners.*

**Keywords:** *visual, verbal, written feedback, students’ language proficiency, efficient learning.*

## Introduction

Globalization has brought changes about the way people concept living and education. People from different parts of the world are learners of different concepts, languages, jobs, professions, socio-cultural background and so on. However, through all the times, from the past to the present and the future preserve to them the great desire: learning a foreign language. The concepts of *why? how?* and *what?* foster the need to learn a language more. There is a shift of the concept from “*learning for the sake of learning*” to the concept of “*learning for*

*communicate*". Learners need and develop the concept to communicate effectively in this world.

According to Moss and Brookhart,<sup>1</sup> feedback is a teacher's response to student work with the intention of furthering learning. This feedback does not have an established point of time and space. In other words, English language teachers, and foreign language teachers in general, may use it in different ways and times. Feedback may be practiced in different forms: *visual*, *verbal* and *written*. In this paper, we will consider some ways of providing feedback to learners and how to use them effectively. Fostering student's proficiency depends on many teaching components. It serves to learners to acquire language, while to teachers to differentiate methodology. According to Hyland,<sup>2</sup> providing feedback to students is often seen as one of the teacher's most important tasks, offering the kind of individual attention that is otherwise rarely possible under classroom conditions.

The aim of this study comes just from the need to improve what concern languages teachers: effective teaching – effective learning, as long as the students' goals are also the teachers' goals. Feedback has to be used in the right way for it to be effective.<sup>3</sup>

In our everyday teaching, we use feedback with our students in every class, in every subject at any time. However, *are students aware of feedback? Should we use it more? Is it effective for student's communication?* We should begin first of all by analyzing the very concept of feedback, because sometimes is clear and sometimes is not, sometimes is used consciously, but sometimes is not. This study focuses on communication, feedback and its types: oral, written, direct, indirect, and on teachers' and students' concept of the importance and effectiveness of feedback.

### *Feedback and target language*

As language teachers, we are aware that students face every day different communication problems. For these reason, this study is conducted to determine the types, amount of oral and written feedback, student's responses, techniques used by teachers to help English foreign language learners overcome

---

<sup>1</sup> C. M. Moss and S. M. Brookhart, *Advancing formative assessment in every classroom: A guide for instructional leaders* (Alexandria Va.: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 2009).

<sup>2</sup> K. Hyland, *English for Academic Purposes. An Advanced Resource Book* (London: Routledge, 2006).

<sup>3</sup> N. Frey and D. Fisher, *The formative assessment action plan: Practical steps to more successful teaching and learning* (Alexandria Va.:ASCD, 2011).

### *Means of Providing Feedback to the Learners*

communication problems, feelings, fostering motivation on the concept of learning. There are not many studies in the Albanian context about feedback uses in English foreign language classes. Feedback sometimes is neglected as a concept too. However, feedback is an important concept in the theories of language acquisition. Feedback is also an important means of motivation.

In the language process, teachers can provide a variety of feedback to students. Feedback is important for error correction too. *Curricula of Foreign Language Teaching*<sup>4</sup> stresses the fact of enhancing student's communication through providing meaningful social contexts in language classes helping students overcome the barriers of learning.

Feedback as stated above can be taken and given through tasks, assessments, portfolios, in oral form through explanation, questioning and oral tasks. In other words provided frequently it helps students communicate fluently and offers for teachers a clear view of students' problems. Knowing the problems of their students, teachers can improve techniques and strategies of teaching. After explanation, the frequent questions are *Did you understand? Do you have questions? Do you have any unclear concept?* This is direct feedback. In student-centered classes direct feedback is very important.

### *Means of providing effective feedback to learners*

Foreign language teachers have to use strategies or techniques effectively to meet the goals. Feedback should be seen as having a positive effect and not a negative effect on learners. Language teachers should take in consideration some different uses of feedback and students' feelings. Why? and Where? Are the common questions, so let us have a look at some suggestions of Where? And Why? to use effective feedback. There should be always a balance between the feedback on form and the feedback on content.<sup>5</sup>

Teachers can provide feedback in different ways through different means such as:

- *Portfolios (reflection on proficiency);*
- *Oral feedback: Oral tasks (reflection on accuracy and fluency);*
- *Written feedback: Written tasks like: essays, test (reflection on errors, mistakes and content).*

---

<sup>4</sup> *Kurrikula Kombëtare e Gjuhëve Moderne për Arsimin Publik Parauniversitar* (Tirane: Toena, 2000).

<sup>5</sup> P. Ur, *A course in language teaching* (Cambridge University Press, 1996).

According to Clarke,<sup>6</sup> oral feedback is the most natural one of the feedback types, because it can be given instantly and frequently when needed.

- Using portfolios

Students complete portfolios:

- *without pressure or time constraints;*
- *Portfolios clearly demonstrate progress of students over time;*
- *Portfolios develop active learners;*
- *Conversations about entries demonstrate comprehension and the ability to use academic language.*

For the above reasons the use of portfolios gives direct feedback to student's proficiency. Usually portfolios are used in secondary and high schools. Written feedback, like oral feedback, is in the same way efficient.

- Written feedback: Comments on students' writing:

Purpose:

- *Help students understand if the content is right if they understood the questions;*
- *Help students understand their errors and mistakes;*
- *To give students a motive for revision.*

If teachers correct in a paper just with a mark, sometimes it is not enough.

- Feedback and error correction
  - *Errors and mistakes (grammar and content).* According to Harmer<sup>7</sup> students often prefer feedback on grammatical items instead of for example on content or the design.
  - *Comprehensive feedback: give clearly written feedback, so that students understand better;*
  - *Direct Feedback: oral and written;*
  - *Indirect Feedback: let students understand through analyzes.*
- Students' responses to Feedback: Interviews and questionnaire
  - *What feedback did you get from the essay?*
  - *What feedback did you get from the test?*
  - *When revising your test, did you focus more on grammar correction or content correction?*
  - *What part of feedback written was clearer? Why?*

---

<sup>6</sup> S. Clarke, *Enriching feedback in the primary classroom: Oral and written feedback from teachers and children* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 2003).

<sup>7</sup> J. Harmer, *How to teach writing* (Harlow: Longman, 2004).

### *Means of Providing Feedback to the Learners*

- *Describe your feelings when you read your test.*
- *Do you prefer more written or oral feedback?*
- *Which one do you think is more efficient for you? Which one do you think help you improve your proficiency?*

According to Mudra,<sup>8</sup> interviews give the participants a chance to think of answer deeply as it is not static on one type of question only and the interviewer is able to explore the participants' answers to other possible responses or explanations.

### *Conclusions*

In studying the effectiveness of foreign language classroom, this paper presented some reviews on the feedback concept in English foreign language classes. It was discussed about effectiveness of feedback, some types of it and several samples where and why to use it.

According to our teaching experience, the concept itself is related explicitly to students' learning. As the processes are inseparable in the same way, feedback is inseparable in the foreign language classroom.

Feedback can be given in two ways: oral and written. In both cases, the use of feedback depends on teaching goals and purpose. As learners are not exposed to everyday foreign language as they do in their native language, feedback should be part of their learning process. Students will have success if they exactly know their own proficiency and this is done just thanks to frequent feedback. Teachers need to reflect frequently on their teaching strategies to meet teaching goals to student's goals. Teachers need to use different types of feedback that would lead the students to language proficiency.

### **Bibliography:**

1. Clarke, S. *Enriching feedback in the primary classroom: Oral and written feedback from teachers and children*. London: Hodder & Stoughton, 2003.
2. Frey, N. and D. Fisher. *The formative assessment action plan: Practical steps to more successful teaching and learning*. Alexandria Va.: ASCD, 2011.
3. Harmer, J. *How to teach writing*. Harlow: Longman, 2004.
4. Hyland, K. *English for Academic Purposes. An Advanced Resource Book*. London: Routledge, 2006.

---

<sup>8</sup> H. Mudra, "The utilization of authentic materials in Indonesian EFL contexts: an exploratory study on learners' perceptions," *International Journal of English Language & Translation Studies* 2(2) (2014): 197-210.

5. *Kurrikula Kombëtare e Gjuhëve Moderne për Arsimin Publik Parauniversitar*. Tirane: Toena, 2000.
6. Moss, C. M., and S. M. Brookhart. *Advancing formative assessment in every classroom: A guide for instructional leaders*. Alexandria Va.: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 2009.
7. Mudra, H. "The utilization of authentic materials in Indonesian EFL contexts: an exploratory study on learners' perceptions." *International Journal of English Language & Translation Studies* 2(2) (2014): 197-210.
8. Ur, P. *A course in language teaching*. Cambridge University Press, 1996.

# Why we Fail in a Technological World

*PhD Student Roxana-Ionela ACHIRICESEI*  
*“Ștefan cel Mare” University of Suceava, Romania*  
*rachiricesei@yahoo.com*

*PhD Student Mihaela BOBOC*  
*“Ștefan cel Mare” University of Suceava, Romania*  
*mutu.mihaela87@gmail.com*

*PhD Student Ioan Mircea TURCULEȚ*  
*“Ștefan cel Mare” University of Suceava, Romania*  
*turculetioan@yahoo.com*

## **Abstract**

*Our relationship with technology has become co-dependent and somehow a personal and an intimate one. Generally speaking, we tend to think that we experience the world around us as it is, but that is not what we really do. In a lifetime, we learn and store knowledge, but we only use from it what we think and feel it will help us to realize the most important projects in our lives. Therefore, we invent things that have the purpose to make our lives easier, just to have time to manage and work on the other part of life – the non-material part of it - , that concerns the personal development of human. First of all, that is or that should be the idea for developing technology, but on second thoughts, we somehow fail to adapt to it, and from that it deceives us – transforming itself in an insecurity, like high-tech products that are too hard to use, or too unreliable to be counted on, the lack of necessary knowledge in order to use it, the costs.*

*Even if we have these technologies as available, we manage to lose ourselves, by becoming more into it than into us and those around us. We like to think we possess knowledge, that we are experts in some areas, we hold and keep lectures on ethics, moral values, efficient communication, but all become a strategic action – from ones that have the power to others that need guidance and confirmation for looking good for others, to win over, convince or convert new adepts to the proposed ideas of ones that have the power, to court those in power, to please everyone, except yourself. But all of that leads to failure – a self-failure, an inner weakness – and we are becoming our own adversaries, which are silent ones.*

*But if technology is so worthy, why we do not manage so well on moral and ethical aspects?*

**Keywords:** *technology, knowledge, ethics, moral values, communication.*

*Introduction*

From far as we know people communicated (from petroglyphs, pictograms, ideograms, writing to telecommunication and many other communication tools). Since all time and also in the technological era that we live in, it seems we communicate inefficient and that somewhere it intervene a breach. Perhaps, in course of history, the human needs were different, but he was pleased with what he had and if he was not, he accepted his condition because there was no other choice available. Considering there was no technology to rely on and not so much access to knowledge, people depended on traditional communication.

Technology, from its *birth* became both useful and addictive. Its *growth* ease human's life, in order to make it more pleasant, so he could manage and enjoy the gifts of the life. Nowadays technology is *young as specie* – if we are allowed to attribute anthropomorphic features to a domain that is still developing, because we *see* technology *now* in symbiosis with humans – and it has so much to *grow*. Our *symbiosis* with technology can have either a positive or negative purposefulness. We can only draw in broad lines a sort of finality for fulfillment or failure through technology.

Even if there is the ethics of technology and a lot of advices how to use it – from the level of utilization to the level of moral – we seem not to understand its entire process and full purpose and utility, because we tend to live in a sort of mirage, like being charmed by it through its *beauty* and all the facilities that it brings. Therefore we enslaved ourselves to it, raising it to a rank that even if it deserves this position we do not fully understand it.

This era of technology should bring us humans to the point of discovery of ourselves to the point of understanding our short lives and trying to live it thoroughly and for good, and leave for technology *to make* our physical work.

We need to rely on technology, reliability that could only be obtained by knowing, understanding and properly using it. It is probably the most beautiful thing created by and for us for ease our daily tasks, but we make use so defective of it that this can lead only to failure.

The reliability is needed and it is possible through moral values – conceived by humans – and ethics of technology – understood by humans – on every level and domain in which technology *exists* and *manifests*. Because “on so skillful, on so little wise proves to be human being, isolated from the plenitude of existence through the world growth as a protective shell, but which also disconnects. (...)”

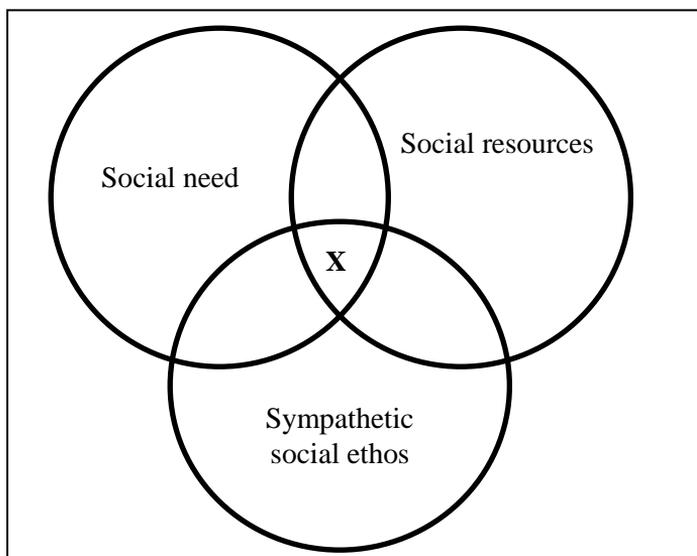
Human ability comes from his world, which protects him, and the incapacity from the same world that disconnects him.”<sup>1</sup>

*The stubbornness of old ideas about technology*

From prehistoric to present, technology is proved to be useful and good, even there were skeptics and critics. We as humans have moral principles which are deeply held in our individual conscience, and we act upon them when we are in a group, as a social group, that becomes a social conscience. This social conscience is in the social environment that we live and we need to be conscious about the social environment and that its “interaction is important in surveying the development of technology through successive civilizations”<sup>2</sup>.

The social environment lead through civilizations to development and for technological improvement it was and it is needed – and will be needed – a favorable environment and *people* to do it, and in order to that, for innovation in a specific field it demanded “social need, social resources and a sympathetic social ethos”<sup>3</sup>.

We can represent the propitious environment for people’s innovation in technology in a schematic form for a better view on technology development:



---

<sup>1</sup> Ștefan M. Gheorghe, *Ethos, pathos, logos. Eseuri despre o dialectică ternară* (Bucharest: All, 2012), 5.

<sup>2</sup> Robert Angus Buchanan, “History of Technology,” in *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, <https://www.britannica.com/technology/history-of-technology#toc10382>.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibidem*.

Where  $X$  is the point where *it happens* the favorable environment for people's innovation in technology.

Probably, the skeptics and the critics were the ones that did not understand the purpose of technology and the ones that had no interest in learning it – maybe it was the reason of age, culture, beliefs, moral grounds – because at the time they did not think it could help under no circumstances in everyday activities. Some of these *beliefs* were left as an inheritance for nowadays and we can still find plenty of skepticism and criticism towards technology among people. The transition between generations is a sensitive point in communion with technology. Some of the people want to learn and some of them do not. The category that wants to learn is conscious that the new technologies will improve their lives, while the other category does not recognize that technology has its *good*.

Technologies take many forms – personal computers, web and mobile applications, smart phones, the internet, cloud computing and many others – but even if they are available at a large scale, people are still reluctant about it. Perhaps, the reduced knowledge on the subject itself and about *the product*, as technology, that we consume – because in the end humans are consumers of technology – tends to bring the skeptics and the critics in public eyes degrading its practical use, creating and generating confusion among users. Because we as users are not aware about our mind that knows and we ignore that human himself is an unpredictable being. And what human can't understand criticizes.

Maybe it is in human nature to feel fear regarding *the new*, but we can acknowledge that the social-will of the majority made technology what is today, and it will make it further. This social will spokes through technology and science and it will need through ethics too, leaving censure and criticism behind, because those two took birth from ignorance, fear and the need of stability and what is known so far, as a routine. We can say these were the reasons for which knowledge failed in the past – maybe it is too much to say that it failed, but comparing the new ideas of the time and the mass of people that did not understand it, we could call it failure –, and the reasons that underlie the future of technology and how we will make use it.

In order to counterargument some of the critics and skeptics; let's assume this supposition as a final and true conclusion: *Technology is a propitious element for development*. Technology is developed in a social environment, that it developed through social-will and according to social needs. This leads also to innovation in some points of historical development of technology and science, that made the environment that we live in now, propitious for innovation – if we

reach sensitive points like overpopulation, global warming, globalization, and others – an powerful incentive for scientists and philosophers to develop new technologies and ethics for a new living environment in an accelerated technological world.

If the conclusion confirms that the next step will be to *sketch* new ethics regarding technologies, especially new technologies, for a better understanding and use of it, and for a better human in a technological world.

### *The Ethics of Technology*

Nowadays we can find ethics in every field – *ethics and environment, economy, deontology, feminism, information technology, genetics, biomedical, legal*, and others – as a dimension that supports them. In the twentieth century the ethics of technology was developed “as a systematic and more or less independent subdiscipline of philosophy.”<sup>4</sup>

As far as the ethics of technology is concerned, it has, beyond necessity, a political and cultural approach. “Political approaches to technology mostly go back to Marx, who assumed that the material structure of production in society, in which technology is obviously a major factor, determined the economic and social structure of that society.”<sup>5</sup> His approach determined the society at the time, but nowadays it cannot stand by itself because, as Wittgenstein said, we are misled by our own language, and the political needed upgrade. The “cultural approaches are often phenomenological in nature or at least position themselves in relation to phenomenology as post-phenomenology.”<sup>6</sup> Throughout our entire life we, as a social beings, experiment the world through experience, either political or cultural. Cultural approach is in its essence a phenomenological approach. From this perspective, the experience on the phenomena is based on social consciousness as a culture, as a whole, and the result is based on the subjective experience of the culture. In phenomenological living of existence we can decide on what is *good* or what is *bad* about what it *is needed to be* decided as *good* or *bad*. And if these have a phenomenological nature, we can say that technology (as a result of political and cultural approach) could be a phenomenon – a thing that appeared in our experience and in the way that we experienced it – and as a phenomenological approach on technology we refer to the conscious experience of humans on it. If

---

<sup>4</sup> Maarten Franssen, Gert-Jan Lokhorst and Ibo van de Poel, “Philosophy of Technology,” in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward N. Zalta (Fall 2015 Edition), <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/technology/>.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibidem*.

we consider existence as an order, as a classification according to industrial revolution organization of things, things may be different, because we need the capacity to discern, evaluate the phenomenon and decide on it, if it is *good* or *bad*. The “cultural approach integrates the political argument and the technological assessment to assert that, fundamentally, technology is a social process.”<sup>7</sup> The commitment was made when human started to use technology which involves responsibility. We say that is a *natural* reaction of technology towards human because human started to live in a sort of *symbiosis* with technology and if the phenomenon itself – the technology – *collapses* it will become a natural effect. Regarding the awareness of it is the fact that we as humans do not realize all the time that we depend on technology and we empower with responsibility its *creators*.

Concerning the wide coverage area of ethics, there is a particular interest in information technology – “The term «information» in colloquial speech is currently predominantly used as an abstract mass-noun used to denote any amount of data, code or text that is stored, sent, received or manipulated in any medium. ... The exact meaning of the term «information» varies in different philosophical traditions and its colloquial use varies geographically and over different pragmatic contexts.”<sup>8</sup> Information technology changes “many aspects of human endeavour and existence.”<sup>9</sup> The need of information technology “is now ubiquitous in the lives of people across the globe.”<sup>10</sup> We are strong related to it the context of globalization, because the access to technology, precisely the information technology, had led to the new methods of communication between humans. Globalization “emerged as *the* buzzword of the 1990s, because it captured the increasingly interconnected nature of social life on our planet mediated by the ICT<sup>11</sup> revolution and the global integration of markets.”<sup>12</sup>

---

<sup>7</sup> Anne Balsamo, “Democratic technologies and the technology of democracy: a review of John Street’s *politics and technology*,” in *Cultural Studies: Volume 8*, First Edition, eds. Grossberg Lawrence, Radway Janice (Routledge, 1994), 125-131, 131.

<sup>8</sup> Pieter Adriaans, “Information,” in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward N. Zalta (Fall 2013 Edition), <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2013/entries/information/>.

<sup>9</sup> Lucas Introna, “Phenomenological Approaches to Ethics and Information Technology,” in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward N. Zalta (Fall 2017 Edition), <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2017/entries/ethics-it-phenomenology/>.

<sup>10</sup> John Sullins, “Information Technology and Moral Values,” in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward N. Zalta (Spring 2016 Edition), <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2016/entries/it-moral-values/>.

<sup>11</sup> Information and Communication Technology.

<sup>12</sup> Manfred B. Steger, *Globalization. A very short introduction* (United Kingdom Oxford University Press, 2013), 1.

All corporations that have their market in this area have benefits. There is even an economical approach in technology, because the market provides all types of technologies for every kind of budget that is also adjusted to the economic background of a country, to the workforce and payment, in order to make it available at a large scale.

When we are approaching the information technology as a main subject of interest in ethics of technology, we have to stop for a moment on the most relevant historical meanings of the term *information*, which are:

- “*information* as a process of being informed;
- *information* as a state of an agent;
- *information* as the disposition to inform.”<sup>13</sup>

Information technology presumes at its basis the three criteria mentioned above which may provide the beginning point into its ethics.

So, after spreading worldwide technology, what do we do? Do we understand it and its need? Do we use it properly?

Here is where ethics is needed, to point out the way the technology works and to “trace the impact of information technologies on moral values”.<sup>14</sup>

Technology is immersive and compelling, but it can be dangerous if we – as users – do not take into account the risks, if we do not take measures for our own safety and privacy. From social media to online payments we use it, trust it, but in most cases do not understand it. Probably, if we were instructed or better say, educated to using it, we would not face so many inconveniences. Another probability for an irresponsible use may be considered the world population, because there are people that learned the basics of using technology, and there are the children and the young who were born with it. But it is still a probability; because the *old ones* did not understand its full purpose and they could not pass to the younger generation methods of securely use it and an ethical guidance.

This brings along making an ethics of technology issues – old and new ones. Probably the corporations that have their market in the area are not taken by surprise, contrary they provide new methods of technologies that are meant to defend devices and their personal users.

We cannot talk about technology without science and about science without technology nowadays. These two merge into human development. An idea, a

---

<sup>13</sup> Pieter Adriaans, “Information,” in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward N. Zalta (Fall 2013 Edition), <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2013/entries/information/> 8.

<sup>14</sup> John Sullins, “Information Technology and Moral Values”.

theory is being implemented with the help of technology, and technology could not develop without scientific theories.

Ziman says as conclusion that: "...science is all these things and more. It is indeed the product of research; it does employ characteristic methods; it is an organized body of knowledge; it is a means of solving problems."<sup>15</sup> And in pair with technology, science becomes reality.

Science, environment for new idea brings into study the most relevant subjects that concerns human living, activities and purposes. The "science studies is a diverse field with many subject matters and a variety of goals. One goal is to develop a coherent, unified theory of science as a human activity."<sup>16</sup> The new era of technology will endanger many human activities, as we know so far. Ethics is required to put in order the *symbiosis* between human and technology. Science, through technology, and with the help of ethics will make the theoretical perspective a real, a practical perspective.

### *Communication in a Technological World*

Human, as a social animal, must communicate. To communicate in a technological world he needs the technology. "The technologies that revolutionized communication through electricity are telegraph, telephone, radio, television, the internet and electronics with semiconductors, the latter being the physical foundation of the virtual world"<sup>17</sup>.

As easy as it seems and as difficult as it comes in practice communication in technological world seems to take a break out of the real world and transposing itself in virtual reality.

Virtual reality creates an imaginary world for those who spend most of the time on social media networks. "The interactive web, (...), where users generate much of the content themselves, poses additional challenges."<sup>18</sup> Challenges are seen from the beginning of using a social media network. After the user completes

---

<sup>15</sup> John Ziman, *An Introduction to Science Studies: The Philosophical and Social Aspects of Science and Technology* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1984), 2.

<sup>16</sup> Roland N. Giere, "The Units Analysis of Science Studies," in *The cognitive turn: Sociological and Psychological Perspectives on Science*, eds. Fuller Steve, De Mey Marc, Shinn Terry, Woolgar Steve (Springer Science+Business Media, B.V., 1989), 3.

<sup>17</sup> Roxana-Ionela Achiricesei and Mihaela Boboc, "Communication in the digital era – connections and virtual space," in *Globalization and National Identity. Studies on the Strategies of Intercultural Dialogue, Communication, Public Relations and Journalism Section, Volume III*, coord. Iulian Boldea (Universitatea "Petru Maior", Tîrgu Mureş, 2016), 295-301.

<sup>18</sup> Jeroen van den Hoven, Martijn Blaauw, Wolter Pieters and Martijn Warnier, "Privacy and Information Technology," in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward N. Zalta (Spring 2016 Edition), <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2016/entries/it-privacy/>.

with personal data his attention is distracted and without knowledge he generates attention about his profile – even if he/she fills up the section of privacy – through his/her search mode which is stored in a virtual memory that generates to user information regarding a subject that he/she maybe has great interest. By options that come within search he/she has an offer to *like* – even if behind it stands a threat – and to share.

Most of the communication on social media networks resumes in liking, sharing and posting. So how can we communicate and *read* through this mechanism? We need to deduce by shares and posts if that person tries to say something, has a problem or its just having fun. Many users do not even understand the meaning of something that they share to their virtual friends. So why do they do it? Does that mean that social media networks become an addiction to users? Many articles or information are taken by many other users that made their pages official as a credible source, but the content can be found in other sources. This taking over and over of a content can be confusing – but not all users complain about this, because it does not considered as such a big problem the fact that the content is not advised and sure – in a mass of information. If we analyze a social media page of a user we can observe that a part of his communication consists in sharing.

It is hard to put boundary between what is real and what is imaginary in online communication because “social networking technologies open up a new type of ethical space in which personal identities and communities, both «real» and virtual, are constructed, presented, negotiated, managed and performed.”<sup>19</sup> So how can we have an efficient communication if we live most of our lives in social media networks? Maybe we will need to exercise more the meetings and moral values that seem to get lost in such a world or maybe in this consists the *new natural*. “It has also been argued that the ever morphing nature of information technology is changing our ability to even fully understand moral values as they change.”<sup>20</sup> This results as a consequence from the impact of information technology upon moral values, but maybe this is the consequence of progress of human through technology.

We need to understand the new type of communication in a technological world in order to bring to surface the moral values that we inherited and turn those

---

<sup>19</sup> Shannon Vallor, “Social Networking and Ethics”, in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward N. Zalta (Winter 2016 Edition), <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2016/entries/ethics-social-networking/>.

<sup>20</sup> Pieter Adriaans, “Information.”

into a practice of ethics in efficient communication (even) through social media networks.

### *Conclusions*

We have tried to reach some sensitive points in which why humans fail in a technological world. If all fields will identify its sensitive points maybe ethics will come in easy into ethical guidance. Technology's role is to make our lives easier and we cannot imagine living a life without it. Its ethics is important as it is the ethics in every domain, but it is a key role here, in information technology, where (natural) reality becomes virtual reality.

If we take a look around us we could observe that we somehow forget to be humans, although *being human* is not that easy to define. But the addiction to technology leads human to submit himself to technology. Technology makes our work easier on one hand, but brings difficulties on social aspects. We leave morality behind embedded on the wall of a social network, shared by many and understood by few.

To *merge* with technology – through science – we need to rediscover moral values, ethics and communication. But we need to work in-depth of the problem, not on its surface and relying on subjective perception regarding this new wave in our existence. It may seem an unachievable goal, but human is a *skillful animal* that will adapt to the new world, but not alone: human will need to relearn to belong to the group.

### **Bibliography:**

1. Achiricesei, Roxana-Ionela, and Mihaela Boboc. "Communication in the digital era – connections and virtual space." In *Globalization and National Identity. Studies on the Strategies of Intercultural Dialogue, Communication, Public Relations and Journalism Section, Volume III*. Coord. Boldea Iulian. Universitatea "Petru Maior" Tîrgu Mureş, 2016, 295-301.
2. Adriaans, Pieter, "Information." In *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Edited by Edward N. Zalta. Fall 2013 Edition. <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2013/entries/information/>.
3. Balsamo, Anne. "Democratic technologies and the technology of democracy: a review of John Street's *politics and technology*." In *Cultural Studies: Volume 8*, First Edition. Edited by Grossberg Lawrence and Radway Janice. Routledge, 1994, 125-131.

4. Buchanan, Robert Angus. "History of Technology." In *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. <https://www.britannica.com/technology/history-of-technology#toc10382>.
5. Franssen, Maarten, Gert-Jan Lokhorst, and Ibo van de Poel. "Philosophy of Technology." In *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Edited by Edward N. Zalta. Fall 2015 Edition. <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/technology/>.
6. Fuller, Steve, Marc De Mey, Terry Shinn, and Steve Woolgar (eds.). *The cognitive turn: Sociological and Psychological Perspectives on Science*. Springer Science+Business Media, B.V., 1989.
7. Gheorghe, M. Ștefan. *Ethos, pathos, logos. Eseuri despre o dialectică ternară*. Bucharest: All, 2012.
8. Giere, Roland N. "The Units Analysis of Science Studies." In *The cognitive turn: Sociological and Psychological Perspectives on Science*. Edited by Fuller Steve, De Mey Marc, Shinn Terry, Woolgar Steve. Springer Science+Business Media, B.V., 1989.
9. Grossberg, Lawrence, and Janice Radway (eds.). *Cultural Studies: Volume 8, First Edition*, Routledge, 1994.
10. Hoven van den, Jeroen, Martijn Blaauw, Wolter Pieters, and Martijn Warnier. "Privacy and Information Technology." In *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Edited by Edward N. Zalta. Spring 2016 Edition. <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2016/entries/it-privacy/>.
11. Introna, Lucas. "Phenomenological Approaches to Ethics and Information Technology." In *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Edited by Edward N. Zalta. Fall 2017 Edition. <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2017/entries/ethics-it-phenomenology/>.
12. Steger, Manfred B. *Globalization. A very short introduction*. Fourth Edition. Oxford University Press, United Kingdom, 2017.
13. Sullins, John. "Information Technology and Moral Values." In *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Edited by Edward N. Zalta. Spring 2016 Edition. <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2016/entries/it-moral-values/>.
14. Vallor, Shannon. "Social Networking and Ethics." In *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Edited by Edward N. Zalta. Winter 2016 Edition. <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2016/entries/ethics-social-networking/>.
15. Ziman, John. *An Introduction to Science Studies: The Philosophical and Social Aspects of Science and Technology*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1984.



# International Migration of Qualified Human Resources in Social Assistance. Value Dimensions and Professional Dilemmas

Lecturer PhD Viorica-Cristina CORMOȘ  
“Ștefan cel Mare” University of Suceava, Romania  
cristinacormos@yahoo.com

## Abstract

*International migration of work force is presently a high amplitude phenomenon. Romanian people have emigrated for work around the world, being engaged both in the physically hardest jobs and in activities that require completion of specialized courses and certification in a particular field. This last category includes social workers who, following schooling and certification and even having a minimal experience in the home country, apply for jobs in the field of social assistance. These recruiters aim to distribute social workers at the workplace of interest, according to certain well-defined criteria. In the present paper we describe international migration of work force, and we illustrate it by adding case studies of life experience of social workers who underwent the process of emigration to the United Kingdom. Throughout the emigration process, these workers experienced certain changes in their life principles, mentality, values, and were marked by professional dilemmas in extreme situations.*

**Keywords:** *emigration, work force, social assistance, social worker, professional recruiters, life experience, extreme situations, change, value, dilemma.*

## *Introduction. International migration of work force*

International migration of work force has become increasingly important over the recent years, gaining widespread attention. This phenomenon is generally understood as “the movement of individual people or groups, families, across national borders in the hope of finding better living conditions.”<sup>1</sup> In practical terms, international migration of work force is the movement of work force from one country to another in order to pursue an activity abroad for which migrants

---

<sup>1</sup> Alexandru Albu and Ion Roșu-Hamzescu, *International labour migration* (Bucharest: Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1987), 11.

receive payment from physical or legal persons, or other legal entities for which they carry out those activities.

Individually or collectively, people often associate migration with the achievement of aspirations regarding new opportunities, possibilities and certainties. At the individual level, the decision to migrate is the result of a rational calculation of the benefits and costs of emigration for work, compared to the possible achievements in the home country. Collectively, the decision to migration is taken by group members at the initiative of a group leader after analyzing the costs and benefits of emigration and / or remaining in the place of origin. "Spatial differentiation motivates individual movement, which in turn permanently re-arranges population factors, employment, consumption, etc., everywhere it occurs. Agreed analytical framework of migration in terms of attraction – rejection illustrates exactly this gap. Regional differences define the decisional context of the individuals for migration, but the determinants of these territorial features are considered to be exogenous."<sup>2</sup>

International migration (market) of work force has a number of important elements:

a) International labor market, comprising all individuals carrying out an economic and social activity outside the country of origin and have their residence in the country in which they activate; payment for their work is assessed by natural or legal persons of the host country;

b) International labor market is smaller than international migration, because the latter also includes people who have left their home country and who are not engaged in a remunerated socio-economic activity. International labor market offers an instant picture of the use of foreign work force, whereas international labor migration is a very large and complex process that highlights developments, trends and aspects of the international labor flow;

c) In addition to international labor migration, international movement of work force also includes the movement of work force across borders within actions related to international economic and technical-scientific cooperation and the movement of international officials.<sup>3</sup>

Labor migration is temporary, but its duration varies widely and involves no changes of permanent residence. Three categories of emigrants are identified: the first category – emigrants with a higher qualification and skills in the fields of

---

<sup>2</sup> Daniel Delaunay, "Les déterminants individuels et contextuels de la migration internationale," in *Les migrations internationales. Observations, analyse et perspective* (Paris: Press Universitaires de France, 2007), 137.

<sup>3</sup> Albu and Roșu-Hamzescu, *International labour migration*, 12.

*International Migration of Qualified Human Resources in Social Assistance. Value Dimensions and Professional Dilemmas*

science, technology and other services in domains such as health, education, social assistance, etc. These emigrants have the possibility to obtain an employment contract and the right of residence in the country of migration; The second category – emigrants averagely skilled and specialized, characteristic of a wide range of activities and professions (builders, medical personnel, workers employed in the hotel industry or food service, etc.); The third category – emigrants who have no (recognized) qualification and who work in agriculture, construction, sanitation, etc.

There is a number of emigrants working illegally in closed and uncontrolled activities, and this aspect of labor migration cannot be managed, both in the country of origin and in the destination country. Most of these emigrants works and lives in conditions which do not comply with the standards provided to domestic work force. Over the recent years, there has been an increase in permanent migration and temporary labor migration as a result of, “on the one hand, the intensity of the expansion phase in the late 90s and, on the other hand, the development of Information and communication technology, of health and education sectors requiring highly skilled workers.”<sup>4</sup>

An important element of international labor migration is linked to “brain” migration, a phenomenon defined as a constant transfer of highly qualified personnel from generally countries less developed to more developed countries. There are other terms for this phenomenon, such as “brain drain”, “brain theft”, “intelligence theft” or “exodus of competence”, etc. There are two main reasons for the “brain drain”: “on the one hand, the existence of an environment that offers for talented young people a guarantee for the quality of education and international recognition of qualifications. On the other hand, the prospect of higher material incentives and promotion of the most competent people in educational or research institutes and the multinationals.”<sup>5</sup>

*The profession of social worker and emigration*

Social assistance was developed in Romania particularly after 1989, starting from simple charity and support through the church and other religious institutions up to the implementation of social activities by relevant institutions, NGOs and

---

<sup>4</sup> Carmen Mihaela Tudorache, “Evoluția fenomenului migrației Europa,” *Theoretical and Applied Economics* 6 (2006) (501): 97.

<sup>5</sup> Andreea Vass, “Migrația creierelor românești între risc și oportunitate,” *OEconomica* 03 (2007): 81.

specific legislation. Social assistance “denominates an ensemble of institutions, programs, measures, professionalized activities, specialized services for the protection of individuals, groups, communities with special needs and in temporary difficulties, which, due to economic, socio-cultural, biological and psychological reasons, are unable to achieve a normal, decent life through their own efforts and means.”<sup>6</sup>

Social assistance is used to support to people in difficulty to achieve a decent life, by helping them to develop their capabilities and skills for better social functioning. The social worker, as a professional, mainly handles with psychosocial recovery and professional reintegration of people with special problems such as mental and / or physical impairment, antisocial behavior (delinquency) and various social problems. He / she carries out a complex and varied activity: analyzes the influence of social factors on mental health and human behavior, gives advice on the rights and obligations of the assisted people, collaborates with institutions or organizations that have similar goals, participates in the development of working methods and techniques, proposes measures of support and help. All activities are conducted with reference to the *Code of Ethics for Social Work* and according to the legislation in force.

According to the Law no. 466 of 2004 on the status of social worker (Paragraph 2), the following persons can be social workers:<sup>7</sup>

*1. The person who received a university diploma within a superior studies unit specialized in the field, long length type 4 years, certified according to the law; 2. The person who holds a graduation diploma from a higher education unit specialized in the field, short length type, 3 years, certified according to the law. 3. A person who holds a diploma of social work, certified according to the law. 4. A person who holds a diploma of social work issued or recognized in one of the states which are members of the European Union, other states of the European Economic Area or the Swiss Confederation.*

After 1989, altogether with increasing level of the schooling and certification of social workers, it has been observed that the phenomenon of migration abroad of social workers has widened, at first on its own, and over time facilitated by professional recruiters. This phenomenon of emigration of social workers was observed to be directed towards several countries such as the United Kingdom, Germany, Switzerland, Italy, etc., but presently emigration of social workers is particularly directed towards the United Kingdom. Thus, following a specific procedure, professional recruiters establish certain selection criteria, such as:

---

<sup>6</sup> Maria Bulgaru and M Dilion, *Concepte fundamentale ale asistenței sociale* (USM, Chișinău, 2000), 9.

<sup>7</sup> Legea nr.466 din 2004 privind Statutul Asistentului Social.

*International Migration of Qualified Human Resources in Social Assistance. Value Dimensions and Professional Dilemmas*

higher education in the field of social work (at least a Bachelor degree), at least two years of experience in social assistance in the last five years of professional activity, availability to work in the United Kingdom for at least two years, knowledge of English at an advanced level and holding a driving license which is considered an advantage. If these conditions are met, social workers undergo an interview with specialists in social assistance in the United Kingdom. Moreover, professional recruiters often collaborate with institutions in Romania to identify more easily the people who are both skilled in the field of social work and willing to migrate to work abroad (e.g. National College of Social Workers, NGOs, public institutions, religious institutions).

An example of professional recruitment leader in the UK is *HCL Social Care*. It collaborates with Romanian social workers specializing in child protection and family support, assistance of juvenile delinquents, of people addicted to the use of various substances, people with physical or mental impairments, and other vulnerable groups. *HCL Social Care* requires that social workers should be enrolled in the National College of Social Workers and be signed in HCPC (the British equivalent of CNASR). The association provides assistance to all international candidates in the process of relocation to the UK, providing them with adequate information on transport, accommodation, documents required for inclusion in HCPC, etc.<sup>8</sup>

The procedure followed by social workers for leaving to work abroad includes the following steps: registration by sending a CV to a recruitment agency, validation of qualifications and experience in the field of social assistance, the study of documentation on social welfare and the laws of the UK, an interview with specialists from the UK in the field of social assistance, signing a contract and accepting the assigned job. The services offered for integration of social workers in England are: an assigned job, a competitive offer for salary and relocation packages, courses of English language, courses of professional training in the field of social assistance, transportation, accommodation information, guidance, company car (in some cases).

*Case studies: "The integration and adaptation of social workers in the UK. Value dimensions and professional dilemmas"*

To highlight the opportunities to emigrate in the UK as a social worker, as well as the risks and efforts employed to achieve this goal, a research was carried

---

<sup>8</sup> [Http://www.hclsocialcare.com](http://www.hclsocialcare.com).

out which aimed at assessing the possibilities for integration and adaptation of the social workers who opted to work in England and their possible professional development. The research was based on a research method - the interview, which was applied to a significant number of emigrant social workers. For this article has been chosen three illustrative cases to be analyzed. One was successful, one with setbacks but with final achievements, and the third a failure. By means of their analysis we can notice that the people involved in these particular cases went through some changes and stages of assimilation and integration, with implications and changes in the know style of work, attitudes and perception towards life, values, both professionally and economically.

CASE 1 - "A GREAT SUCCESS!"

D. I. is a woman aged 39 years, a social worker who has been working in England for the past nine years. She has integrated quite well in the destination country. The first year was difficult, but she managed to improve her language skills and to adapt to the new professional requirements. She was successively promoted and currently works as an integrating service coordinator and lecturer at a prestigious university.

*in the beginning it was not easy for me, but with work and perseverance I managed to get to coordinate services, to make decisions and to educate young people willing to do this profession. I think it is a chance for many of the social workers, for me it really was and is.*

D. I. mentioned that in England it is not very hard to find another job in the field. One can be promoted and search for better paying jobs if he/she is concerned about occupational safety and has the desire for professional improvement.

*This is not like in the in the home country, where you need to protect your job. If you are skilled you can easily go from one institution to another and seek increasingly better paid jobs. One starts from 1200 -1300 pounds per month, but this can increase to 3500-4000 pounds per month. The goal is to earn better, because you do the job anyway.*

What Mrs. D. I. said was impressive, because it shows that in the UK social work is respected and known as a profession and social workers perform their work according to the principles and rules of professional conduct. Unfortunately in most countries, including Romania, social work is perceived distorted.

*The best part is that here you just do your job and are respected for what you do. Social work in the UK is very well organized and regulated. Unfortunately it is not the same in the country of origin, where not everybody seems to know clearly what social work involves, and where social workers are still confused with nurses, orderlies,*

*International Migration of Qualified Human Resources in Social Assistance. Value Dimensions and Professional Dilemmas*

*personal assistants. Unfortunately there are other countries where the same perception dominates.*

When asked whether she would want to return in the home country, D. I. specified that there's nothing to return to, because she managed to meet her aims and to develop professionally in the UK.

*What does the home country give me, so that I should go back? Nothing. Here I bought a house, I bought what I wanted, here I managed to see the world, I was able to have any holiday I dreamed of, I am respected as a professional here. In the home country, a social worker salary is barely enough to survive with. It's the minimum wage, which is shameful. For now I would not return.*

CASE 2 - "I DID NOT GIVE UP."

The social worker S.R., a woman aged 37, who lives in the UK with her husband for three years. She found very difficult even to find a job in England, according to her personal experience in the field achieved before leaving the home country. The reason for leaving was the lack of financial resources. "I left the country because my husband and I were no longer able to live on the salaries we have in the home country. But it was very hard for me before I left because I did not know much English and I did not want to accept any kind of job there."

There are situations where to be accepted to work as a social worker is more difficult. In this case the person who applied for the job was only accepted the third time.

*I was rejected at the first interview; I was even in the UK to give an interview. I was about to give up, but I managed to move on. Basically at the third interview I was accepted for a job that I wanted. It was not quite easy, for some people it is much easier.*

S.R. encountered some difficulties in the country of migration such as language, the differences in the laws and methods applied, and in the work style.

*First, I found it very hard to handle the language and the work style, which are different from the home country. In addition, I had to learn a lot of methods and techniques, legislation, work strategies because they have a different style of working which, I admit, is more accurate and effective.*

Once integrated in the country of migration, S.R. is satisfied with what she has been offered, feeling motivated and valued. She believes that if the home country does not motivated young people to stay, they will further migrate and this will be an important loss for the country.

*I'm not sorry that I got here. I feel increasingly motivated and valued. There are drawbacks as anywhere, but it's something else. For now I'm not going to return home.*

*Unfortunately if we consider the rate at which Romania motivates young graduates in the field of social assistance, they will leave the country. And destination countries such as the UK benefit from young people schooled in the home country.*

CASE 3 - "IT WAS A FAILURE"

The social worker, R.I. a woman aged 41, has lived in England for two years. She worked in an organization handling with the incoming emergency calls. It was not what she had dreamed of and it was strenuous for her. She was not paid well and, as a result, together with her husband she decided to return home.

*Although I really wanted to go abroad for work, for me this was a failure. I think one also needs to have a bit of luck. I was assigned to an organization that handled with incoming emergency calls. After a short time I felt exhausted and felt that this was not what I have wanted.*

R.I. considers that it is important how applicants are distributed and which the real chance offered abroad is. In her case it was more difficult, and as a result she decided to return home.

*Maybe if I had another job in the field and also better paid, I would have chosen not to return to my home country, but maybe it was not meant to be. Life was too tough and strenuous for me.*

In *conclusion*, migration of social workers is based on the one hand on a certain desire to improve their lifestyle – improved quality of life, and on the other hand on the recognition, development and professional mobility. To practice their job in the UK, social workers follow a well-established route and demonstrate that they fulfill certain criteria pursued by professional recruiters, starting with an advanced level of English, holding diplomas certifying completion of studies in the field, to the willingness to work in England for at least two years. Once in the country of migration, social workers are assigned to a workplace and supported by the same recruitment leaders; as a result, they benefit from certain services aimed to help them to integrate in the destination country and at the new work place.

In the present paper we analyzed three cases highlighting the difficulties faced by immigrant social workers, and the benefits they may enjoy. The development of the immigration process is noteworthy and also the changes occurring with the integration in the destination country: changes in personal and social identity, in the professional perspectives, in self-perception and self-esteem, in mentality, perception, values, in social and professional mobility, in lifestyle.

### **Bibliography:**

1. Albu, Alexandru, and Ion Roșu-Hamzescu. *International labour migration*. Bucharest: Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1987.

*International Migration of Qualified Human Resources in Social Assistance. Value Dimensions and Professional Dilemmas*

2. Cormoș, Viorica-Cristina. *Changes identity in the word of international migration*. Iași: Lumen, 2015.
3. Delaunay, Daniel. “Les déterminants individuels et contextuels de la migration internationale.” In *Les migrations internationales. Observations, analyse et perspective. Colloque international de Budapest*. Paris: Press Universitaires de France, 2007.
4. Tudorache, Carmen Mihaela. “Evoluția fenomenului migrației în Europa” (Evolution of the migration phenomenon in Europe). *Theoretical and Applied Economics* 6 (2006) (501): 95-100. [www.ectap.ro](http://www.ectap.ro).
5. Vass, Andreea. “Migrația creierelor românești între risc și oportunitate” (Romanian brain drain, between risk and opportunity). *OEconomica*, 03 (2007):81-87.
6. Bulgaru, Maria. *Concepte fundamentale ale asistenței sociale* (Fundamental concepts in social assistance). USM, Chișinău, 2000.
7. Legea nr.466 din 2004 privind statutul asistentului social (Law no. 466/2004 on the Status of Social Workers).



ESSAYS

PRESENTATIONS

REVIEWS



# The Atlas of Beauty

## Review

**Mihaela NOROC, *The Atlas of Beauty*, Bucharest: Humanitas, 2017**

*PhD student Anca URSACHE TCACIUC*

*“Ștefan cel Mare” University of Suceava*

*alinavarvaroi@yahoo.com*

### **Abstract**

*The Atlas of Beauty is a photographic project around the world. Mihaela Noroc, the author of this book, has travelled in different countries and took pictures of women showing in this way the diversity of beauty.*

**Keywords:** *photography, art, beauty, culture, values, women.*

*The Atlas of Beauty* represents the materialization of a bold, ambitious, highly appreciated worldwide project, belonging to a wonderful young lady, Mihaela Noroc.

She travelled to over fifty countries, taking pictures of women representing all social environments, without allowing herself to be influenced by any kind of discrimination filter as race, color, age, religion, education, sexual orientation, household versus career professionals, or traditional, vanguards, conservative, artist profiles, achieving on this line an exceptional intercultural transfer.

An wonderful adventure around the world colored by a multitude of experiences turns into an impressive collection of portraits and stories, all of them summoning a tribute to dignity, originality, variety and, especially, to the uniqueness that consists in the power to accept the presence of diversity discovered in each of us.

The approach of the Romanian young woman has become famous all over the world, her project being chased by nearly a million and a half people on social networks *Facebook, Instagram, Trumblr*, but also through publications such as *Huffington Post, Business Insider, Forbes, Wall Street Journal, The Guardian, Sky News, The Independent, Le Figaro* who have extensively presented *The Atlas of*

*Beauty*, turning it into the most publicized artistic project by a Romanian nowadays, as well, as some *Super Soul Sunday* shows of the famous Oprah Winfrey, where Mihaela Noroc spoke live about her desires and achievements: “I have photographed more than two thousands women in every corner of the world, and there where the communication was possible, I listen every single life story... through my pictures I wanted to capture the calm and warm feeling from their eyes.”

*The Atlas of Beauty*, the author’s photographic project, was originally published in several languages, within the prestigious Publishing House Penguin Books, later being released in Romania, in November 2017, at the Humanitas Publishing House, under the title *Atlasul Frumuseții*. An impressive publication, being part of the category *Book. Art, Architecture and Design*, more exactly, *Art and Photographic Technique*, according to the highest quality standards, in 8g/m paper, containing 352 pages. The book is published in Romanian language, the translation being made from English by Andreea Nita and Iulia Vladimirov.

“*Women of the World in 500 Portraits* is not the printed version of Facebook page, but much more than this...the book contains pictures and stories which I never post online. The Romanian edition printed by Humanitas Publishing House will not be just a translation from English. I insert new pictures, I wrote new texts, I created a new cover and I hope the book will have success in our country, too”, said Mihaela Noroc.

Reading this atlas, I had the immediate feeling of a deep attachment, absolutely not surprised at how human experiences interferes, but deeply thankful that someone had the initiative to combine in such a surprising way the feminine diversity.

The distribution of portraits is remarkable, through the process of contrast to reflect so many similarities. Each page will sent your thoughts over the world corners, apparently so different, but essentially so identical.

Synchronicities, coincidences, activities, similar situations that consist of a dream or survival in the vicinity of tragedies, the same mother worried for her baby somewhere in Nepal or in United States, the same fight for dignity within the protests on the streets of Greece or Brazil; in all these picture there can be felt the life beyond the scenes and the wisdom of those women in painting their existence colorfully.

“The real beauty doesn’t have borders. You can find it in Africa or in Europe, in a village or in a city, in a smile, in a gesture, in an intensive look, in few wrinkles or in a story,” is Mihaela Noroc opinion.

In a world where physical beauty standards are so demanding, the author takes advantage of the evolutionary technique of information on social platforms, come directly in the millions of women's homes and souls, her mission being nothing else than reconnection to the real true values of humanity and not one of those absurd habits imposed by the industry of fashion promoted by mass media corporation.

The author expressed her vision in several prestigious publications:

CNN: "In my opinion, beauty means to keep alive the origins and culture. Being natural, sincere, authentic, special."

THE INDEPENDENT: "The idea is that we are all part of the same family. Beauty means surprising the cultural diversity in these amazing pictures."

LE FIGARO: "In the end, beauty is in our differences, but not defined by trends, race or social status."

Therefore, the material and immaterial patrimony is a pillar of resistance in the preservation of spirituality, beauty and femininity.

Actions as the utilizations of applications that consist of performing Photoshop filter, in order to present a beautiful picture of ourselves, but which is, at the same time, unrealistic, or more seriously when extreme gestures are used, like starvation or many esthetical interventions, develops an excess of physical, abstract beauty generated by the pattern of some standards dimensions and appearances that can only direct to superficiality and involution, thus enhancing the premises of the disappearance of the variety by uniformization of the female archetype.

The real beauty surprised by the photographer uncovers femininity in the total splendor of its accomplishment. The author resuscitates the concept of beauty by capturing the most noble feelings, the most intensive colors in a superficial shadowy world. The women vibrate with a high amplitude, you'll have the impression of smelling their fatigue, the fear of terror, the serenity of sharing satisfaction, happiness, and peace.

They are not famous or reach, but everyone is unique in her own way; the feminine beauty means balance between giving and taking, a millennial philosophy activated in their soul, but insufficiently developed in practice. "The beauty can teach us tolerance, the sincerity, the kindness, and we need these values in our lives more than ever," says Mihaela.

This project is an artistic proof of *kairopraxis*<sup>1</sup> and an infinite manifestation of beauty, love and affection.

For me, this amazing girl is not lucky just being in contact with so many cultures resulted from her trips, she's an example of simplicity, altruism, energy and rare passion; travelling she takes pictures, but in her reports she paints portraits.

I will end with a very evocative Leo Tolstoi's quote: "You wonder how beauty gives us the full illusion of good. When a beautiful woman says nonsenses, you listen to her and you don't observe her stupidity, everything she tells you seems intelligent for you. She talks and acts horrible, and you see in this something cute. But, if she doesn't say nonsenses, she does not do ugly things and besides she's beautiful, then you're immediately convinced that's a miracle of wisdom and morality."

---

<sup>1</sup> *Kairopraxis* defines those intentional deliberate actions in accordance with moral laws. Using the comparative method in order to debate for its acceptance and for more understanding, several of its characteristics comes in antithesis with *malpraxis* term, who defines human error, improper professional conduct, both from ignorance and indolence, and lack of responsibility, too.

*Kairopraxis* is based on the ancient Greek notions, *praxis*, who means activity, action, and *kairos*, the Greek Divinity who symbolized the occasion, the opportunity that intervenes in the temporality field to make the good target of action.