Annals of "Ştefan cel Mare" University of Suceava

PHILOSOPHY, SOCIAL AND HUMAN DISCIPLINES SERIES

2021

VOLUME II

Co-editors:
Bogdan POPOVENIUC
Marius CUCU

ANNALS
of
Philosophy, Social and Human Disciplines

(Annals of "Stefan cel Mare" University of Suceava, PHILOSOPHY, SOCIAL AND HUMAN DISCIPLINES SERIES)

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RESEARCH PAPERS

Can "Ecological Empathy" Play an Effective Role to Make an Environmentally Responsible Individual? A Review of Deep Ecology and Covey's Idea of Empathy

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Abstract

Nowadays, the environmental crisis is becoming a vital issue to discuss. Our anthropocentric attitude towards nature is creating such disaster that it raises questions about our existence in long run. Deep ecology can play a vital role in the sustainable development of environmental crises. By making a connection between Covey's 7 habits and deep ecology, we can create an ethically responsible global citizen. This article will try to make a connection between different philosophical thoughts (e.g. Buddhist concept of the Four Noble Truth, Avicenna's holism, Confucian's view of loyalty and empathy, Kantian sense of perfect and imperfect duty and ethics of care's particular other) and deep ecology, to show the role of it for making a globally competent value-driven individual and finally demonstrates a relation between deep ecology and Covey's Seven Habits to make ecologically empathic and effective global citizens for solving the environmental challenges. The article concludes that ecological empathy can make an effective role in the sustainable development of the environment.

Keywords: *anthropocentric and non-anthropocentric behavior, biotic community, deep ecology, ecological empathy, environmental education, holistic approach, identification.*

Introduction

In the world of globalization environmental crises are increasing day by day. Along with technological development man's anthropocentric attitude towards nature is creating a threat to the existence of human beings. The recent incident of COVID-19 is a very good example of man's excessive manipulation of nature. Apart from the global warming, greenhouse effect, increasing sea level, sudden flooding, Tsunamis, wildfire, earthquakes, the recent epidemic of coronavirus are representing man's careless behavior to the environment. Thus, it is becoming an urge of the situation to control ourselves and shift our paradigm from

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anthropocentrism to non-anthropocentrism for living a balanced and harmonious life. Arne Naess, a Norwegian philosopher coined the term "Deep Ecology" where he shows that like humans, nature is also possessing some value, named intrinsic value. Therefore, like every human being nature is also having the right to flourish.

In this paper, I will raise a few deep ecological questions in brief and focus on the relation between different philosophical thoughts (e.g. Buddhism, Confucian loyalty and empathy, Avicenna's holistic nature, Kantian perfect and imperfect duty, ethics of care's particular other) and deep ecology. To explain the link with Buddhism, at first I will illustrate the connection between Four Noble Truths and environment and then show that how the deep ecological idea of self realization is closely related with the Buddhist concept of Nirvana. At the end of this paper, I will show that how the combination of Covey's seven habits and deep ecology can play a critical role to make a value-derived ecological empathic individual for solving the environmental catastrophe.

The Four Noble Truths and its relation with the environment:

According to Buddhism, human beings are suffering from birth to death for their endless desire. These desires are the reasons for all of our problems in life. Buddhism is talking about Four Noble Truths. In brief, the first Noble Truth is accepting the fact that there is suffering in this world, the second Noble Truth is about the origin of *Dukkha* which states that we are suffering because of our desire. That means, the second Noble Truth is talking about the reason behind our suffering. The third Noble Truth is illustrating how can we cease this *Dukkha* by detaching ourselves from all types of attachments and the last one is demonstrating how can we get Nirvana through the eightfold path.

In my opinion, because of our anthropocentric attitude that we are practicing towards the environment, we are suffering nowadays. Thus, to get rid of this crisis we need to understand the concept of Four Noble Truths so that we can be awakened from our selfishness. As Loy (2019) writes,

> *The Four Noble Truths provide a framework for diagnosing our current situation and formulating appropriate guidelines — because the threats and disasters we face ultimately stem from the human mind, and therefore require profound changes within our minds.* (p. 154)

Moreover, the environmental catastrophes that we are facing today because of our concept of superiority, are not only a matter of materialistic issues but also spiritual and metaphysical. In this regard, Bloom (1972) mentions,

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*...the ecological crisis is more than the mere disposition of materials in the
environment. It is, rather, a spiritual issue... For Buddhism man's problem does not
lie outside of him, but within him — in his mind, his thought, his values, and their
consequent actions. For Buddhism the ethical problem is also a metaphysical issue.*
(pp. 125-126)

At this point, I will talk about the Four Noble Truths in detail and show the
connection with the environment.

The first Noble Truth (Dukkah) and the environmental point of view:

In Buswell's (2004) book, he is taking about the Four Noble Truths and
shows that, these Noble Truths are not only representing the suffering of this world
but also it is demonstrating the way to get rid of this suffering. The first sermon of
the Four Noble Truths of Buddhism is stating,

*This, bhikkhus, is the Noble Truth that is suffering. Birth is suffering; old age is
suffering; illness is suffering; death is suffering; sorrow and grief, physical and
mental suffering, and disturbance are suffering. Association with things not liked is
suffering, separation from desired things is suffering; not getting what one wants is
suffering; in short, the five aggregates of grasping are suffering. (Book of Kindred
Sayings [Samyutta-nikaya], vol. 5, line 410ff).* (p. 296)

According to the Buddhist concept of suffering, we are suffering from birth
to death because we are clinging ourselves to the five SKANDHA
(AGGREGATE) which are: form or material image (*rupa*), sensations or feelings
(*vedana*), perceptions (*samjna*), mental activity or formations (*sankhara*) and
consciousness (*vijnana*). In Buswell's (2004) statement,

*...there were three kinds of suffering: suffering that is inherent in a thing, suffering
that emerges because things change, and suffering that develops because something
else influences an experience.* (p. 296)

Therefore, everywhere in this world suffering is present because we are
attaching ourselves with the impermanent things of this world and inviting sorrow
in our life. If we are focusing on our natural environment we will see that the
environment is suffering as a whole because of our anthropocentric attitude
towards nature. The increasing ratio of greenhouse gas, pollution are creating
unexpected disasters in our regular lifestyle. As a result, we all are suffering as a
whole. COVID-19 is one of the recent examples of it. This concept of suffering
can also be found in Henning's (2002) view,

*Dukkha or the First Noble Truth applies to the natural environment with the
recognition that nature is suffering as a whole and that serious environmental
crises are appearing locally and globally everywhere.* (p. 50)

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The second Noble Truth (Samudaya) and the environmental point of view:

The second Noble Truth illustrates that,

This, bhikkhus, is the Noble Truth that is the arising of suffering. This is craving that leads to rebirth, is connected with pleasure and passion and finds pleasure in this or that; that is, craving for desire, existence, and the fading away of existence. (Book of Kindred Sayings [Samyutta-nikaya], vol. 5, line 410ff). (Buswell, 2004, p. 296)

This Noble Truth is basically focusing on the reason behind how and why we are suffering. It elucidates that we are suffering because of our endless desire and attachment. Our carving to achieve something along with our "I" centric mentality is also the root cause of our suffering. As we are always trying to satisfy this "I", we cannot get rid of the desire, as a result, this desire is bringing sorrow in our life. As Henning (2002) writes, "Suffering is often self-inflicted by grasping after the illusions of an «I, me, and mine»." (p. 51)

To explain the connection between the second Noble Truth and environment, everything in this world is followed by the law of cause and effect. Thus, there must be a reason behind the suffering that we are facing because of the environmental calamities. Henning (2002) notes,

Phra Debvedi considers these fundamental principles: (a) Everything in the universe is subject to the law of cause and effect. Every act of man has an effect on the universe. Thus man is part of the process and subject to the laws of nature, including impermanence and suffering along with other beings;... (Phra Debvedi, 1993). (p. 51)

Hence, climate and environmental changes that we are facing nowadays are the effect of our abusive practice towards nature. Even if we are depending on nature, we are destroying it. Therefore, our desire and ignorance towards the practices with nature, we are suffering.

The third Noble Truth (Nirodha) and the environmental point of view:

This Noble Truth is known as "cessation" and is closely connected with the second one. It says that,

This, bhikkhus, is the Noble Truth that is the ending of suffering. This is the complete fading away and ending of that very craving, giving it up, renouncing it, releasing it, and letting go. (Book of Kindred Sayings [Samyutta-nikaya], vol. 5, line 410ff). (Buswell, 2004, p. 296)

This means that, if we are suffering because of our curving then it can be ended by stopping this carving or desire. Henning (2002) comments,

Thus the third Noble Truth is the realization that people can transcend Dukkha or mental pain and grief. Just as a flame expires without fuel, Dukkha similarly becomes extinct if its fuel of carving is consumed. (Inwood, 1981). (p. 52)

From the view of the environment, when we will be able to figure out the reasons behind the environmental problems, we will be able to reduce the environmental challenges that we are facing nowadays. And when we realize the reason behind suffering is due to environmental abuses then, instead of doing the misconduct to nature, we will take adaptations and mitigation measurements. Such as for adaptation we can cop-up some behavioral shifts and for mitigation, we can reduce the emission of carbon dioxide and greenhouse gases (GHG) and enhance the sinks into the atmosphere. Thus, it is essential to have the right understanding and mindfulness to practice and uphold new habits. As Loy (2019) states,

> *To survive the rough transitions ahead, our lifestyles and expectations must change. This involves new habits as well as new values… Individually, we must adopt behaviors that increase everyday ecological awareness and reduce our "carbon footprint."* (pp. 154-155)

It is essential to note that even if people are understanding the aftereffect of misusing nature, if they are not having a mindful desire to take proper action, ultimately this understanding will go to vein. Thus it is important to follow right behavior through right mindfulness and understanding. About this Thathong (2012) notes

> *Even when people understand the cause and effect of environmental problems, they will not change their behaviours harmful to the environment if their minds do not have the desire to do so. Thus, panya must be supported and enhanced by sila and samadhi. (Payutto, 1995).* (p. 5064)

The fourth Noble Truth (Magga) and the environmental point of view:

The fourth Noble Truth articulates that,

> *This, bhikkhus, is the Noble Truth that is the way leading to the ending of suffering. This is the eightfold path of the noble ones: right view, right intention, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right concentration. (Book of Kindred Sayings [Samyutta-nikaya], vol. 5, line 410ff)* (Buswell, 2004, p. 296)

The last Noble Truth is ultimately showing us the way (the eightfold path) to be awakened and enlightened. There are three stages of this eightfold path. The right understanding and right thoughts are under the stage of right wisdom, the next three paths, right speech, right conduct, and right livelihood, can guide us how to do good through the proper ethical conduct and lastly the last three paths,

right effort, right mindfulness, and right concentration belong to the state of right concentration. All of these eight-fold paths are interconnected with each other.

The first group illustrates that one must have the right knowledge to realize their own self and their position to the world. When an individual is having the right understanding and thought that he is only one of the parts of nature like the other species of the environment and causing suffering to one of the parts of it is ultimately suffering himself, he will naturally stop abusing nature. In Henning's (2002) statement, "...wise protection of the natural environment will lessen the suffering for oneself and other beings" (p. 53). Consequently, the right understanding will create the right thought process which will lead towards the right speech. The right speech emanates the right action where the individual will take necessary measurements to protect nature. When we will take the proper initiative to preserve nature, we will create the right livelihood.

At this point, it is essential to note that to live the right livelihood, the right effort is indispensable because our endless carving can overpower us. Thus, to live a good life we need to focus on the right effort simultaneously. This right effort will create the right awareness in our minds. This awareness is avoiding the "monkey mind" condition and helping us to concentrate in the present followed by the right concentration. Eventually, it is leading us to the proper initiative for protecting the environment. As Henning (2002) writes,

> *Right awareness encompasses mindfulness of one's own attitude toward nature as well as one's own behavior, in not destroying or degrading the natural environment, as well as by taking measures to protect and enhance it.* (p. 55)

From the above-mentioned discussion, it is clear that the Four Noble Truths can be a better solution to solve the environmental crisis. Because through this process we get to know that, we are suffering as a whole along with the environment, there is reason behind this suffering, together we can cease the cause of this suffering and finally we can get rid from it by following the eightfold path which will lead us to Nirvana. However, this Buddhist concept of Nirvana is closely connected with deep ecology's concept of Self realization. Therefore, in below mentioned paragraph I will talk about the connection between Nirvana and Self-realization, and show the impact of it in terms of solving the environmental crisis.

Can "Ecological Empathy" Play an Effective Role to Make an Environmentally Responsible Individual?

Some fundamental ecological questions: deep ecology and the Four Noble Truths of Buddhism

The term deep ecology can be considered as a non-anthropocentric approach towards the environment, is rejecting any bifurcation between man and nature and asking more fundamental questions related to the man-nature relationship. According to Talukder (2018) "Deep ecology as an environmental movement emphasizes Self-realization, ecological wisdom, and asking of deeper questions" (p. 11). Devall and Sessions (1985) in their book titled "Deep ecology" mention that, "The essence of deep ecology is to keep asking more searching questions about human life, society, and Nature as in the Western philosophical tradition of Socrates" (p. 65).

If we focus on Socrates' life we will see that Socrates himself thought that an unexamined life is not worthy. Thus, from the deep ecological point of view, we may ask a few fundamental questions, such as, how and why everything is interconnected? What is the essence of this interconnected relationship? How can we flourish this nature in the man-nature relationship? According to Devall and Sessions (1985), "The foundations of deep ecology are the basic intuitions and experiencing of ourselves and Nature which comprise ecological consciousness" (p. 65).

To understand the concept of ecological consciousness it is essential to understand the concept of Self-realization. The word Self-realization is considered as one of the fundamental concepts of deep ecology. It is considering the whole ecosystem as one community.

Talukder (2018) notes that,

Naess writes, "the Self in question is a symbol of identification with an absolute maximum range of beings" (quoted in Fox 1990, 99). He also adds, "[t]his large comprehensive Self (with a capital «S») embraces all the life forms on the planet" (Naess 1986, 80). (p. 13)

He (2018) writes, "The Self can also be seen as an extended manifestation of the self or, in other words, the universal Self is the mature form of the narrow self." (p. 13) Naess talked about two types of selves, Self with capital "S" and self with small "s". The former one is representing the universal Self and the latter one is pointing the individual self. In a narrow sense, individuals must try to get rid of their narrower self by diminishing the egoistic desires of an individual and trying to be united with the ultimate Self. In this stage, he will feel a spiritual interconnection between himself and all the entities of the world and consider himself as a part of nature. He understands that doing harm to nature is ultimately

making our existence in question because we all are interrelated with each other. This Self-realization is the spiritual development of an individual that a person can achieve by freeing himself from all kinds of self-concern. As Talukder (2018) writes,

> *...two basic principles — the diminishing of ego and the integrity between the human and the non-human world — constitute Naess's ultimate norm of Self-realization. By the diminishing of ego, he means the gradual reduction of our hedonistic attitudes and the curtailment of our Western isolated egos. The integrity principle says that everything in this biosphere is internally connected, as all organisms are parts of an integrated whole. That is, if we harm any elements in nature, then eventually we will harm ourselves.* (p. 12)

This process of self-realization is showing that human beings are not superior to the elements of nature and there is no hierarchy in man and nature relationship. Henning (2002) observes that,

> *With the ecological self or true self arising and breaking out of the prison-self of separate ego, moral exhortation becomes more and more irrelevant, particularly under non-self and Deep Ecology. Thus Dhamma or nature helps us to overcome our alienation from the world and its living creatures and changes the way we experience selfhood through an ever-widening process of identification with other living beings and forms of creation.* (p. 82)

Therefore, from the above discussion, it can be stated that in the process of Self-realization all forms of life are considered fundamentally one which has a resemblance with the Buddhist concept of oneness. As Henning (2002) mentions, "Buddhism and Deep Ecology focuses on the Buddhist view of «One» world that is home to all known life." (p. 7) This concept of "Oneness" is also visible in the Buddhist concept of Nirvana. Henning (2002) writes, "This state of oneness is called Nirvana or Enlightenment. The teachings of Buddha also portray a total connection with everything that is also part of Deep Ecology." (p. 2)

Thus, from the above-mentioned statements, we can draw the assumption that to live a balanced and harmonious life at first we must be get rid of our egoistic and anthropocentric attitude (The smaller self) towards nature and move forward to be united with the capital Self through our spiritual awareness. Because that is how we can achieve Oneness or Nirvana. In this process of Self-realization, we understand that neither we are alien nor master to nature. Our relation to nature is a relation of stewardship. We are just the integral part of it and we are interconnected. this realization is helping us to be free from all the suffering of the world. At this level, we understand the notion of selflessness. Talukder (2018) writes,

Narrow human dominance dissolves into the Self. So, the Self, in another sense, refers to the wider, broadened, matured, refined, examined, and developed self. (p. 13)

Thus, it is essential to understand the interrelation between the greater Self and individual self to understand the deepest meaning of deep ecology. And to make an ecologically empathic global citizen, there can be no other alternative but to be consolidated with these ideas.

Avicenna and the holistic approach:

Naess considers deep ecology as the holistic approach of environmental ethics. Devall and Sessions (1985) state that, "Some will no doubt say that deep ecology proposals for holistic management and reinhabitation are overly idealistic and impractical on a global scale" (p. 158).

This holistic approach can also be seen in one of the most influential Islamic philosophers Avicenna's philosophy as well. Avicenna talks about the holistic nature of human beings in his idea of medicine. For him, mind and body are not separated but interrelated. While treating a patient, he gives priority to both psychic and physical life. Whereas in the western tradition, especially in Descartes's philosophy, a clear distinction between mind and body are visible, Avicenna makes non-distinction between them. One of the articles published by UNESCO (2004) points out that, "Since Avicenna considered each human being to be a whole, he did not make a strict distinction between mind and body as is often done today" (p. 23).

This holistic approach of Avicenna can also be connected with the concept of Naess's holistic approach. Even if Avicenna talks about medicine, this concept can also be considered in terms of the environment. If we consider the environment as a whole then humans and nature are not different from each other but they are an integral part of the environment who has a different role to play for their own sustainability and flourishment. As it is mentioned by the article of UNESCO (2004), "In Avicenna's science, humankind is (still) looking for a harmonious relationship with nature, and seeking to know it and conform to i" (p. 19).

The article of UNESCO (2004) also stipulates that,

Treating the person as a whole, however, should not be confined to Avicenna's holistic approach in medicine. This attitude was manifest throughout his entire life: through his involvement in politics (unity of theory and practice, of science and politics); through his quality as a universal scholar (unity of different parts of

knowledge); and through his relationship with nature (unity of humankind and its environment). (pp. 24-25)

The same reflection can also be seen in the chapter titled "Some Sources of the deep ecology perspective" written by Devall and Sessions (1985). It says that,

We are now aware that physical health cannot be separated from the mental health, and the health of the individual cannot be separated from the health of the environment. (p. 89)

An American ecologist, Aldo Leopold, also talked about this sense of integrity in his book *A Sand County Almanac.* According to Satyanarayana (2009):

In his concept of "Land Ethics", humans are considered as part and parcel of a wider community, which Leopold called as "biotic community", an enlarged community, which includes not only all living species but also all members of the ecological system, including water, air, and soil, or collectively-the land. (p. 131)

The principle of land ethic is also demonstrating the sense of holism. It states that, "A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise" (p. 131). William Godfrey-Smith (1979), an Australian philosopher, in his essay titled 'The Value of Wilderness' asserts that: "The holistic conception of the natural world contains, in my view, the possibility of extending the idea of community beyond human society" (p. 317).

Thus, it is evident that the concept of integrity is fundamental in the process of holism that we can observe in the view of Naess, Avicenna, Leopold, and Godfrey-Smith. We might be the different elements of nature, yet for solving the environmental crisis and for the sustainability and flourishment of the environment as a whole, there can be no alternative than following holism. As Talukder (2019) states, "Deep ecologist Arne Naess also presents a similar view by mixing ecology and ethics as an alternative to solve the environmental crisis… the principle of integrity is the (moral) basis of biocentric holism (pp. 7-8)."

Kantian sense of perfect and imperfect duty and deep ecology:

Naess's first principle of deep ecology can be illustrated with the Kantian conception of perfect and imperfect duty. According to the first principle of deep ecology:

The well-being and flourishing of human and nonhuman Life on Earth have value in themselves (synonyms: intrinsic value, inherent value). These values are independent of the usefulness of the non-human world for human purposes. (Devall & Sessions, 1985, p. 70)

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This principle refers that, everything within the biotic community is having value, not because of its usefulness but because they are valuable within themselves. We can observe the same perception in Kantian ethics as well. As Godfrey-Smith (1979) articulates while rejecting the Cartesian conception and proposing certain types of behavioral change, "A recognition that biological systems are items which possess intrinsic value, in Kant's terminology, that they are «ends in themselves»". (p. 318)

Pojman and Fieser (2009), in their book *Ethics Discovering Right and Wrong*, states that:

> *Kant wanted to remove moral truth from the zone of contingency and empirical observation and place it securely in the area of necessary, absolute, universal truth. Morality's value is not based on the fact that it has instrumental value, that it often secures nonmoral goods such as happiness; rather, morality is valuable in its own right.* (p. 117)

Kant considers categorical imperative (CI) as the supreme principle of morality which is followed by the rational being's sense of duty. For him, categorical imperative (CI) is, "Act only according to that maxim by which you can at the same time will that it would become a universal law" (Pojman and Fieser, 2009, p. 119).

Pojman and Fieser (2009) illustrates categorical imperative (CI) as such,

The general scheme of the CI procedure, then, is this:

Maxim of action

↓

Universalize maxim

↓

Accept successfully universalized maxim (reject unsuccessful maxim) (p. 119)

Now I will explain this with two examples (One for perfect duty and another is for imperfect duty). Let's consider the first example where human beings are abusing nature even after knowing that they are an integral part of the environment. Now, according to the categorical imperative at first, we need to formulate the maxim. So, the maxim of this given scenario is,

we are one of the integral parts of nature but we are not enriching the richness and the diversity of nature.

Secondly, we need to universalize the maxim. So, we need to think of a world where every individual will follow the same maxim. By being a member of the biotic community, we will not let the community flourish.

Thirdly, we need to check whether there is any contradiction or not. If it is contradicting then the maxim is immoral (perfect duty). If there is no contradiction but we cannot think of a world of that maxim, then the maxim is immoral (Imperfect duty).

By analyzing the given example we can see that there is a clear contradiction. Because if we are one of the members of the biotic community and if we are not let the community develop, we are basically causing harm to ourselves. And as rational beings, we cannot continue this practice because in that case, we are not following the duty of integrity. Thus, it is our perfect duty to value and respect nature rather than abuse it.

For the second scenario, let's consider an example where we are thinking for the sustainability of nature, the policy must be followed and implemented, but we are choosing not to do so.

Now, if we are following the steps of CI, firstly we need to formulate the maxim that is, even though we have the capability to follow the policy for the flourishment of nature, we choose not to do so.

Secondly, we can think of a world where every human being is having the ability to save nature by following the policies but they are choosing not to do that.

Thirdly, if we check with contradiction, definitely there is no contradiction in this given scenario, yet we cannot think of a world where everyone is capable to save nature but no one is taking initiative. Therefore, it is our imperfect duty to follow the policy for the sustainable development and flourishment of nature.

Thus, from the above discussion, it is clear that Kantian ethics will also support our moral obligation towards nature because nature is valuable within itself which Kant named as "end in itself". Even though Kant talks about the "pure reason", that is not against one's inclination but to some extent, it is connected with Naess's concept of identification. As Talukder (2018) mentions,

> *Reitan maintains that Naess's "narrow reading" of Kant fails to grasp what moral acts are. According to this reading, acts that are performed by "pure practical reason" without personal feelings, desires, and so forth, are moral acts. But this does not mean that such acts must be "against one's inclinations"; rather it means only an "indifferent" position. He points out that "one of the elements of Kant's philosophy that is overlooked in the narrow reading is the centrality of respect" (Reitan, 1996, 419). He advances: respect obviously involves certain inclinations, such as emotion. So, Kant uses "respect" in the same sense as Naess*

uses "identification". Respecting cannot be just a physical act. Rather, as Reitan puts it, a "mental act" or an "act of will". (pp. 25-26)

Ethics of Care and Deep Ecology

Naess considers self-love as one of the pre-conditions in the process of identification which indicates love for others rather than egoistic love. As Talukder (2018) asserts:

> *According to Naess, self-love is a pre-condition for identification. He understands self-love not in an egoistic sense, but rather in a deep and wide sense that promotes others 'interest. The being's interest, therefore, makes a bridge to reach Self-realization from self-love.'* (p. 14)

This concept of love for others can also be found in ethics of care, precisely in the term *"particular others"*. Ethics of care consider care, empathy, mutual cultivation of trust are have some role to play in the field of ethical principles. Chaffee (2016) states that:

> *Virginia Held, a contemporary American philosopher who has devoted her work to care ethics, argues that genuine morality does not take rational principles of "duty" as fundamental, as Kant suggests; nor does it require that we impartially promote the interests of everyone alike, as Utilitarians believe. Instead, morality begins with a conception of the self as embedded in a network of relationships with "particular other".* (pp. 509-510)

Even though the term "*particular others*" is focusing on the concept or values of women, in the wider sense it can also be incorporating the environment as a whole. Like the way Avicenna's holistic nature is not limited within medicine, the idea of particular others is also not limited within the relation of women in morality. If we consider the term particular others for the environment and the traditional concept of morality for human beings, we will see that the traditional concept of morality is always focusing on the development of human beings, which includes both men and women, but for the flourishment of an individual the particular others, (e.g. in this case environment) is also having an effective role to play. The identification can only be possible when we are considering particular others, trying to make a connection with every entity of nature, and practicing Self-love. As Chafee (2016) says:

> *Whereas traditional ethical theories presuppose that a mature moral life involves disconnecting ourselves from the particular others, care entices develops Simone de Beavoir's insight that it is only through interacting with others, through connections, that our choice can have meaning and our world can gain moral significance. Indeed, disconnecting from particular others may make us incapable of morality rather than capable of it, if, as Alison Jaggar suggests, "an*

ineliminable part of morality consists in responding emotionally to particular others. (p. 510)

Moreover, it is important to follow the concept of self-love through the sense of identification to understand the "*particular other*s". As Chaffee (2016) enunciates:

Indeed, whether no not we acknowledge it, we are all what Held calls "relational" selves – selves for whom creating and sustaining mutually caring relationships holds the key to genuine maturity, flourishing, and, ultimately, morality. (p. 510)

Therefore, the environment can be considered as the particular others mentioned in ethics of care because for making the biocentric equality the role of the particular self cannot be ignored.

Confucianism and identification:

In Naess's deep ecology identification is considered as one of the vital concepts, that he prescribes as the process of Self-realization. According to Naess, "Our Self is that with which we identify". In other words, through the process of identification we know the Self. This notion of identification is closely connected with the Confucian notion of "*the rectification of names*". The aim of Confucian philosophy is to focus on the moral cultivation of human nature through the process of Ren (Men of Humanity) and Li (Propriety). In this process of moral cultivation, Sage is the ultimate stage. To be in the ultimate stage an individual needs to correspond with the name that s/he is upholding. This sense is connected with the concept of "Loyalty" (Zhong) where an individual is loyal towards his role. Liu (2006) states that:

Loyalty is not a devotion directed specifically toward one's superior; rather, it is directed toward the role one plays – being loyal means doing one's best in whatever one does. in this sense, loyalty can be defined as "doing what one is supposed to do" or "being loyal to one's role." In other words, a social role is not simply a social assignment; it is also a moral assignment. Being loyal to one's role means being able to act in accordance with whatever moral obligations come with the social role. Loyalty is thus being loyal to one's moral obligations and fulfilling the duty that one's role dictates. (p. 50)

Thus, when an individual is following his duty properly by maintaining the ritual propriety (Li), he can embrace the narrower and broader sense of Ren (Caring for others and Humanness) and ultimately reach the higher stage, Sage (Sheng). Therefore, it is clear that an individual can reach the highest stage only when he will play his role properly and be identified with nature. As Talukder (2014) mentions,

But this devotion is not easily achievable; in fact, Confucius believed that at the age of seventy one could attain it. Here, we can reasonably argue that Confucius suggested a continuous and persistent identification of human self with nature... So, the Confucian solution of good life turns to make a harmonious contact with nature. (pp. 9-10)

Now if we consider the above-mentioned statement with environmental ethics, we will see that because of our devastating attitude towards nature which is mostly followed by the sense of anthropocentric morality, we are using nature according to our wish. As an integral part of the environment, we are neither practicing the proper conduct of li which is practicing respectful and courteous behavior, nor we can reach the stage of Ren by practicing humanness, and ultimately failed to do our role accordingly as an integral part of the nature.

The great Confucian commentator Mencius observes human nature as innately good but can do evil action through the outside influences. He talks about four types of feelings of humans, e.g. feeling of commiseration, feeling of shame or dislike, feeling of modesty and complacency, and feeling of approval and disapproval, and shows that:

...goodness is an innate disposition, is the stronger one. Mencius 'example of how any person would feel distress at seeing a child about to fall into a well and spontaneously attempt to save the child captures the essence of this view (Books of Mencius 2A:6. See also 6A:10). That there is a spontaneous desire to do what is good suggests a naturalistic and deterministic account of human goodness. (Lai, 2008, p. 39)

We can see the same type of feelings in Naess's deep ecology when he felt compassion and empathy after seeing a flea dying after jumping into acid. This example of identification shows that we are not separated from each other but are closely intertwined. Thus, we need to nurture this quality of ours to develop the goodness within ourselves. As Lai (2008) states that:

Mencius sought to locate the source of human goodness in tian, a source more fundamental than humanity itself; in that sense we may say that tian is the transcendent basis for human goodness. Yet, in another sense, the relation between tian and human nature is a closely intertwined one, interdependent rather than independent: the person who preserves (the goodness of) his heart–mind, xin, and who cultivates his nature is engaged in one and the same process of serving tian. (p. 38)

Another great Confucian commentator Xunzi believes that human being is naturally bad but through proper training and education, we can lead a harmonious life. Talukder (2018) notes,

Xunzi in his writings on Tien or Nature says, "...nature endows human beings with biological, emotional, and personal governance systems that are seriously underdetermined". (Nelville, 2008, p. 18). (p. 10)

So, to be a part of the sustainable development of the environment we need to live our life by maintaining balance and harmony with nature.

Furthermore, Naess in his deep ecology considers empathy as a medium of identification. As Talukder (2014) mentions:

Naess writes, "So there must be identification in order for there to be compassion and, among humans, solidarity" (Naess, 1995: 227). But Naess quickly rejected "compassion", "empathy", or "solidarity", as the basic idea. Rather, these are medium of identification according to him. (p. 15)

In Talukder's (2018) view:

Naess mentions that human beings cannot help animals, plants, other species, and even landscapes, because we can only identify ourselves with them. Identification is a situation that "elicits intense empathy" (Naess, 1986, 227). (p. 4)

For him, "Identification means that one is not alienate from others." (p. 5*)*

The above-mentioned statements can be analyzed in terms of the Christian and the Confucian golden rule. The Christian golden rule (also known as the positive golden rule) states that "Treat others the way you want to be treated". If we are considering human beings as an integral part of the biotic community then according to the Christian golden rule we will treat nature the way we want to be treated. On the other hand, the Confucian golden rule (also known as a negative golden rule or Confucian empathy, Shu) says that "Do not treat others the way you don't want to be treated". This means that as a part of the environment we shouldn't treat nature in a way we don't want to be treated. But the questions raised here are that if we are considering empathy as a medium of identification according to Naess, which of the above-mentioned golden rule or empathy is more suitable to ensure the sustainability of nature? How do we acknowledge that?

According to Allinson, the positive and the negative Golden Rule are different, and the latter is superior to the former in that (1) it expresses modesty and humility, (2) it does not presume that one necessarily has knowledge of what the good is – what is good for oneself and whether it would be good for other people, and (3) it is less likely to lead to abuse or moral harm to others. (Liu, 2006, p. 53)

Ivanhoe points out a challenge of the Christian golden rule which he names as "*the principle of reversibility*". For him:

it can end up being a disguised way of advocating the adoption of one's personal preferences. For example, "the principle of reversibility would seem to urge a masochist to become a sadist – to adopt the motto: "«hurt others as you would have

others hurt you»." *The Confucian Golden rule, on the other hand, does not seem to have this problem. At first appearance, the negative formulation seems to be a better moral principle. But to see a deeper comparison, we need to consider their applications.* (Liu, 2006, pp. 53-54)

Thus, only feeling the way other is feeling can never be a solution to the environmental crisis. Rather we need to adopt different strategies. At this point, I would like to introduce a new term "ecological empathy". I think the proper application of ecological empathy can play an effective role to resolve environmental challenges. For this reason, now I will talk about Covey's seven habits of highly effective people and make a connection with the deep ecology to figure out a tentative solution to environmental problems.

Covey's Seven Habits and Deep Ecology of Naess

Covey (2004) talks about seven habits in his book *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People* where he shows that how can we be effective individuals. In my opinion, for solving the environmental crisis, an ecologically empathic person is becoming an urge of the situation, and the coalescence of seven habits and deep ecology can play an effective role in this regard.

Covey (2004) shows that to be an effective individual, a mind shift is required which he named as a paradigm shift. It is a thought-changing process, a way to change our mindset or perception. In Covey's (2004) view:

In the more general sense, it's the way we "see" the world -- not in terms of our visual sense of sight, but in terms of perceiving, understanding, and interpreting… …The term Paradigm Shift was introduced by Thomas Kuhn in his highly influential landmark book, The Structure of Scientific Revolutions. Kuhn shows how almost every significant breakthrough in the field of scientific endeavor is first a break with tradition, with old ways of thinking, with old paradigms. (pp. 23-29)

From my view, the way we are abusing nature, we also need to have a shift in our behavior so that we can save nature as well as us from environmental destruction. While refusing the Cartesian perception Godfrey-Smith (1979) is also talking about the necessity of a shift in our behavior. In his words:

In rejecting the Cartesian conception the following related shifts in attitudes can, I think, be discerned.

(1) A change from reductive convergent patterns of thought to divergent holistic patterns.

(2) A shift from man's conception of himself as the center of the biological world, to one in which he is conceived of as a component in a network of biological

relations, a shift comparable to the Copernican discovery that man does not occupy the physical center of the universe. (p. 318)

That means, for saving our existence it is becoming an emergency to shift our mind from anthropocentrism to non-anthropocentrism, from dictatorship to stewardship, and follow the interconnectivity between man and nature relationships.

By focusing on the power of paradigm shift Covey (2004) asserts:

But whether they shift us in positive or negative directions, whether they are instantaneous or developmental, Paradigm Shifts move us from one way of seeing the world to another. And those shifts create powerful change. Our paradigms, correct or incorrect, are the sources of our attitudes and behaviors, and ultimately our relationships with others. (p. 30)

Covey (2004) observes human life in its full form only in the stage of interdependence. In other words, when human beings can live an interactive life through interrelation only then they can become effective. In his statement:

Interdependence is a far more mature, more advanced concept. If I am physically interdependent, I am self-reliant and capable, but I also realize that you and I working together can accomplish far more than, even at my best, I could accomplish alone. If I am emotionally interdependent, I derive a great sense of worth within myself, but I also recognize the need for love, for giving, and for receiving love from others. If I am intellectually interdependent, I realize that I need the best thinking of other people to join with my own. (p. 51)

This idea of Covey cannot simply confine within the development of human beings but it can also be included the nature as well. If we are considering human beings as independent members of the biotic community, then for his full flourishment interdependence with nature is indispensable. We can see this perception in Naess's deep ecology as well. According to Talukder (2018):

Arne Naess's ecosophy T has as its ultimate norm Self-realization, a norm that holds that all entities in Nature are interrelated. (…) Once identified with Nature they can feel the ecological wholeness, the interconnectedness of animals, plants, and even landscapes. A more deepened, rather than alienated view of empathy and compassion for other biological entities, as they also have potentialities, is the goal of such realization. (p. 29)

Hence, we can easily understand the necessity of interdependence and interrelations between man-nature relationships to solve environmental problems.

In the next part of the discussion, I will relate Covey's seven habits with the basic principles and concepts of deep ecology and try to find out a better solution for ecological calamity.

The Seven Habits and Naess's principle

Covey in his first habit (Be proactive) talks about two types of circles, the circle of concern and the circle of influence. People who are living in the circle of concern, are always focusing on the issues that are not in their hands or they are concerned about stuff that they cannot control. Rather than taking initiative, they blame the situation. Because of this reactive and self-centered nature, their circle of influence is shrinking, and circled concern is getting bigger. As a result, they cannot focus on their inner potentiality and develop as a whole. As Talukder (2018) mentions:

> *We are not aware of the full extent of humanity's enormous potential. Our self-centered behavior has narrowed our abilities. We misunderstand the notion of living a meaningful life and instead privilege artificial luxury over protecting the environment.* (p. 5)

On the other hand, the proactive person is taking the necessary steps and is involved in the action. They are focusing on the issues that they can do something about. Therefore, to make an effective change in our behavior towards the environment, it is essential to focus on our proactive nature, so that we can take initiative for solving the environmental crisis. In Bill Devall and George Session's (1985) words:

> *This process involves being honest with ourselves and seeking clarity in our intuitions, then acting from clear principles. It results in taking charge of our actions, taking responsibility, practicing self-discipline, and working honestly within our community.* (p. 8)

The 5th basic principle of deep ecology states that "Present human interference with the nonhuman world is excessive, and the situation is rapidly worsening" (Devall & Session, 1985, p. 70). To stop this situation, steps must be taken. Rather than blaming one another for environmental issues, proper initiatives should be implemented. According to Naess:

> *The slogan of "non-interference" does not imply that humans should not modify some ecosystems as do other species. Humans have modified the earth and will probably continue to do so. At issue is the nature and extent of such interference.* (Devall & Session, 1985, p. 72)

This statement shows that up to which extend we can use nature, that must be acknowledged. However, Godfrey-Smith (1979) rejects this use of nature in his The Value of wilderness and states that:

By wilderness I understand any reasonably large tract of the Earth, together with its plant and animal communities, which is substantially unmodified by humans and in particular by human technology. (p. 310)

Yet, we cannot completely deny the necessity of using nature. The important point over here is that, rather than polluting and destroying nature, we need to preserve and extend it. As Naess says:

The fight to preserve and extend areas of wilderness or near-wilderness should continue and should focus on the general ecological functions of these areas (one such function: large wilderness areas are required in the biosphere to allow for continued evolutionary speciation of animals and plants). (Devall & Sessions, 1985, p. 73)

And to follow this, we need to be proactive. We need to be influenced by our positive energy. Unfortunately, as we are focusing on our reactive nature and negative energy, we forget how to live a good and meaningful life. Still, these issues can be solved if we focus on our proactive nature and coming up from our self-centered attitude.

The second habit, "Begin with the end in mind" prescribes having a blueprint in our mind before taking any action. If we are considering the 2nd, 3rd, and 6th principles (2. Richness and diversity of life forms contribute to the realization of these values and are also values in themselves. 3. Humans have no right to reduce this richness and diversity except to satisfy *vital* needs. 6. Policies must therefore be changed. These policies affect basic economic, technological, and ideological structures. The resulting state of affairs will be deeply different from the present.)[1] of Naess, we will see that these principles are focusing on the richness and diversity of nature and advice us, not to use nature without the necessity of survival. At this point, if we consider Covey's second habit we will see that to make environmental policy we must have a blueprint in our mind that, the policy must be implemented in a way that will increase the richness and diversity of nature and decrease the environmental abuses, yet, economic, technological, and ideological development will be continued.

The third habit, "Put First Things First", is focusing on the time management matrix where an individual must be knowing the priority of action. Covey presents four quadrants of his third habit; they are Quadrant I - Urgent and Important, Quadrant II - Not Urgent but Important, Quadrant III - Urgent but Not Important, and Quadrant IV - Not Urgent and Not Important. For Covey, the second quadrant

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[1] Among the 8 basic principles of deep ecology, proposed by Arne Nasess, these 3 are the 2nd, 3rd and 6th principles which are mentioned by Devall and Sessions in their book *Deep Ecology* in page 70.

is the heart of effectiveness because by following it we can make sustainable development. According to Covey (2004):

> *It deals with things that are not urgent, but are important. It deals with things like building relationships, writing a personal mission statement, long-range planning, exercising, preventive maintenance, preparation -- all those things we know we need to do, but somehow seldom get around to doing, because they aren't urgent.* (p. 154)

Now, if we focus on the seventh principle of Naess we will see that, to live a good life we need to focus on the quality of living instead of the higher standard of living. In Naess's statement:

> *The ideological change is mainly that of appreciating life quality (dwelling in situations of inherent value) rather than adhering to an increasingly higher standard of living. There will be a profound awareness of the difference between big and great. (*Devall & Sessions, 1985, p. 70)

To achieve this quality of life, prescribe by Naess, at first we need to have a vision on our mind (According to the second habit) and then we must control our unnecessary use of nature. We need to know to which extent of preservation of nature is needed rather than exploiting it. We have to maintain the matrix of not urgent but important because this matrix is focusing on the balance and discipline life. Though Naess emphasizes policy changing in his sixth principle, the educational syllabus can also be incorporated with this idea. From the beginning of childhood, we can incorporate some "Save environment" based projects from the primary to higher level of education so that people will become ecologically empathic global citizens. Because only area-based environmental protection cannot save the whole world from environmental crises. As Naess says:

> *Whereas "self-determination," "local community," and "think globally, act locally," will remain key terms in the ecology of human societies, nevertheless the implementation of deep changes requires increasingly global action- action across borders.* (Devall & Sessions, 1985, p. 73).

These first three habits of Covey (2004) help a person to overcome his/her challenges, fixing vision, and managing the time matrix. Now if we consider these habits from an environmental view we will see that to make a sustainable development for the environment, it is necessary to take initiative, focus on the circle of influence rather than the circle of concern, set the vision of making effective environment-friendly policies and work a-prior hand even if it is not urgent but important. As far as private victory is concerned, we need to realize that this private victory is not a selfish victory. Instead, it is an urge to get the integral

victory. Because alike Naess, Covey is also thinking that for the full flourishment we must be living in the state of interdependence.

The fourth habit, named Win-win, is the principle of interpersonal leadership. It shows that among the six paradigms (Win/Win, Win/Lose, Lose/Win, Lose/Lose, Win, Win/Win or No Deal) of human interaction Win/Win is the best one because it focuses on cooperation rather than competition. In Covey's (2004) words:

> *Win-win means that agreements or solutions are mutually beneficial, mutually satisfying. With a win-win solution, all parties feel good about the decision and feel committed to the action plan. Win-win sees life as a cooperative, not a competitive arena.* (p. 207)

If we can incorporate this habit with the concept of the biotic community and practice the win-win paradigm, it would be possible to ensure balance and harmony in the man-nature relationship. Because it that case we will try not to abuse or pollute nature. Instead, we will focus on the preservation of the environment by maintaining its richness and diversity. Because win-win practice teaches us the loss of one part of the environment, is the loss of the whole system. As Satyanarayana (2009) says,

> *...if we harm anything in nature then we are harming ourselves. We have to respect all human and non-human members in their won rights as parts of the whole.* (p. 133)

The fifth habit (Seek first to understand then to be understood) is followed by the principle of empathic communication, which states that we must try to put ourselves into other shoes. For Covey (2004), "The essence of empathic listening is not that you agree with someone; it's that you fully, deeply, understand that person, emotionally as well as intellectually" (p. 24).

Thus, we must be able to see the point of view of others before sharing our own thought to live a harmonious life. According to Covey (2004), "Seek first to understand" involves a very deep shift in paradigm... Knowing how to be understood is the other half of Habit 5, and is equally critical in reaching win-win solution (pp. 239 and 255).

Now, if we consider human beings as a part of the biotic community and put ourselves into the place of nature and try to understand our misbehavior towards it, then we will understand why it is becoming an emergency to cultivate ecological consciousness. As Devall and Sessions (1985) state:

> *Cultivating ecological consciousness is a process of learning to appreciate silence and solitude and rediscovering how to listen. It is learning how to be more receptive, trusting, holistic in perception, and is grounded in a vision of nonexploitive science and technology.* (p. 8)

Thus, living and working with nature is not only a demand for human existence but also is our moral obligation to focus on it. Because humans and nature are not separated but interrelated with each other. I think, at this point, we can take Confucian negative empathy into consideration. By being an integral part of the biotic community, to maintain biocentric equality we must not treat nature in a way we don't want to be treated. And to adapt this type of behavioral change, ecological empathy can play a vital role. We need to be empathic not only towards human beings but also towards nature.

The sixth habit (Synergize) is the essence of principle-centered leadership, particularly focusing on the fact that "the whole is greater than the sum of its parts." (Covey, 2004, pp. 262 & 263) Covey (2004) says, "It catalyzes, unifies, and unleashes the greatest powers within people" (p. 262). Though Covey (2004) focuses on the unity of the people when they are working in a team, this can also be triggered from the view of the biotic community. If we consider the man-nature relationship as teamwork, then it is clear that without having a cooperative relation none of us can develop fully. Moreover, one of the essences of the synergies is valuing the differences. For Covey (2004), "Valuing the differences is the essence of synergy..." (p. 277) By acknowledging this view from the perspective of the biotic community we will see that every element of this community is invaluable within itself. We simply cannot use them as a means to justify our ends because each of them is valuable just the way they are. As stated in the first principle of Naess:

> The well-being and flourishing of human and nonhuman Life on Earth have value in themselves (synonyms: intrinsic value, inherent value). These values are independent of the usefulness of the non-human world for human purposes. (Devall & Sessions, 1985, p. 70)

Therefore, it is necessary to practice ecological empathy for valuing nature. If we are only empathic towards human beings, we may not develop our sense of empathy for our surroundings. But as an integral part of the biotic community, we have some moral obligations to all the entities of nature. And in this case, the practice of ecological empathy can develop our sense of stewardship. Thus, ecological empathy is needed to serve the entire biotic community because this is one of the ways to make a connection between the human and non-human elements of nature.

From the above-mentioned discussion, it is clear that in the fourth, fifth, and sixth habit Covey (2004) focuses on the public victory which is the paradigm of interdependence, and for him, we can only achieve it when we are becoming

independent. In his words, "Before moving into the area of Public Victory, we should remember that effective interdependence can only be built on a foundation of true independence. Private Victory precedes Public Victory" (p. 185).

This idea can be found in the concept of Naess's Self-realization. Whereas Nasess uses the smaller self as a dimension of ego and the bigger Self or capital Self in the sense of union with the small self, Covey uses the first three habits for developing oneself and the fourth, fifth, and sixth habit for developing the practice of interpersonal relationships. Because only self victory is not enough to be an effective person, we need to focus on our interrelationships. By realizing our core competence and area of improvement we can become developed individuals, where we are not trying to be an egoistic entity of the world. This sense of realization can create a significant role in our interrelationships with the biotic community. As Devall and Sessions (1985) state:

A fuller discussion of the biocentric norm as it unfolds itself in practice begins with the realization that we, as individual humans, and as communities of humans, have vital needs which go beyond such basics as food, water, and shelter to include love, play, creative expression, intimate relationships with a particular landscape (or Nature taken in its entirety) as well as intimate relationships with other humans, and the vital need for spiritual growth, for becoming a mature human being. (p. 68)

The seventh habit, Sharpen the saw, is the principle of the balance self-renewal, which basically focuses on the four dimensions to get a balance life. The four dimensions are, physical, mental, social, and spiritual. Covey (2004) considers these four dimensions for making an effective individual, yet, these can also be used to get a balanced and harmonized man-nature relationship. Even though Covey's physical dimension is focusing on the effectiveness of our physical body through the right exercise and nutrition, we can practice the same thing in the biotic community as well. Our right practice towards nature, proper maintenance of the environment can also develop both of us through this interpersonal relationship. The spiritual dimension which is connected with the sense of value clarification and commitment, and the mental dimension which is emphasizing on visualization and planning, can also be practiced for the sustainability of nature. The long-term goal for making an eco-friendly environment can definitely be made through proper planning and management.

Last but not least, the social dimension which is focusing on service, empathy, synergy and intrinsic security are the fundamentals to ensure biocentric equality. Thus, it is becoming a demand of the situation to practice ecological empathy and become an effective person for bringing vital and necessary changes in the policies and environmental education. As mentioned by Naess in his 8th

principle, "Those who subscribe to the foregoing points have an obligation directly or indirectly to try to implement the necessary changes." (Devall and Sessions, 1985, p. 70)

Basically, in the 7th habit, Covey shows the necessity of all the six habits by focusing on the independence and interdependence paradigm. If we consider Naess at this point, we will see that Naess also talks about the importance of two types of self, where the individual is firstly focusing on self-realization by ignoring the selfish quality and secondly trying to be united with the capital Self. It is important to note that the smaller self and capital Self are not different but identical. And the full flourishment is possible when we are followed by a sense of interdependence. Thus, only by combining individuals to nature, effective environmental policies can be made. As Talukder (2018) says:

> *The individual self should achieve the universal Self through the diminishing of ego or through the narrow self. In other words, through realizing the maxim "everything is interrelated". Naess argues that once the individual self attains Self-realization, her behavior "naturally" and "joyfully" follows the norms of environmental ethics.* (p. 12)

Furthermore, Covey (2004) uses habits as a process of becoming an effective person who will be independent and interdependent. Likewise, Naess uses the term "identification" as a process of achieving Self-realization. As Talukder (2014) mentioned

> *...Identification is a "process" for Naess. He has taken it as a tool, a method, a way, or a means, to achieve his ultimate norm "Self- realization".* (p. 93)

Conclusion

Finally, we can see that both Covey and Naess's ideologies are connected in many ways as both of them are focusing on the necessity of becoming an interdependent entity of the world. They have used different terms and perceptions in terms of their analysis but at the bottom of their discussion, they are emphasizing the effectiveness of interpersonal relationships. And to make this relation sustainable, ecological empathy can play a vital role. Even though I try to show the connection between different philosophical ideas and Covey's 7 habits with the deep ecological view, further study can be taken on how we can incorporate this ecological empathy in our education sector for making a globally effective citizen.

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A Few Conceptual Proposals of the "New" Materialism

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Abstract

The explosive evolution of scientific research and discoveries in recent decades has brought back into question the philosophical option of materialism, which is being reconsidered from the new positions of the current research. The functional structure of matter, the validity of the linear causal principle, the morphological differences between cause and effect, the potentiality of active matter and singularity as a theme of differential calculus, challenging the uniqueness of the active form and of the matter only as a passive entity are a few topics evoked in this text, understood as analytical openings and not as simple conceptual solutions.

Keywords: *active matter, nonlinear causality, relativisation, singularity, potentiality of the matter, ontic rejection of the active form.*

Reconsideration of the morphological functionality of the matter.

The conceptual duality between immanence and transcendence is one of the most long-lasting metaphysical structures proposed by the universal philosophical thought. On this basis of the general-ontological bipolarity it was consolidated the duality between matter and spirit, reformulated in terms of the theological assumption as the terminological pair between corporeality and soul. From these stabilizations at the beginning of ontological and gnoseological analyzes, the idea of the existence of a constant universal relationship meant to support the entire cosmic evolution, a relationship identified by the concept of causality, was postulated. Thus, from this perspective, the law of causality has the privilege of explanatory supremacy over the endless range of natural phenomena, including over the dimension of living and thinking of the human being. If Plato proposed a crystallization of transcendent-immanent bipolarity, by describing the two distinct existential frameworks, the world of Perfect Ideas and the world of imperfect copies, (Platon, 1996, p. 93) the size of the cavern of materiality and that of the

spiritual spheres above it, Aristotle insisted on the idea of causality as the universal explanatory principle, every ontic active occurrence being conceived as a cause for an effect but also an effect of another cause. The principle of transcendence becomes one of action, of a general inaugural cause that can no longer be a result, an effect of another cause. Thus, the regression to infinity that could be conceptually uncontrollable finds its annihilating reply in the postulate of a primary cause, a motionless engine that generates the whole chain of universal dynamics. This motionless engine identified by Aristotle as the principle of divine order and postulated, (Aristotel, 2000, p. 31) subsequently, by Thomas Aquinas, as the Creator proposed by the Christian faith, had the role of primordial impulse but also of absolute form capable of informing any layer of matter as a created substance (Aquino, 1997, p. 136). Through the act of in-forming and generating the transcendent-timeless origin of the mobility of the matter, the neo-Aristotelian tradition tried to explain the organization of the whole universe on the basis of stable and irreversible laws that do not allow indeterminable relativizations and modulations (DeLanda, 2017). According to this perspective, the cosmos was administered physically but also spiritually, strictly observing the principle of causality and the proportion between the nature of the cause and that of the effect. In this sense, Leibniz proposed an image of the universe in which the pre-established harmony rules, the evil being insular in an endless complexity of the general good guaranteed by the divine order (Leibniz, 1997, p. 93). A redirection of analytical attention from transcendent principles or from active to immanent forms and the contents of matter was manifested, as an inaugural gesture for modern thought, in Baruch Spinoza's pantheistic metaphysics. His perspectives were later resumed in the open framework by the new knowledge offered by current physics research, being important to rethink the concept of matter and its specific features. The Newtonian view in which the matter strictly follows the imperatives of inviolable universal abstract laws has undergone severe changes, especially with the understanding of Einstein's relativity as a key concept for the entire complexity of the cosmos. At the same time, the relationship between form and content as well as that between cause and effect were not rejected or defined as false, but they underwent large-scale conceptual recalibrating and repositioning. In this context, the matter began to be seen and explored as a constant physical and existential dynamic, endowed with multiple capacities of mobility and transformation, of tendencies and multiple structural options. Thus, the transition from the concept of passive matter to that of active matter was made. Passive matter was recognized only as having the ability to take certain impulses and forms. On the other hand, active matter was understood as a physical entity

capable of morphological transitions and developments. Such transformations were conceived as processes triggered from within the structure of the active matter, not from an exterior, possibly transcendent. This new conceptual perspective does not aim at denying the possibility of the existence of transcendent operative factors but insists on the exceptional, as yet undiscovered capabilities and potentialities of the matter. Defining it as an amorphous element that only receives information and conforms to it proves to be far too simplistic in the new conditions opened by scientific and technological progress.

In the current context, there is no longer any discussion of a materialism conceived as a single current, a single direction of epistemological thinking. On the contrary, it aims to develop a wide range of materialisms that sum up multiple conceptual and empirical reports of the concept of matter in creative and research spheres as diverse as the arts or the social sciences (Fox & Alldred, 2019). It cannot be said that an overcoming or even annulment of the classical perspectives of materialism thought of as an independent philosophical direction is intended, but we are witnessing the approach of overcoming the dualistic, bipolar vision in which matter was positioned in opposition to other concepts such as spirit, life, society or humanity. The subject is invested with new capabilities and it is desired to recognize some properties that it would have in spite of the old definitions and characterizations of its substance and primary formations. The new theses of post-humanist and post-anthropocentric orientation, which support the re-assumption of another perspective on nature, rely, in essence, on overcoming the dual relationship between nature and culture by replacing anthropocentrism with ecocentrism. Nature and, therefore, implicitly matter, too, become central elements from which one can discuss and re-evaluate the destiny and progress of all mankind. Correlated with the revaluation of the concept of nature from the perspective of the new materialist directions, there is also the need for a different understanding of the cultural, social and historical reality of the first peoples and of the indigenous nations (Sundberg, 2014, pp. 33-47; Todd, 2016, pp. 4-22). At the same time, the physical world is rethought beyond the tradition of matter-spirit bipolarity and becomes an active factor that decisively influences not only the technological or social evolution but also the psychological one at the level of the individual and the human community. The way in which this psychic mobility of man is marked by urban architecture or by tools offered by advanced technologies becomes central themes for the analytical discourse proposed by the new directions of materialist thinking. From this perspective, new directions are developed in applied ethics, ethics that bring into play issues such as those of nature protection or the deontologies of professions that operate directly with

natural resources (Bennett, 2010; Chen, 2012). Revaluing the concept of matter leads, therefore, to a possible ethical recalibration of the relation of modern man to the natural environment as well as to the hypostases of what has been called primitive civilizations. At the same time, the concept of matter has undergone substantial changes in approach, especially from quantum physics, which thus makes its decisive contribution to the rethinking of old materialism. Quantum dialectics proposes concepts such as three-matter as well as new physical principles such as the principle of antagonism. According to these new visions, it is proposed that there be a third matter, called matter T, a foundation and a primary source for the other two types of matter, namely biological and physical matter. They would return, in a dialectical circularity, to the T-type raw material and then be redesigned into a universal extension (Nicolescu, 2009, p. 64). It is observed how in this modern perspective proposed by quantum physics the concept of matter is redefined based on the identification of new properties and valences foreign to the conceptualizations of classical materialism. Despite appearances, the new approach to the concepts of materialism does not aim at restricting the area of research on matter and nature as a whole. On the contrary, it is intended to be an analytical opening that must develop multiple references to other areas of research and meditation on the world, the contributions of ontology, metaphysics and applied ethics being required in this context. From the new understanding of the matter, one can therefore revalue the axiomatic importance of interdisciplinarity in practice, the different fields of investigation of the world reaching a stage where they feel the need for gnoseological intercommunication. Thus, a new understanding of the current world does not seem to be possible, as Basarab Nicolescu pointed out, without assuming the unity of knowledge (Nicolescu, 2002, p. 232).

The conceptual proposals of Manuel DeLanda.

As one of the followers of this new orientation in the philosophy of science, Manuel DeLanda pointed out that the old explanatory concepts on matter and universal dynamics have undergone serious mutations due to the new scientific evidence (DeLanda, 2015). The issue of causality is one of the most revised conceptual spheres in this context. Practically, as DeLanda argues, causality has not been denied or rejected in its entirety as the decisive law of our physical and mental reality, but it has undergone a number of changes, improvements, and restrictions. These interventions revolve around rethinking the relationship between cause and effect. The two pillars can no longer be so close and

morphologically and substantially similar. The old idea that a cause of a certain intensity and structural profile will have an effect similar to its intensity and structure turns out to contain severe gaps. Thus, new research shows that the effect can be extremely relative, sometimes, in relation to the generating cause, it can be strongly different in form and content, but also in mobility and action, in relation to its precisely identified source. Often it is not about similarities, but about major differences that lead to a decisive differentiation and distance between the actual reality of the cause and that of the effect. Thus, linear causality was replaced, based on experimental findings, by nonlinear causality. It has been observed that if, for example, a certain weight is attached to a metal structure, it will undergo a change proportional to the value of that weight. In this case, the intensity of the cause may be similar in value to the intensity of the effect. But this principle of the reflexive balance between cause and effect is no longer present in the case of loading certain organic tissues with pressures and weights of different degrees. Such a tissue does not follow a causal linearity and its effects are not manifested in proportion to the evolution, amplification or diminution of the causal action. Thus, in the first phase of the experiment, the tissue behaves like the metal subjected to active weight but later involves a transformation that no longer observes the principle of linear causality. Initially it expands in proportion to the pressure exerted by the weight pressing on it, but later, although it is significantly reduced, it continues the process of expansion in an accelerated manner which is no longer justified by the action of that weight. Therefore there are organic materials but also metals of a special type of alloys that continue their process of structural change even after the cessation of the causative agent, so the proportion between the intensity of the cause and that of the effect is no longer respected, the material on which a certain type of active pressure manifesting a high degree of independence of internal transformations was exercised. Thus, were observed situations in which a certain material, at the beginning of the action process on it, respects the intensity of the causal agent after which it amplifies its process of structural changes even if this agent reduced or even canceled its coercive action. There have also been reversed cases in which, although the causal agent gradually amplifies its action on a matter, it initially respects the level of force induced and transformed in proportion to its increase, after a certain critical point of the reaction process, ceases to show the tendency to change regardless of the increase of the level of action on it, there is a stop or a considerable decrease of the structural metamorphosis which manifests itself independently in relation to the intensification of the action of the initial causative agent. Thus, in these situations it is no longer possible to speak of a linear causality, the proportionality between

the intensity of the cause and that of the effect being neglected. Of course, the causal relationship does not disappear but it is put in other parameters of operationality, being obvious that the matter contains formulas of manifestation that cannot fall under the principle of a proportional-linear causality. On the contrary, the dynamics of these cause-and-effect relationships are found to be non-linear, in oscillating or curved formats. The radical determinism that proposed the same notion to equate the properties and energy of cause and effect gives rise, in the new context, to a relativized determinism, in which the nature of the cause cannot be the same as the nature of the effect. Therefore, the principle that upholds the proportionality between the dynamic energy of cause and that of effect cannot always be recognized as sovereign. The relativization of determinism and the cause-effect relationship support the image of a universe in which the eruption of novelty is an ontological constant and the classical postulate of a primary cause, a generator that determines demiurgically without being created in its turn, is not completely denied, but only re-evaluated and subject to new criteria of interpretation. The relationship between cause and effect is also repositioned in terms of the uniqueness of the two poles. Thus, the analysis of recent biological research, as exemplified by DeLanda, indicates that several causes can generate the same effect based on a cyclic metabolism, loops that close certain functional events inside an organism, so that it is no longer possible to discuss about a linearity of determinations, but only sequences, links that have their own exclusive circularity. They are structurally, morphologically and energetically related but they do not observe the principle of linearity and potential equivalence, some of these structures being more diminished and others more intense within the same biological complex. It has also been found that there are systems in which, conversely, a single cause can generate several effects, different in nature and intensity. For example, the application of a growth hormone to the tops of a plant can accelerate its growth while the insertion of the same hormone at the roots of the same plant can cause a stagnation of its development.

Freedom of matter mobility, singularity and differential mathematical calculation.

These new observations have determined the conceptual re-assumption of the reality of matter now understood as an active matter endowed not only with properties but also with multiple capacities. A tool, such as a knife, has certain properties including shape, sharpness, stiffness, weight. But it also has the ability to cut. This capacity is activated in relation to the action in which the knife can be

engaged and to the material subjected to cutting by the operator who actively handles the knife. Therefore, the properties of an object remain permanently active with the existence of that object, whereas its capabilities are located in a virtual area from which they can be projected in the act once the operation of its proper use starts. Gilles Deleuze (1995) resuming the discussion on the need to reform the understanding of the concept of matter and determinism will emphasize that the area of capabilities of an object, its virtual level and the one related to matter in general must be understood as a component part, as a segment and a hidden but real area of empirical totality (p. 384). Therefore, the capabilities of the knife make up its virtual component, the ontic perimeter of its functions that reside in its strength, according to the scholastic expression. From this perspective, four essential concepts come together: trend, capacity, structure and uniqueness. One of the classic examples of how matter is active and dynamic and involves decisive transformations is the transition of a substance from a liquid to a gaseous state and, conversely, from a gaseous to a liquid state. What is observed in the foreground of this finding is the force of the matter to tend to other forms, in fact, its multiple tendencies towards the adoption of other structural and functional formulas. But, as DeLande points out, the multitude of these tendencies seems to be controllable, exponentially limited to the context in which the substance is transformed. Instead, the number of capabilities of an object or substance seems uncontrollable and unlimited. The capabilities of a knife comprise an endless range of potential variables that can be activated depending on the operational context, being able to be used in an unlimited range of actions. Basically, according to this perspective, there are an endless series of possible scenarios for the use of matter, especially an object, and these scenarios represent the virtual dimension of that object or of matter in general. Each of these scenarios is an independent virtual structure that is defined by singularity, in essence they are singularities that move from strength to act. Singularities can be thought of as spaces or points stratified on the architecture of a scale of values, of a line on which are located, for example, the level of freezing or melting of water as references of the stage of transformation. Thus, in a container, water in solid state, resulting from the freezing process, belongs to a scenario, a singular structure and the water, from the same vessel, which reaches the liquid state, resulting from the melting process, belongs to another unique structure. The gradual evolution from one state to another involves a transition through a multitude of other intermediate stages which, in their turn, are structural singularities and formatting scenarios of that particular substance. The degrees of freedom of the transformations of the matter and the connection between them are the object of the differential mathematical calculation which deals with

rhythmicity, the rates of change and the speed or the slow degree of transiting of that matter from a certain structural point to another. Translated into geometry, this calculation becomes one of the possibility of space and the way of organization and distribution of singularities as possible scenarios of matter formation. The tendencies of cyclic stabilization of the transformation phenomena at the level of the matter were assumed and brought in the area of demonstration by mathematics in order to be later confirmed by empirical research. Thus, it has been found that, for example, soap bubbles or certain crystals tend to ensure a functional balance by showing the tendency to minimize surface energy which ensures an economy and a constant flow of tension in their composition. Also, the trade winds, the monsoon but also the lava masses that interact with the tectonic plates show the tendency of physical stabilization, of inscription in a balanced rhythmicity of periodic manifestations. In order to understand these complex phenomena, we must therefore take into account the conjunction between the processes of transition from qualitative to qualitative changes and the way of activating singularities understood as possible scenarios, located in strength and ready to become effective, to turn into acts.

A new understanding of matter.

This new perspective on the matter insists on its ability to generate its own forms and structures. They reject the idea of an external agent that would impose or generate the content of the primordial matter forms based on which the configurations of objects and beings in the extension of the entire universe could be constituted. Primary materialism therefore excluded any intervention of a transcendent factor, only the sphere of the immanent being accepted in the plane of the reality of existence. The new materialism, on the other hand, places greater emphasis on the energetic capacity of matter transposed into its constant mobilities and metamorphoses. Therefore, any formatting is rethought as an inner act of matter, an occurrence from this interiority to the outer ontic expressions. Thus, the replacement of the principle of causal linearity with that of relative causality comes to open new perspectives in understanding the universe of the matter as much more complex than was initially postulated by the conceptual simplicity of the separation between matter and spirit or between body and soul. The new analytical guidelines in this field of research do not aim to completely deny the contributions of traditional metaphysics in this regard, but only to point out that the issue of the matter and its functions is open to other investigations, with

knowledge and understanding of the laws and axioms governing the matter being far from reaching an integral universal truth.

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A Short Description of the Romanian Language as a Romance Language with Latin, Dacian and other Characteristics

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Abstract

Languages connect people with their roots, providing the opportunity to learn and teach, to express feelings and hopes. When learning one's native language, people are imprinted with a permanent identity connected not only to history but also to the future development of society.

The Romanian language was born in a Dacian space, with a Latin influence, and Slavic, Greek, and other particularities, especially concerning words that came from different domains. The Romanian language is very rich in old expressions that cannot be translated into other languages and has its own associated letters like ş, î, ţ, ă, â. For example, in Romanian, "Romania" is called România and it includes the Romanian letter â. Although other languages, like English or German have "sh" written in English or "sch" written in German and pronounced as Romanian letter "ş", the letter "ş" is present just in Romanian alphabet and comes from the Latin letter "s" with a comma bellow.

This paper includes a general description of the evolution of the Romanian language as a Romance language, and analyzes its Dacian influences and its development. This work also describes the oldest traditions concerning the Dacian people and their spiritual symbol, Zalmoxis.

Traditionally, the Romanian language has been used by people to share stories or fairy tales. The Latin and Dacian languages have played an important role in the formation of Romanian. Therefore, when analyzing Romanian, a description of the Dacian and Latin influences on the formation of this language, that have provided a rich cultural influence, is necessary.

The last part of this paper includes a short overview concerning Greek and French cultural influences on the modern development of Romanian language.

Keywords: *Romance languages, Romanian language, Latin, Thracian-Dacian language, traditions, Zalmoxis.*

Introduction

Language represents one's connection with a culture, or a set of values in the historical context. A native language connects people with the past, with ancestors and provides an opportunity to receive and transfer information, having the chance to learn from others and teach them to express feelings and hopes. At the same time, when learning a native language, people learn how to interact in a specific context and how to express themselves. Additionally, people receive a permanent identity connected to the history of their culture and to the future development of their society. People also learn how to express an individual point of view and a collective perspective on different subjects.

An important function of one's native language is its ability to forge an individual or collective identity related to religion, culture, gender, and values that people consider fundamental in the context of their society.

Considered a Latin language, Romanian emerged from a Dacian speaking space. However, this language also contains Slavic, Greek, and Turkish influences. Trying to explore how the language was formed and what impacted different characteristics of Romanian, is important to analyze its particularities.

Traditionally, Romanian is connected to stories that were used by people to share their values from one generation to another, through the oral aspects of Dacian language, but also to Latin influences, especially as the language started to be written using Latin, after the use of Cyrillic alphabet. People used the language to share stories and tales, being influenced by old texts that inspired oral stories.

Culturally impacted by Greek and French, the Romanian language expanded, enriching its vocabulary in different domains.

Starting from a general description of Romanian, as a Romance language, this paper includes an analysis of the evolution of the Romanian language, its Latin and Dacian aspects, and presents how Romanian was shaped from its beginning to modern times.

Latin, Thracian-Dacian influences, and other aspects concerning the evolution of Romanian

Romanian was shaped by Latin and the Thracian-Dacian language in the context of its development, receiving as well other influences.

Romanian is a Romance language, a language with Latin influences, from the same family as French, Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese. When many foreigners discover Romanian, they are surprised to find that the Romanian

language has a strong Latin influence. Slavic and Greek influences can also be observed on Romanian.

The Romanian language is presented by Alexandru Rosetti as representing the continuing spoken Latin language on the oriental side of the Roman Empire. This gives Romanian a Latin background, as well as being influenced by the Dacian language of the locals or by the languages of other people that came to live in this area.

Romanian is part of Appennino–Balcanic linguistic group which includes Dalmatian, Albanese, and Central and Southern Italian dialects. Rosseti (1986) identified several common characteristics of these languages: keeping the Latin u in Romanian and Italian dialects, as in the Romanian word furca (pitchfork) and the Sardinian word furca. Different words that include in the pronunciation of p, t, k, and s can be found in Romanian, Spanish and Italian:

- in Romanian the words căpăstru (halter, bridle), roată (wheel), păcurar (shepherd; also refers to a worker that extracts oil), are similar with the same words in Spanish: cabestro, rueda, pegureiro, and in Italian capestro, rota, pecoraio. (p.13).

The Romanian literary lexis indicated the following composition in the middle of 20th century:

- 20 per cent inherited Latin words;
- 11.5 per cent Slavic words;
- 3.6 per cent Turkish words;
- 2.4 per cent Modern Greek words;
- 2.17 per cent Hungarian words;
- 43 per cent Romance words, with a majority of 38.40 per cent from French.
(Dindelegan, 2013, p. 3)

Genealogically, Romanian has characteristics from Latin (Neolatin) and from the lexical point of view, Romanian is Thracian-Dacian, including over 150 words from the Thracian and Dacian substrate, used gradually in the Danubian Latin (Căprioară, 2020, p. 432).

Grumeza (2009) observed several conjectures about the Dacian language, stating that "Dacians did not have a written language" and "were not a migratory population", having "settlements today in and around modern Romania". The group of words in Romanian that are supposed to come from the Dacian language include: abur (steam), amurg (down), balaur (serpent), baiat (boy) (p. 86).

When learning Romanian, learners pay attention the words that come from Dacian words, like *brânză* for *cheese* or *copac* for *tree*. The presence of a consonance gives these words a specific particularity.

Thraco-Dacian, a "satem type Indo European", forms the substratum of the Romanian language, concerning mostly "anthroponyms, toponyms, hydronyms, or names of mountains". In Greek and Latin treatises of botany and medicine there were found Dacian medicinal plant names (Dindelegan, p. 2).

In the 11th century, there were published the first documents that confirmed the existence of a group of people called Romanians (äz Rum), presented in the Arab-Persian world, in a treatise called The Ornament of Histories by the historian and geographer Gardizi. Romanians (äz Rum) are described as a group of people from the Roman Empire located between the Danube and a large group of mountains (Decei, 1936, p. 19).

Friedriech Christian Diez (1833), an important German linguist, made the first significant analysis of Romance languages and stated that Romanian was a Romance language. Diez called the language Valachian as the language of Valachia, Țara Românească, and placed it together with other Latin languages, showing that the Romanian language is a similar language with Italian, Spanish and Portuguese, and French. In his research that started in 1836, Friedrich Diez analyzed in several sections, the declination, conjugation, nouns, and verbs of the Romanian language (p. 3). Diez showed that all the mentioned languages have the same influence concerning writing and speaking, keeping also a strong cultural influence from the Latin culture.

Diez also emphasized how different old Dacian ballads with Thracian influence helped develop the language by preserving the Dacian influence on the formation of the Romanian language. From this source came the particularities of the Romanian language that included its roots that shaped the language as the society changed.

Further, Diez explained how Daco-Romanian literature started in 1580, demonstrating its importance that at that time was not yet discovered and promoted (p. 67). His reference to the beginning of Daco-Romanian literature was published in his first work edition.

A literature with Dacian roots and Latin influences started slowly to develop and to be shared among people.

The oldest period of the Romanian language, called "Common Romanian, Proto-Romanian, Primitive Romanian" is the period between the 10th and 12th centuries that was before the separation of the four Romanian dialects.

The four Romanian dialects were: "a north Danubian dialect (Daco-Romanian) and three south Danubian dialects (Aromanian-Macedo Romanian, Megleno-Romanian and Istro-Romanian)" (Dindelegan, p. 4).

A Short Description of the Romanian Language as a Romance Language with Latin, Dacian and other Characteristics

In 1780 the first book of the Romanian grammar was printed in Vienna by Samuil Micu and Gheorghe Şincai.

Based on the evolution of different alphabets throughout the world, it can be observed that the Cyrillic alphabet represents one of the oldest to reflect the evolution of languages and of humanity. The Cyrillic alphabet is one of the oldest and most widespread alphabets in the world nowadays, alongside the Latin (or Roman) alphabet, Chinese characters, the Arabic script, and the Devanagari script. Concerning its evolution, the Cyrillic alphabet is considered to originate in the 10th century from areas around Bulgaria, where before were used other alphabets, like Gothic alphabet, invented in the 4th century and Slavic Glagolitic alphabet, invented in the 9th century by St. Cyril (Iliev, 2013, p. 221).

Invented in the year 893, the Cyrillic alphabet is considered to be an expended form of the Greek uncial writing system, and therefore, it is not treated as a totally unique alphabet like the old Glagolitic alphabet (Iliev, p. 225).

After the formation of the Romanian principalities Moldova and Wallachia, for around five centuries the Cyrillic script was used for religious rituals and as the liturgical and administrative script, first used in Slavic and later also in the Romanian language.

Concerning the official beginning of the Romanian language, the earliest known text in Romanian is from 1521, representing a Letter from Neacşu of Câmpulung to the Mayor of Braşov. The letter was written using the old Cyrillic alphabet that was used until 1859 in both Moldova and Walachia.

In the middle of the 16th century, Deacon Coresi went to Braşov to provide Romanian churches with religious services in Romanian. In 1559-1560, Coresi started to publish The Christian Inquiry, printing 35 different religious books from Church Slavonic to Romanian. Other translations of religious texts took place in Transylvania in 1570, and in 1648 the whole of the New Testament was translated into Romanian in Alba Iulia under the coordination of Metropolitan Simion Ştefan. The printing press was introduced in Iasi in 1640 and some of the religious texts were written directly in Romanian. In 1673 Dosoftei, Metropolitan of Moldova, published the Romanian verse version of the Book of Psalms (Baker, 1998, p. 534).

The first literary texts written in Romanian were The Chronicles, by Grigore Ureche (1642-1647), Miron Costin (1675), and Ion Neculce (1732). The Chronicles also include short stories, biographies, and historical aspects of political events concerning the Romanian Principalities (Hill, Alboiu, 2016, p. xvii).

From the end of the 17th century, the Latin alphabet was starting to be largely used for more texts, and in the middle of the 19th century, from 1860 to 1862, Cyrillic was replaced by a Romanian alphabet that was based on the Latin alphabet.

Traditions associated with stories that influenced the Romanian language

Traditionally, the Romanian language is connected to stories that were used by people to share their values from one generation to another through old Thraco-Dacian ballads and Latin stories that influenced the development of the Romanian language.

In Romanian, Romania is written as România and is a reflection of the people's identity. The structure of the name of the country, Romania, is very complex and is assumed to come from the toponym "Romanus+ia". Romanus as the Oriental Roman Empire or the Byzantine Empire, that represented Oriental Christianity (Metzeltin, 2006, p. 221). Symbolically, when analyzing the suffix ia, it also is a separate word that refers to the Romanian word ia. The word ia refers to a handmade Romanian shirt of white fabric decorated with embroidery and beads. This handmade Romanian blouse, ia, is a part of traditional clothing, connecting Romanians to their traditions and ancestors. Ia, as a component of the country's name, connects Romanian people to their identity, their cultural and historical heritage that shaped their historical evolution, reflecting the distinctive continuity of Romanians, connecting them with the old values of the past, and the perpetuity of the traditional heritage.

The official use of the name Romania for the country was started in 1862 by Alexandru Ioan Cuza who was named the first head of state of the Romanian Principalities in 1859. After his abdication, in 1866, the name Romania was included in Article 1 of the Constitution of 1866: "The United-Romanian Principalities constitute a single indivisible State, under the name of Romania" (Constitutiune. Titlul 1, 2010).

Different stories that traditionally influenced the development of the Romanian language and identity are found in old documents. Book IV of Herodotus' Histories mentions the oldest treaty concerning the history of Getae, and was written to describe the expedition lead by King Darius I against the north-pontic Scythians (Florea, 2019, p. 14). The Persian army met the Getae army which was considered to represent bravery and justice among all the Thracians tribes. This document remains of a considerable importance for the description of those times, and for the presentation of the traditions associated with the bravery

of those tribes that inspired many generations to follow and to include it in short-stories, songs, and ballads.

This short description of the history of the Geto-Dacian people influenced not just the formation of a future group, shaped by an ideology of bravery and strength in the light of history, but also created a mixture between historical events and the imagination of the old communities that was later transferred to future generations. Zalmoxis was also mentioned as a central figure that dominated the Geto-Dacian people's social and religious life.

Eliade (1972) describes Herodotus' presentation of Zalmoxis (p. 257). He was seen as the central deity of the Getae who were considered to represent the bravest of all Thracians. Zalmoxis influenced the social and religious lifestyle of the Getae. Herodotus mentioned two important rituals that were dedicated to Zalmoxis. The first one happened every five years and it was represented by the sacrifice of a messenger. The second ritual was practiced during thunderstorms and included the shooting of an arrow. Both of these rituals had a strong significance for the community's lifestyle and then for the development of its collective identity based on bravery and its connection with the forces of the nature.

From Herodotus description of the Greeks, readers can find another symbolic influence on both science and tradition. It is stated that Zalmoxis (Salmixis) "was a man who once was a slave in Samos, his master being Pythagoras, son of Mnesarchus; presently, after being freed and gaining great wealth, he returned to his own country" (Eliade, 1972, p. 257) This story inspired the transfer, through language, of different beliefs associated with the collective wisdom of Zalmoxis as a hero that came from the past to the present.

The story of Zalmoxis shows on the historical side, a significant Dacian influence on the development of Romanian identity, and on the scientific side, it reflects the Greek influence in the Black Sea region that impacted the Romanian language, science, and culture.

Greek and French cultural influences on the Romanian language

A complex concept present and functional in different societies is the concept of culture. It is described by Hou (2013) as representing "a set of fundamental ideas, practices, and experiences of a group of people that are symbolically transmitted generation to generation through a learning process" (p. 31). Culture includes different aspects of a people's identity, their values, and

attitudes concerning diverse challenges and their capacity to express themselves in distinctive ways.

Constantin Erbiceanu (1888) was the founder of Modern Greek studies in Romania and described the cultural Greek influence on Romanian economic and religious activities, historic texts, and architectural designs. In 1888, Erbiceanu was the editor of a volume that included a group of Greek chronicles which made reference to different aspects of Wallachia and Moldavia during the Phanariot time. In the introduction it is argued that the influence of the Greeks in Dacia was known before, during, and after the Roman conquest (pp. ix-xiii.).

Erbiceanu stated that in the context of learning about Romanian history, it is very important to elaborately research old Greek texts that reflect Romanian history and that can offer data and historical facts that can open more perspectives when interpreting Romanian religious traditions and philosophy (p. VIII).

Additionally, a strong cultural influence on Romanian culture, history, and language came from the French. At the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century, France was seen as a model for many countries in Europe, being the first republic of Europe that lead to the development of modern Europe. This made Romania follow the example of the French state, society, and culture and seek French support in promoting and realizing its political and cultural goals. Therefore, a large number of Romanian writers, historians, philosophers, and painters studied in France. Xenopol and Iorga had some of their texts first published in French, and from 1869 to 1914 Pompiliu Eliade created the "national consciousness of Romanians" with his French texts (Kellog, 1990, p. 89).

Conclusions

In summary, the Romanian language as a Romance language has its particularities due to the location of its development. Romanian is a language formed under Dacian influence, representing the Latin language that spread on the oriental side of the Roman Empire. The language was influenced by old Thraco-Dacian ballads, and, according to the German linguist Diez, Daco-Romanian literature started in 1580, which was not widely known at that time.

The oldest period of the Romanian language was the period when the language was known as Common Romanian and it existed from the 10th to the 12th century before the separation of the four Romanian dialects. The first book of Romanian grammar was printed in Vienna in 1780.

The official beginning of the Romanian language includes the earliest known text in Romanian that was written in 1521, representing a Letter from Neacşu of

Câmpulung to the Mayor of Braşov city. The letter was written in the old Cyrillic alphabet that was used in both, Moldova and Walachia, until 1859.

After the formation of the Romanian principalities, Moldova and Wallachia, for around five centuries the Cyrillic script was used for religious rituals and for writing official documents in Romanian. Starting from the end of the 17th century, the Latin alphabet was used for more texts and in the middle of the 19th century Cyrillic was totally replaced by a Romanian alphabet based on the Latin alphabet.

The name of the country Romania, in Romanian România, was officialy used for the first time during Alexandru Ioan Cuza's leadership and was included in Article One of the Constitution of 1866. Symbolically, the name of the country connects Romanians with nature and ancestral times.

Based on different traditions that shaped the Romanian language and Romanians identity, it can be concluded from Herodotus' Histories that the history of Geto-Dacian is perceived as presenting those people that were shaped by an ideology of courage and strengths, living somewhere between reality and an imagination of old ancestral communities. They had Zalmoxis (Salmixis) as a model which was a central figure that dominated their social and religious lives. This model of life was then transferred to future generations through stories associated with this period.

Herodotus wrote what he learned from Greeks, and Greek culture and language also influenced the Romanian language, its history, science and philosophy, and it contributed to the development of Romanian culture.

Culturally, the modern Romanian language was influenced by French. In the 19th and 20th centuries, numerous Romanian writers, historians, painters, philosophers, sculptures, and architects studied in France, having a strong impact on the modern development of the Romanian language and culture.

The Romanian language is a Romance language, similar to French, Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese. Romanian is considered to be the persisting spoken Latin language of the oriental side of the Roman Empire, part of the Appennino-Balcanic linguistic group. The evolution of this language showed, in the middle of the 20th century, a strong presence of Latin and words from the group of Romance languages, with a strong influence from French words. Several words from the Dacian language are still present in it, representing the Thraco-Dacian substratum of Romanian.

Geographically isolated from the other Romance languages, Romanian nonetheless has remained a Romance language and it has kept, to this day, its Dacian roots.

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Representations of the Black Sea Space in Popular Communist Culture of the Post-Stalinist Era

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Abstract

The following paper analyses ways of representing the Black Sea space in popular late Communist culture. Doing this entails seeing the Black Sea space as "lived or living space", not just a physical and geographical concept, but a network of intersecting socio-political relations. Ideologies influence the representations of this space. Thus, in the poetry of detention written by the political detainees working at the Danube-Black Sea Canal from 1949 to 1953, the Black Sea space is first and foremost characterized by blackness – the word black being both a geographical attribute, and also the colour of pure negativity, referring to the experience of torture. During Ceauşescu's rule the cultural imaginary of the Black Sea undergoes a metamorphosis. With the Thaw and the re-evaluation of Soviet policy undertaken by Nikita Khrushchev a new cultural aesthetic emerges, one which is more Western-oriented (in the sense that it looks towards the satisfaction of popular taste), even if still having to comply with the demands of the Party. The Black Sea turns into a paradisiacal space perfect for the development of communist romance. With this utopian re-imagining of the space of the Black Sea, the attribute "black" suddenly ceases to appeal, and the sea suddenly becomes blue, as part of the vast campaign of history-rewriting which Nicolae Ceauşescu undertook in his project of building a national brand of socialism.

Keywords: *Black Sea space, popular culture, communism, history-rewriting.*

Introduction

The Black Sea as lived or living space has a long history. Seas and oceans have always been the main routes of international commerce, as well as objects of exploration and discovery. But first of all, what does "lived space" mean, more exactly? Henri Lefebvre (1991) the Marxist philosopher and social theorist who pioneered the spatial turn in the humanities conceived social space as a multi-layered entity, the result of three different modes of production or spatializations:

• Author's note: The translation of the primary sources in Romanian used in this article is mine.

the perceived space, the conceived mental organization of the space and the lived space as the product of a network of intersecting social relations. For Lefebvre (1991) space was not, like for the ancient philosophers, just a container, but a product of social relations, or, more precisely a set of relations expressed through certain forms. However, my object of research is not the "lived space" of the Black Sea, but its fictionalized form, which is a reflection or a "staging" (inszenierung) of the "lived space" itself. This means that cultural or literary texts will select some aspects or inter-relations of the real "lived" space and critically reflect on them or try to project some imaginary or simply non-existing relations onto the space in question.

The fictionalized "lived space" is, as Jacquelin Klooster and Jo Heirman (2013) argue in "The Ideologies of 'Lived Space', Ancient and Modern", space as "experienced and valued by the narrator or (one of the) characters in an ideological, emotional, experiential relation to society and power, not as a number of coordinates on a geographical map" (p. 5). In other words, the multiplicity of social, political and cultural relations that make up a certain space is subjectively represented in texts, so that several cultural or literary texts will offer different – and often contrasting representations – of the same space. Another important aspect to be considered is the fact that "lived spaces" are sets of relations which are often subject to change on both a synchronic and diachronic level. Thus, quoting Gerard Hoffman, Klooster and Heirman note that "lived spaces" are not "static but subject to change in the course of a literary text or in relation to the human subjects who experience them: one type of space can be experienced as intimate and reassuring by one character but as threatening by another character, the narrator or the same character later on" (p. 5).

Last but not least, it may be necessary to circumscribe the significance of the phrase "Black Sea space". By it I will refer not only to the obvious geographical area occupied by the Black Sea, but also to a network of other places, natural, rural or urban, which are closely linked to that of the Black Sea and which participate in the production of a social space characterized by common features such as seafaring, formal and informal trade and exchange, and tourism.

Images and representations of the Black Sea space during the communist period vary greatly, as they are underpinned by different aesthetics. There is of course the poetry of detention, written by the detainees working on the Danube-Black Sea Canal (from 1949 to 1953), a subgenre of memoir literature, where a certain type of realism is prevailing. On the other hand, the short stories of Anatol E. Baconsky, which illustrate the typology of the uncanny, belong to a period of both physical and psychic repression, and would best be characterized as

expressionist, on account of the elements of fantastic and the subjective distortion of reality. Radu Tudoran's novels were by far the most popular: his epic of nautical adventures *Toate pânzele sus!* [All Sails up!] (1954) enjoyed such a success with the wide public that it was eventually adapted for television in 1976. Finally, the aesthetic of the mass cultural productions envisioned and produced by communist propaganda is radically different both from the early socialist realism and the realism of the poetry of detention: meant to instruct and entertain simultaneously, such productions aimed to satisfy a general taste, while promoting the aspirations of party ideologists.

Popular culture in communist Romania followed the different models of communism implemented first by Moscow and then gradually reworked to fit the national project of the Romanian Communist Party and its leader, Nicolae Ceaușescu. Until around 1959 the Stalinist model prevailed, where the dictatorship of the proletariat required artists to comply with the demands of socialist realism. The sixties and the early seventies were a period of cultural relaxation, during which Western influences made themselves felt in all the spheres of life.[1] However, after the "July theses" of 1971, there was a gradual ousting of what Ceaușescu felt were outside corrupting influences, coupled with the effort, on the part of the communist regime, to develop cultural activities which would mobilize the population for revolutionary goals as well as improve the ideological education of the youth" (Stanciu, 2013, p. 1072). To this aim, a host of musical and film productions became centred on the workers, technical progress, and work relations within and among socialist production units. The Black Sea, as a popular destination for workers' holidays became involved in the propaganda machine, which used it either as the appropriate background for communist romance, or manipulated its symbolism to fit its purposes.

Re-imagining the Black Sea after Stalin's death

Stalin's name was connected with one of the most controversial projects in early Communist Romania: the construction of the Danube-Black Sea canal. Stalin had also initiated the construction of the Belomor canal as the first part of his Gulag project. In a stenogram of the meeting of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Romanian Workers' Party (May 5, 1949), one of the communist

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[1] As Tismăneanu (1991) remarks, the first stage of Ceaușescu's rule was "characterized by increased political and economic links with the West, ideological relaxation and the endeavour to create a Romanian model of socialism different from the rigid, monolithic pattern" put forward by Brezhnev and his supporters from the Warsaw pact (p. 86).

leaders stated that the objective of the Canal was to become a "laboratory" for the formation of the future communist propaganda personnel (qtd. in Stănescu, 2012, p. 125). Stănescu (2012) claims that the purpose of using political detainees for this type of work was a triple one: forced labour (to compensate for the lack of existing resources), the extermination of the old and weak, and the re-education of the young (p. 126).

In most of the poems composed by the political detainees from the forced labour colonies, the word "black" is obsessively repeated: "everything here is black and impoverished", "It's black and dirty, poured in the bowl / the ladle of a tasteless broth", "The water from the mud is black" (Ciurunga, 2010b, p. 164), "The bread is black inside the famished prison / As if the sky had baked it in its tears." (Ciurunga, 2010a, p. 183) "The sky never seemed blacker / than when the alarm was sounded in the camp" (Oniga, 2010, p. 451).

Apart from referring to the miserable conditions the detainees had to put up with in the camp and the never-ending torture of the work and the beatings, blackness also worked as a real designation of place, the geographical location of torture symbolically pointing to suffering and death: the Black Water (Kara Su) Valley[2] leading to the Black Sea. The building of the Danube-Black Sea Canal began along the trajectory of the Kara Su Valley, a valley which crosses Dobrudja from East to West. After the rains, the valley was flooded by muddy waters (often alluded to in the prison poems), which then flowed into the Danube at Cernavodă – the name of the town containing another "black" reference).

After Stalin's death, the new political regime of Nikita Khrushchev and the Thaw brought about the dismantling of the labour / detention camp system. Giving up Stalinist authoritarianism, Khrushchev sought new ways of exerting political control over the Eastern bloc, ways that were more in tune with Western civilization. Among these was the project of what some historians call the Sovietization of the Black Sea littoral, with a view to develop the industry of tourism and vacations, while redefining it from a staple of bourgeois consumerism to a purposeful holiday with a medical agenda, but also as a way of rising the cultural standards of Soviet consumers (Kroenker, 2013, p. 182).

In 1962, after travelling to the Bulgarian littoral, Khrushchev used the phrase "our Black Sea Coast" to introduce, according to Johanna Conterio (2018),

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[2] The Kara Su Valley was one of the oldest commercial roads in Dobrudja. It connected the Kara Su Lake to the Danube and thus it was often flooded. There was a permanent layer of reed at its bottom. Dams were built along its course to prevent water from flooding the railroad Constanța-Cernavodă built by an English company (The Danube and Black Sea Railway Society), which had obtained the rights from Sultan Abdul-Medjid around the middle of the 19th century.

"the idea of a shared, socialist space", a solid proof of "the peace-loving and welfare-centred nature of the socialist countries, which contrasted with the militarism of the NATO-dominated West" (p. 327), for, as he pointed out, "the Black Sea should be a sea of peace and of friendship of peoples" (qtd. in Conterio, 2018, p. 328). This new policy, which sought to promote vacations for workers and their families, based on rising living standards and an awareness of the importance of the cultural mission of socialist governments, together with the ideological imperative of transforming the Black Sea into an international health resort, evidence of the peace and friendship prevalent among communist countries, led to the emergence of a new culture related to the Black Sea as part of a shared socialist space.

The re-imagining of the Black Sea space in Romanian communist pop music and soft propaganda movies sprang from Khrushchev's idea, but it took a different course, influenced by the specificities of the Communist regime in Romania. Khrushchev's de-stalinization brought with it certain anxiety for Romanian Communist Party leaders, Gheorghe Gheorghiu Dej and Nicolae Ceaușescu. According to Tismăneanu (1991), Gheorghiu Dej managed to shun de-Stalinization, "keeping Romania a fortress of Communist orthodoxy" (p. 85). Negrici, in his large scale study on Romanian Literature during communism, also notes that after Stalin's death, the leaders of the Romanian Workers' Party and Dej "make a show out of de-stalinisation", while in reality they continue a "Stalinist politics without Stalin". Khrushcev's Thaw will be practised in Romania, too, yet, as Negrici (2010) remarks, "mainly in the cultural-artistic sphere, where a certain propagandistic profit could be made among Romanian intellectuals" (p. 189).

Ceaușescu's rule, on the other hand, offered "a fascinating example of a neo-Stalinist personal dictatorship" (Tismăneanu, 1991, p. 85). While appearing to follow Moscow's indications faithfully, he only followed them in the letter, not in the spirit. As he had openly criticized the invasion of Czechoslovakia by the Russian troops in 1968, Ceaușescu, Tismăneanu (1991) contends, "was not perceived as the Kremlin's puppet" (p. 85) on the international stage. However, his condemnation of the Soviet-led intervention against the Prague Spring complicated his relations with Brezhnev afterwards. Thus, while outwardly trying to placate him, in reality Ceaușescu sought to implement a nationalistic socialist policy in all fields, and rule the country according to his messianic view of communist history.

There were two stages in Ceaușescu's autocratic regime. In the sixties, when Ceaușescu's aim was to gain a certain autonomy from Moscow and the countries of the Warsaw pact, Romanians enjoyed "a relaxation of repression,

increase in standards of living, political amnesties, and liberalization of culture" (Stanciu, 2013, p. 1064). According to Stanciu (2013), "The cultural and ideological restrictions of the Stalinist era had slowly faded away and Romania appeared to be headed for a different version of Communism, one relying on liberalization and openness to the West" (p. 1063).

Starting with July 1971, however, there was a gradual ousting of what Ceaușescu felt were outside "bourgeois" corrupting influences, coupled with the effort, on the part of the communist regime, to develop the political education of the population, and especially to improve the ideological education of the youth (Stanciu, 2013, p. 1072).

During the early years of the Communist regime, representations of the Black Sea in the poetry of detention had emphasized its blackness. Apart from referring to the miserable conditions the detainees had to put up with in the camp and the never-ending torture of the work and the beatings, the word black (which many poets used metonimically, allegorically or symbolically) also worked as a real designation of place, the geography of torture being located along the Black Water (Kara Su) Valley leading to the Black Sea. However, under Ceaușescu, the blackness of the Black Sea will be dismissed in favour of a lighter – and more optimistic – colour: blue.

The Mamaia festival and its songs

While state-paid vacations for Romanian workers had been introduced earlier, after the establishment of the legal right to a holiday in 1951, in the 60s, taking their cue from Moscow, party ideologists not only started creating an infrastructure for tourism, but also thought of ways to properly educate and entertain Romanian tourists while vacationing at the Black Sea. Thus, in 1963, The National Committee for Culture and the Arts decided to organize a music festival meant to promote Romanian pop music. The music and the festival also served as propaganda media for the communist regime, creating the representation of a happy consumer communist society. Initially, The Festival of Pop Music from Mamaia included only a section for creation. Nicknamed "The Sanremo of Romania", the festival, organized annually in Mamaia, a resort situated to the north of the Romanian littoral, attracted a large number of tourists, both from Romania and Soviet satellite states and launched the hits of the season.

The first song about the sea which won a special award at the Mamaia festival in 1965 was "Seri la malul mării" [Evenings by the sea shore], performed by Margareta Pâslaru. A sentimental evocation of summer romance, the song

introduces the theme of colour change, as the evenings spent with the lover by the sea are called "late blue symphonies" (Dinicu, 1965, 0:33-0:65). Pâslaru, a popular singer and actress until her defection to the United States in 1983, specialized in songs about the sea – maybe also because of her famous big blue eyes. In 1959, she had launched another song about the sea, "Chemarea mării" [The Call of the sea], soon to become a hit on the national radio, breaking all sales records in 1961 and 1962. In 1979, she released another song "Ce frumos zâmbește marea!" [How beautifully the sea smiles!], this time celebrating the sea as a protective divinity of love, bringing the two lovers together: "When from the shore with happiness we look / We give thanks to the sea" (Dragomir, 1979, 2:04-2:11), a theme which will be echoed by almost all Mamaia songs from the 80s. Human love is integrated into the cosmos, in the manner of traditional folk ballads, as the sea only smiles when kissed by the sun. The song will also feature seagull cries, a prop that will turn into a staple of the Mamaia festival sea songs.

However, her most interesting song about the sea was performed in 1970, at the International pop music festival in Athens. The song, composed by Ion Cristinoiu to fit the theme of the Athens festival and initially called "Mediterana" [The Mediterranean], was later used by director Mircea Drăgan as a theme song for the second part of his movie *BD la munte și la mare* [BD at the mountains and at the seashore], under a different name, though: "La Marea Neagră" [By the Black Sea]. Thus the song released in 1970, only one year before the July theses, turned into a song about the national sea in a movie released in December 1971, detailing the activity of a militia brigade on the tracks of international criminals and drug-dealers.

This symbolic transfer from the Mediterranean to the Black Sea may be indicative of the policy of autochtonism initiated as a result of Ceaușescu's July theses, and of his switch from an international to a national communist ideology. What strikes one when listening to the song is its versatility: it seems that the writer may have anticipated the conversion, and so the lyrics fit both the image of the Mediterranean and that of the Black Sea. In the first version, the song begins with the lyrics:

> *Mediterranean*
> *blue paradise,*
> *Mediterranean*
> *beautiful as a dream,*
> *you wrap me up*
> *with waters and sky*
> *without clouds*. (Cristinoiu, 1970, 0:16-0:35)

The second stanza, however, seems to be more appropriate for a depiction of the Black Sea:

But the sea

Now changes its colour [...]

Huge waves rose terribly

And then there were dispelled. (Cristinoiu, 1970, 0:57-1:23)

When the song gets re-named in Mircea Drăgan's movie, the contrasting description will now refer to the Black Sea. While the first stanza, more resonant with the image of the Mediterranean, sounds a bit out of place, the second (which is rendered in the movie) certainly rings true. Moreover, the statement about the sea changing its colour, referring to the topos of the stormy Black Sea, will take on a new meaning: the lyrics offer a strange foreboding of what was to come.

Though there seems to be little connection between the blackness of the Black Sea space as experienced by labour camp detainees and the blueness of the same sea in late communist pop songs, yet, paradoxically, what separates them also unites them: the Canal. Work at the Canal, which had been officially stopped after Stalin's death, was resumed in 1975 by Ceaușescu, who managed to complete it. In 1984, when Nicolae Ceaușescu inaugurated the Danube-Black Sea Canal, the song which won the Mamaia festival was "Magistrala albastră" [The Blue Thoroughfare]. It was performed by Mirabela Dauer and Dan Spătaru, two Romanian pop music stars at the time. Interestingly, in the video, where the Canal is first shown from the perspective of the ship working its way along the still blue waters, Dan Spătaru is wearing the black leather jacket that had become the hallmark of the undercover state security agents, while Mihaela Dauer dons a brown jacket with epaulletes: a reference, perhaps, to the army forces used by Ceaușescu to complete the construction of the Canal. In the song, what had been the death canal is addressed as a "road of waters and dreams" (Vasilache,1984, 0:38-0:42) carrying the Romanian soul, "a song without words" (Vasilache, 1984, 0:42-0:46), towards the sea. The building of the canal is described as a work of love, "lifting the skies above the earth" (Vasilache, 1984, 1:38-1:40), for one's country. The chorus is a typical propaganda text from the late years of Ceaușescu's rule, designed to symbolically manipulate popular consciousness:

The blue thoroughfare, a road built by the people

Which speaks, you know, of present and future

And great construction works[3]

As a sign that they will be on this land forever

That they were and they will be. (Vasilache, 1984, 0:58-1:11)

The Black Sea rewritten as blue: this is one of many re-writings[4] that Ceaușescu and his propaganda apparatus undertook. His project of building a national brand of socialism implied rewriting history,[5] even from its earliest stages, as a series of steps leading to the progress of a great people, the Romanians,[6] towards the golden age of socialism that was to come under his leadership. A messianic project which made sacred everything it touched: the land, the sea, the Canal. Even the age-old blackness of the Black Sea had to be transfigured: from a space of blackness, exile and death it suddenly, yet consistently, turned into the blue sea of communist love dedicated to building a happy future for Romania.

In 1986 and 1987, three songs won the heart of the public at the Mamaia festival, all of them having the sea as a main character. These were "Doar marea"

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[3] In Romanian, the word used to denote "construction works" is "ctitorii", an old word extensively used for the founders of the Orthodox churches and cathedrals. Its usage put the construction of the Canal on the same level with the sacred spaces celebrating the rule of local princes and boyars in mediaeval and early modern Wallachia and Moldavia. Tismăneanu (1991) speaks of "the Byzantine rites" used to conceal Ceaușescu's neo-Stalinist personal dictatorship (p. 85).

[4] Rewriting history seems to have been a regular strategy during Ceaușescu's regime. When, in 1989, a few months before the Revolution, he accused the Romanian Church of being Bulgarophile (on account of worshipping a Bulgarian-born saint, Dimitrie Basarabov), the Romanian patriarch Teoctist used the same strategy to resist the demolition of the Cathedral. According to Mihai Hau, a counsellor at the Patriarchy, a professor of theology was entrusted with re-writing of the life of the saint, who was fittingly renamed, echoing of the "new man" of socialism, Saint Dimitrie the New (Rădulescu, 2017).

[5] In an interview with Pavel Chihaia for Radio Free Europe, historian Șerban Papacostea (1991) noted that the process of falsifying history went through two stages: first, during the stalinist period, the interpretation of Romanian history was subordinated to "the objectives of a foreign power", and so the Romanian historical specificities were downplayed. In the second stage (the 70s and the 80s), occuring as a reaction to the first, "the national feeling was exacerbated "with the aim of turning it into an instrument of a new kind of totalitarianism" (p. 13).

[6] Famous for his protochronism, Ceaușescu (1982) reinterpreted local ancient history, in an effort to demonstrate the continuity and autonomy of the Romanians on their land. In a speech delivered in the Plenum of the Central Committee, he stated that: "As known, the Dacians' civilization flourished vigorously for centuries on end. Two years ago, we celebrated the 2050th anniversary of the foundations of the first centralized Dacian state, although the organization of the Dacians' community life had started many centuries before. […] The long duration of the wars between the Dacians and the Romans is an evidence itself of the force and endurance of the Dacians' state and people. […] As documented by writings dating back to those times, by archeological research and scientific data, that was the period when the Daco-Roman symbiosis was achieved and the making of a new people started, built on the highest virtues of the Dacians and the Romans. And it was thus that the Romanian people was born" (pp. 598-599).

[Only the sea] in 1986, composed by Cornel Fugaru and performed by him and Mirela Voiculescu, and in 1987 "Vorbește marea" [The sea is speaking], performed by Cătălin Crișan, and "Mă-ntorc la tine iar și iar mare albastră" [I come back to you, again and again, blue sea], performed by Daniel Iordăchioaie. There is nothing black about the Black Sea any longer; on the contrary, like Mirela Voiculescu's pale blue dress emphasized on stage, The Black Sea had turned blue, a metamorphosis supported by Iordăchioaie's song the following year. It is still feminine, but what is added is a touch of sun, pleasure and a love as infinite as the sea itself. It provides the perfect setting for the eternal love story. Seagulls and albatrosses now become a staple of the sea's imaginary: before the couple Cornel Fugaru – Mirela Voiculescu performed the song on stage, the scenic effects included one minute of real amorous seagull cries, a romantic prop with sexual undertones. "Only the sea carries us, like a faithful friend, / towards love's threshold" (Fugaru, 1986, 1:25-1:37). The sea is both the background and the divinity protecting the eternal union of souls. In contrast to the archetype of the treacherous Hegelian sea[7], it becomes the very symbol of steadfastness: "Only the sea waits for us, / constant throughout the years, only the sea" (Fugaru, 1986, 2:12-2:25), "The moment broke its wing while flying / and in dying gave us an eternity of love" (Fugaru, 1986, 3:19-3:31).

Love is also the topic of Iordăchioaie's hit "Mă-ntorc la tine, iar și iar, mare albastră" [I come back to you, again and again, blue sea], yet this time it is not mortal, but elemental love. The Sea is the "eternal woman" to which one returns, again and again, drawn by her cosmic song – for the sea also becomes musical, and sings. The love for the sea is described in similar terms to that for a woman "I am yours / you are mine" (Lupu, 1987, 1:14-1:18), "You are the great love of my life" (Lupu, 1987, 2:16-2:20). "I would like to be, forever, your only wave" (Lupu, 1987, 1:09-1:11). Healing (this time spiritual, presumably) is also part of the sea-man relation "Like an albatross with a broken wing / I am now returning to your shore" (Lupu, 1987, 0:32-0:42), an echo of the physical healing, which was often included in the state-paid holidays at seaside resorts.

But the best-known remains the song performed by Cătălin Crișan at the Mamaia Festival in 1987 and the winner of the first prize, "Vorbește marea" [The

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[7] In his *Philosophy of History*, Hegel viewed the sea as a fickle and treacherous element: "For the daring who encounter the sea must at the same time embrace wariness — cunning — since they have to do with the treacherous, the most unreliable and deceitful element. This boundless plain is absolutely yielding — withstanding no pressure, not even a breath of wind. It looks boundlessly innocent, submissive, friendly, and insinuating; and it is exactly this submissiveness which changes the sea into the most dangerous and violent element" (2001, p. 108).

sea is speaking]. If until then quite a number of Romanian popular songs and movies had copied famous Soviet songs and movies, with "The sea is speaking" we can speak of the visible intrusion of Western music into the Romanian pop cannon. The first part of the song is quite a faithful rendering of the first chords from the theme song of *The Phantom of the Opera* (with music composed by Andrew Lloyd Weber), which had premiered the year before in London. It somehow managed to bypass the communist censorship system, and the song enjoyed a great success in the following years. A favourite of the TV channel and radio, Crișan's first hit combined the theme of love with that of the sea as its patron divinity. In contradistinction to the previous songs about the sea, "The sea is speaking" promotes a more balanced, integrating image of the sea as both a punitive and rewarding divinity, raising in revolt to punish the infidelity of lovers, yet also acting as a counsellor for those who seek its advice. Its four stanzas alternate contrasting images of the sea. Thus, the first and third stanzas, set to the music of *The Phantom of the Opera* (with a few sonorous intrusions which imitate the calls of seagulls) describes the turbulences the sea is capable of, whereas the second and the fourth, against a more playful rhythm, paint the paradisiacal picture of the sea as the most appropriate setting for love.

The Black Sea in popular movies from the Communist period

Romance at the seaside remains the favourite topic of movies about the sea as well. Koenker (2013) remarks in *Club red: vacation travel and the Soviet dream* that Soviet vacations could occasion both legitimate and illegitimate (sexually promiscuous) forms of romance (p. 203). Of course, officially released movies promoted only socially healthy forms of romance (leading to marriage), along with officially sanctioned models of behaviour. The most popular movies about the Black Sea during the communist period were the musicals *Cântecele mării/Pesni moria* [Songs of the sea] (1971) and *Eu, tu și... Ovidiu* [I, You and... Ovid] (1977).

Cântecele mării/Pesni moria [Songs of the sea], a Romanian-Soviet co-production, directed by Francisc Munteanu and starring Dan Spătaru and Natalia Fateeva, a Russian actress, in the leading roles enjoyed a great success in the USSR as well, largely due to the songs composed by Temistocle Popa, and rendered in Russian by Robert Rozhdestvensky. The iconic "Tu, eu și-o umbrelă" [You, I and an umbrella], performed by both leading actors and shot alongside the quay of the port of Constanța, reinforces, through the rather clicheic love of the two protagonists, Mihai and Nina, both the healthy, sunny qualities of the Black Sea littoral (the video is almost exclusively filmed in hues of blue and yellow) and

the international friendship of peoples (in this case, the Soviet and the Romanian) which had been the aspiration of Nikita Khrushchev. The Communist international atmosphere of the Black Sea littoral is suggested by the plot, mainly revolving around the complications arising from mistaking the identity of the Russian delegate from the Music Festival of Sochi. The movie features several dream journeys, one in which Mihai drives Nina through Bucharest in an old Chevrolet (pour imiter la bourgeoisie), another one in which they ride through a snowy forest in a Russian troika, while in the background one can hear fragments from the staple Russian song Katiusha, and also one in which Mihai, dressed as a cowboy (in a parody of Western cowboy movies, quite popular in Romania at the time) follows Nina in the train and jokingly threatens to catch her with the lasso. This latter scene is evidence of the Western influence that was gradually making itself felt in Romania beginning with the 60s, which brought "a relaxation period" in the communist regime (Rodat, 2020, p. 122). As Rodat (2020) notes, Western culture became accessible to the Romanian population "via mass media, especially music and cinema"[8] (p. 122).

The most popular movie about the sea and one of the greatest box-office successes in the communist period was *Eu, tu și... Ovidiu* [I, you and... Ovid], directed by Geo Saizescu, produced in 1977 and released in 1978. The title alludes to the famous "You, I and an umbrella", as the musical belonged to the genre of romance as well. The statue of Ovid, located in the centre of Constanța's largest square, serves as a meeting place for the two lovers, Alecu and Ioana, competitors in the communist race for technical-scientific progress. Ioana and another four colleagues criticize Alecu's plant (he is the manager of *Prometheus*, an iron and steel plant) for an allegedly outdated view of the standards of production. When the criticism becomes public, an inspector and a journalist are sent to investigate the case. Going from Bucharest (where Ioana's plant, *Drum nou* [New Road], was located) to Constanța and back, Alecu falls in love with Ioana, simultaneously trying to defend his plant's policy. While Ioana is superficially sketched – a beautiful and lively woman, with a fresh voice and a healthy enthusiasm, Alecu's character is more rounded, and his being played by Florin Piersic (a sex symbol of the 70s and 80s) probably helped a lot in ensuring the box-office success of the movie. Ioana sometimes sees things too simplistically in black and white, while Alecu has a more complex personality, allowing him to both love Ioana for who

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[8] In her article, Rodat (2020) also discusses the major influence that Western music and cinema had on the general lifestyle of the people, noting that these Western art forms managed "to set the tone and trends of ways of getting dressed, shoe wear, haircuts, dance, social activities" (p. 22).

she is, and stick to his principles. At the end, when the protagonists finally kiss by the sea, in response to Ioana's question about what their future life will look like, Alecu says: "I will work, and you will criticize me... lovingly" (Saizescu, 1978, 1: 44). Apart from evidencing Alecu's more complex personality, this sentence also puts an official end to the long years of fierce Communist public critique, when lives and reputations were ruined in the name of progress. The sea, together with Ovid's statue, become symbols of integration and mediation, which promote love as the solution to all conflicts.

Though quoting the earlier box-office success *Cântecele mării/Pesni moria* [Songs of the sea], *Eu, tu şi... Ovidiu* [I, you and... Ovid] differs in many ways from the light romantic comedy which won the hearts of both Romanian and Soviet citizens. It draws on the work relations and the communist ethos as reflected in both the public and the private lives of Romanian citizens. The film was produced following Ceaușescu's cultural revolution, when, in June-July 1971, he presented a series of proposals to the Executive Committee of PCR. As Stanciu (2013) remarks, the proposals stressed that the Party should play a more active part in political and educational activities, increase the role of ideological propaganda in the education of the youth, and demanded that all existing media (radio, television, publishing houses) contribute to ideological propaganda through their editorial content (pp. 1067-1068). Ceaușescu's main objective, by putting forward these theses to the Executive Committee, was to reform the Communist party and its relation to the masses – he was particularly eager to increase the role of workers in managing enterprises (Stanciu, 2013, p. 1071). The movie incorporates this ideological prerequisite in its intricate plot around the competing work ethoses of the two protagonists.

The most popular movie – or rather series – about the sea was by far the TV adaptation of Radu Tudoran's *Toate pânzele sus!* [All Sails up!]. The novel, first published in 1954, was reprinted several times and its huge market success with young and adult audiences alike was further confirmed in 1976, by Mircea Mureșan's adaptation of the book in 12 episodes for television. Although, as Romilă (2015) argues, the principal reason for the success of the book was the "escapist thrill of the sea voyage, on an old ship, at the time of an extreme ideological closure" (p. 117), the film series capitalized on several aspects of the book to make it fit the demands of party propaganda and youth education.

First of all, for ideological reasons – Darwin's theory was of particular interest to the creator of the theory of historical and dialectical materialism – Lupan's Darwinism was exaggerated in the movie adaptation of the novel: at the

end of the series, on returning to Romania (the novel ends before the return), Lupan has a meeting with the famous Romanian naturalist Grigore Antipa,[9] donating dozens of rare specimens for the collection of the Museum of Natural History. Secondly, in the movie series, educational aspects are emphasized: young Mihu, a poor boy from a mountain village (the perfect representative of the subaltern oppressed classes) is personally tutored by the Captain, Anton Lupan, who invests a lot of effort into teaching him the essential three Rs (reading, writing and arithmetic), and further initiates him into the secrets of maps and navigation. Lupan also takes pains to explain to the representative of the harbour administration in Sulina that reading is an essential skill – and even buys him a spelling book.

Thirdly, while the book ends with Lupan and his crew thinking nostalgically about returning to their homeland, the movie series inserts a final episode where Spânu, the Levantine pirate who had terrorized trade ships on the Black Sea, is exemplarily punished: his underwater hiding place in the Delta is spotted by the ever-vigilant Lupan, who, together with the Delta patrol, captures the remaining members of Spânu's crew, while Spânu himself is strangled by a peasant girl whom he had kidnapped from a nearby village. Justice, especially this kind of exemplary justice, was extremely important for the communist authorities. Like in the *Brigada Diverse* movie series, international criminals and drug-dealers stood no chance when confronted with the police force: the Romanian goverment was thus shown to both defend its citizens and successfully neutralize outside enemy forces. Furthermore, as Cristina Vatulescu (2010) contends in *Police Aesthetics*, in communist states – which were essentially police states – one of the main means of strengthening police control was through the use of media and film-making: it was just another way of showing-off and scaring potential rule-breakers.

Conclusion

Thus, while in the early period of the Communist regime, the Black Sea space is reflected in the poetry of detention written by the political detainees working at the Danube-Black Sea Canal through the symbolism of its own designation – black being both a geographical attribute, and also the colour of pure negativity, expressing the terror and deprivations endured by prisoners, during

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[9] Antipa had been Ernst Haeckel's student in Jena, and as his mentor had been very active in popularizing Darwin in Germany, he was a strong supporter of Darwinism as well. Antipa was also the first to study the fauna of the Danube; Delta and the Black Sea in great detail, founding the Bio-Oceanographic Institute in Constanța in 1932, with two reservations and research stations: one in Agigea (present day Romania) and the other at cape Caliacra (present day Bulgaria).

Ceaușescu's rule the cultural imaginary of the Black Sea undergoes a metamorphosis. With the Thaw and the re-evaluation of Soviet policy undertaken by Nikita Khrushchev, we witness the emergence of a new aesthetic, more Western-oriented (in the sense that it looks towards the satisfaction of popular taste), even if still retaining the drive towards social change in conformity with the demands of the Party. The Black Sea takes on the qualities of a mediator or turns into a paradisiacal space perfect for the development of communist romance. With this utopian re-imagining of the space of the Black Sea, the attribute 'black' suddenly ceases to appeal, and the sea turns into the staple blue sea of exotic and far-away lands. However, its newly acquired blueness is not so much an exoticization of the Black Sea as part of the vast campaign of history-rewriting which Ceaușescu undertook in his project of building a national brand of socialism. At the heart of this transformation is again the Canal: in 1984, under the pressure of official propaganda, it turns from a space of forced labour and death into one of dreams and national pride: it becomes the Blue Thoroughfare, carrying the newly reimagined Romanian soul towards the sea.

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Could there be a philosophical Zombie?
A brief attempt to analyze a controversial issue

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Abstract

The following article provides the reader with a challenge, sharing the purpose of a brief examination of some unfamiliar but debatable questions: what are "philosophical zombies"? To what extent should we really accept the existence of these creatures? Are they a fruitful intellectual creation or just another useless and counterproductive appendix to a classical conundrum? This concept is both admired and strongly contested. At the same time, it requires re-examination, because it can be relevant as a philosophical issue, as it is as a thought-experiment with specific virtues in the context of problematizing consciousness and the understanding the relationship between body and mind.

Keywords: *Zombie, thought-experiment, consciousness, body and mind.*

Introduction

The purpose of this article is to clarify the main coordinates of the "philosophical zombie concept" and to evaluate the weighty role of both the "zombie and anti-zombie arguments" into the philosophical debate about the nature and functions of consciousness. Regardless of the authors who claim that the zombie issue is nothing more than a "seductive but radically mistaken way of thinking" (Kirk, 2006, p. 1), we tend to consider this topic as being extremely relevant if we encompass it into the context of understanding the difficult "mind-body" problem. Or, as Chris Frith and Geraint Rees admits, "zombies retain a surprisingly strong influence on contemporary philosophers of consciousness" (Velmans, 2007, p. 17). In order to investigate "the logical supervenience of consciousness", we have a cognitive tool at our disposal: "to consider the logical possibility of a zombie" (Chalmers, 1997, p. 84). Our main assumption is that the "philosophical zombie" can be seen as being closely intertwined with the rejection of the reductionist theories of mind.

First of all, let us take into consideration how the "philosophical zombie concept" is defined. Far away from the Hollywood imaginary creations, the philosophical zombie is "someone or something physically identical to me (or to

other conscious being), but lacking conscious experiences altogether" (Chalmers, 1997, p. 84). There are no obvious physical differences between a zombie and a human being, on the contrary, they are perfectly identical. As Michael Tye says, "a philosophical zombie is a molecule-by-molecule duplicate of a sentient creature, a normal human being, for example, but who differs from that creature in lacking any phenomenal consciousness" (Velmans, 2007, p. 27). A philosophical zombie could be conceptualized as a useful cognitive tool giving us valuable help regarding *qualia*, the existence of the phenomenal experience, subjective feelings or sensations. Obviously, from the reductionist physical point of view, there are no *qualia* at all, but a materialistic universe with humans part of it. On the one hand, the materialist science supports this assumption. Assuming the logical conceivability of the zombies could be, as Robert Kirk (2006) points out, "a major source of confusion and distorted thinking". The same author admits, in a different place, that "whatever you may think about that idea, it forces you to think deeply about consciousness. It also helps to make clear that scientific research by itself will not be enough to answer the question of what it takes for something to be conscious" (Kirk, 2017, p. 65). On the other hand, common sense challenges us to accept the subjective experiences of "what it is like to be something" (Nagel, 1974): the way we perceive the red color of a rose, the way we feel pain or smell a ripe tomato and so on. From a dualistic point of view, *qualia* exist as an irreductibile quality of sensations that we have about things, reffering to the psychological or mental states. For dualists, *zombie* is a seductive idea brought against the physicalist reductive view about the relation between human mind and the external world. From a broader perspective, the zombie arguments are essentially dualistic attempts to argue the existence of the phenomenal consciousness. So, the zombie issue arises between two confronting philosophical perspectives: dualism and monism. "There is a long philosophical tradition, epitomized by Cartesian dualism, according to which minds are distinctly outside the natural order. There is another tradition, materialism, exemplified by Descartes's contemporary Hobbes, and which has since achieved the status of consensus (...), according to which mental phenomena are ultimately natural, physical phenomena." (Levine, 2004, p. 4) Both positions seem to have plausible arguments and dedicated followers. A relevant question arises: could the philosophical zombie bring some clarity into this debate or, on contrary, should it be abandoned?

Pros and Cons of Philosophical Zombies

Even if the term was launched into the philosophical circuit by other thinkers, such as Robert Kirk or Keith Campbell, for David J. Chalmers philosophical zombies are not empirically possible, but they are at least logically concievable or, to put it differently, they are coherent entities in an obvious manner (Chalmers, 1996, pp. 84-85). The Australian philosopher popularizes *phenomenal zombies* in order to prove that materialist explanations about consiousness are wrong. His strategy is to transform these hypothetical creatures in a valuable tool in order to investigate the way our consciousness *supervenes* in complex biological systems. First of all, he defines a phenomenal zombie as „someone or something physically identical to me (or to any other conscious being), but lacking conscious experiences altogether." (Chalmers, 1996, p. 84) Then, he clearly establishes the identity relation between a zombie and a human being through three dimensions: *physical*, *functional* and *psychological*. But, as the author of *The Conscious Mind* argues, there is a major characteristic of a phenomenal zombie, because even if he reacts in a similar way with humans, "none of this functioning will be accompanied by any real conscious experience" (Chalmers, 1996, p. 85). Much more, there is a logical possibility for us to live in *a zombie world*: "a world physically identical to ours, but in which there are no conscious experiences at all. In such a world, everybody is a zombie." (*ibidem*). Criticizing physical reductionism through this thought-experiment, Chalmers proves to be a follower of dualism: if we can conceive something, it means that it is possible for such thing to exist, because whatever is conceivable is possible. There is an inseparable ontological distinction between mental states and physical states. These states are not reducible one to another. His philosophical belief is that consciousness or mental states *supervene* in a well-developed biological system. *The hard problem of the consciousness* (the explanation of the way phenomenal consciousness supervenes) seems to resist against any reductionist attack from materialism, behaviorism, functionalism and so forth.

Also, Joseph Levine is one of the philosophers who admits "the conceivability idea" of philosophical zombies, even if accepting this plausible premise could make the argument evolving to the conclusion that, regarding consciousness, materialist explanations are false. Appealing to common sense intuitions, Levine (2001, p. 44) concludes that the zombie argument "is not formally contradictory, nor does it contain any semantic incoherence." Even if "materialism rules out the metaphysical possibility of a «zombie»" (Levine, 2001, p. 43), Levine takes very seriously into consideration the idea that an

epistemological assumption could have ontological implications. The logical level of analysis is changed with the metaphysical one in order to prove that we can not establish an identity between mental subjective states and physiological or brain states.

Similar to Rene Descartes' *automaton* or much more to *Frankenstein' monster* created by Mary Shelley, a philosophical zombie tends to be perceived more than a cultural icon. This hypothetical entity is a symbol of a paradigm shift in the way we think about mind-body relation and the problem of consciousness. In the middle of the *qualia* debate, it reassumes the classical dualistic point of view – mind distinct from matter and *consciousness as a property that supervene in the matter* – and also orchestrates new responses to the behavioristic and materialistic supremacy, which postulates the matter without any mind at all. „Perhaps there is vital essence that turns a zombie into a human. There are various proposals as to the nature of this vital essence." (Velmans, 2007, p. 18) The *functionalists* admit that consciousness is the same as complex computational algorithms. From this assumption there could be derived the idea that the material support of the consciousness is not so important. Brain is just *hardware*, and mind or consciousness is just a complex program or a *software*. And if we succeed in creating a mechanism with a sufficient level of complexity, then we have produced a conscious machine. It is quite difficult here to avoid the spectrum of dualism.

From a materialistic point of view, exemplarily theorized by Daniel C. Dennett, a philosophical zombie is nothing more than a logical fallacy. For the author of *Consciousness Explained*, by indulging fantasy through their thought-experiments, dualist philosophers only struggle to produce such imaginary and odd entities in order to build a convincing theory about consciousness. This strategy suffers, as Dennett argues, a fatal logical incoherency and we should dismiss without delay the so-called "zombie problem" (Dennett, 1992, p. 95). For Dennett, robots like Shakey are paradigmatic zombies, they seem to perform all kinds of tasks, they navigate in an intelligent manner, they adapt to the environment, they monitor their own activities, even express or report on their internal states. But these internal states are not conscious states at all. At this point, Dennett replaces the zombie with the *zimbo*, this is "a zombie that, as a result of self-monitoring, has internal (but unconscious) higher-order informational states that are about its other, lower-order informational states. (...) A zimbo is just a zombie that is behaviorally complex, thanks to a control system that permits recursive self-representation" (Dennett, 1992, p. 310). Translating all the internal states into the behavioristic language, Dennett concludes that zombie is nothing more than a philosophical nonsense: "I don't think either the concept of a zombie or the folk-

psychological categories of higher-order thoughts can survive except as relicts of a creed outworn" (Dennett, 1992, pp. 313-314). Denying the existence of the phenomenal consciousness, and implicitly the dualist perspective, Dennett dismisses in an accurate way the zombie problem because it is not "a serious philosophical idea but a preposterous and ignoble relic of ancient prejudices" (Dennett, 1992, p. 406). His materialistic account of the subjectivity is not the only methodical rebuttal of the qualia. Analysing the philosophy of Daniel Dennett, Christopher S. Hill declares that "Zombies are ridiculous!" (Hill, 1994, p. 540).

In another field of philosophical ideas, Michael Tye observes that if we, as humans, experience phenomenal consciousness, meaning that we must have sensory experiences about the external world. The question is: could a twin zombie, which is a perfectly physical duplicate of us, experience no conscious states at all? "Since my twin is an exact physical duplicate of me, his inner psychological states will be functionally isomorphic with my own (assuming he is located in an identical environment)." (Velmans, 2007, pp. 27-28) "I and my zombie-duplicate must have the same behavior or to respond in the same way to the stimuli. From this functionalist perspective, which identifies phenomenal psychological states as functional states, there is no difference between me and my duplicate-zombie. (...) my zombie twin has just the same beliefs, thoughts, and desires as I do." (Velmans, 2007, p. 28) Tye construct an argument about the condition of possibility of the philosophical zombie. It is very important to make the difference between the real existence of the zombies and the logical possibility of these creatures. Even if we cannot accept the real existence of the zombies because they deny natural laws, we must admit the hypothesis of the logical possibility. For Michael Tye, philosophical zombies seriously threaten the physicalist view about consciousness. The physicalist problem is to explain how the physical states determine the mental states. The solution is to reduce the mental to the physical. "Phenomenal states, it seems, are not identical with internal, objective physical states, nor are they determined by physical states. This is the problem of microphysical duplicates." (Velmans, 2007, p. 28) So the problem with physicalism is to explain how and, if at all, mental states are determined by the physical states. The physicalists reject the idea that there are experiences (mental facts) that are not determined by the microphysical states or facts. To fight against the functionalistic view about phenomenal consciousness, Tye imagines a thought experiment: *the inverted spectrum*. He imagines a person, Tom, who, after an operation, whenever he sees red objects, he experiences the feeling of "greenness" in the same way we experience the feeling of "redness" without being aware of this inverted quality. Despite the identical functional qualities, Tom experiences

different mental states in comparison to the rest of us. "So the phenomenal quality of Tomʼs experience is not a matter of its functional role." (Velmans, 2007, p. 29) Tyeʼs conclusion is that the functionalist view about phenomenal consciousness is wrong. Another author, Robert Kirk, in *Robots, Zombies und Us*, assumes a version of functionalism, pledging that consciousness is just a matter of functions of the complex organisms or, as he puts it, "a matter of the performance of certain functions" (Kirk, 2017, p. 14).

Being a philosopher gives you the privilege to imagine and navigate into the possible worlds. In one of these worlds, everyone around you could be nothing more than a zombie. There is a provocative mission to prove with strong arguments if they are conscious or not, even if they act like us. The behavioristic way of conceiving human nature is far away from being flawless: seeing actions and reactions, observing the behavior gives you small chances to analyze and understand the realm of subjectivity or the inner non-physical life. The zombie issue seems to arise in the controversial space that lies between first-person perspective and the third-person perspective. But when it comes to us, each of us could say that we are not zombies, we are actually conscious beings, which means that we possess phenomenal experiences.

Conclusion

The concept of the "philosophical zombie" could be understood as an intellectual device that stimulates new ways of thinking about the mind-body relation and also as a thought-experiment that pinpoints strong empirical programs and unsettling findings about consciousness. Even if some of us do not accept that it brings significant value to the scientific study of the mind, we have to admit that it fuels one of the strongest debate about the nature and functions of "what it is like to be something" (Nagel, 1974). The "philosophical zombie" could serve as a valuable tool against any form of reductionism. In our attempt to analyze this philosophical conundrum (the mind/body problem), we might discover that consciousness could be more than a brain state or function. Confronting ourselves with a challenge about identical beings which have no phenomenal experiences at all might enable us to envision, beyond puzzles and paradoxical reflections, some forthcomings of the truth. One of them is that the science about consciousness is still at its inception. Against the reductionist point of view, we might accept, as Plato, Descartes or other philosophers did, that the world has two fundamental substances: matter and consciousness. If we accept this dualistic attitude, we risk bringing ourselves into the area of implausibility or inconsistency. Also, we have

to pay serious attention to some materialistic arguments which are built by physicalist philosophers such as Daniel C. Dennett and others. Neurophysiology offered provocative ways and instruments about processes in our brain, about neural correlates or substrates of the consciousness, establishing a view about the mind which is build on chemical and physical reactions, electric processes and so forth. But that seems not to be enough. Against the dualistic view, which assumes a fundamental difference between physical states and conscious experiences, both with specific attributes, the physicalist approach affirms only the physical states. And where the science ends, bold philosophical hypothesis arises.

Based on the many common sense intuitions, the concept of the "philosophical zombie" warns us about the danger of confusing two levels of understanding. One is the logical analysis and the other is the ontological one. Even if we can conceive some beings without subjective experiences, it is not necessary to admit that these beings are actual ontological possibilities. Logical conceivability should not be confused with ontological or natural possibility. In this case, a willing confusion could bring the philosophical thought into a paradoxical situation. The existence of the phenomenal experiences might be admitted only as a mental experiment or hypothesis. This has not only major implications about the scientific value of our findings, but on the deepest beliefs and attitudes of the common sense.

Bringing the topic to the present day: should we talk about our smart devices or strong AI artifacts as "tehno-zombies"? Or, could we accept that an intelligent robot to be considered conscious? Or is it just a mechanism that is successfully doing its job? Even the functionalists are trying to convince us that being intelligent is not enough for being conscious. Behaving in a proper way or acting *like* a sentient being is not equivalent to be a real conscious being. Also, conceivability is not enough for the possibility, and even less, for the actual existence.

The concept of the "philosophical zombie" brings us paradoxically closer and further from a major problem in the philosophy of mind: the possibility to identify and describe the nature of consciousness. It is not easy at all to understand and convince in a scientific way about what we consciously experience or about *qualia*. At the same time, the "philosophical zombie" brings us to the odd revelation that consciousness could remain for a long time from now just an elusive or an unexplained human phenomenon. Even so, it keeps our curiosity alive, it also keeps our intellectual struggles to understand and explain the unexplainable on the right track.

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Providing Feedback to Learners on Tasks in EFL Classes

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Abstract

Feedback is one of the various types of techniques used by language teachers to understand student's progress to a given activity or task. Frequent feedback involves good communication between students. During a task, the teacher monitors and helps. Given the correct answer and reasons, lowers anxiety. Providing feedback to learners on tasks and other types of assignments improve their language acquisition. Why should teachers use feedback on Tasks? What types of feedback do teachers use in language classes? Which are some of the advantages? These are some of the research questions that are considered in this paper, from theoretical to practical point of view. Feedback affects students' language proficiency at any level. What should learners improve? Where should learners focus? Effective learning depends on effective frequent feedback. In this paper, there are considered some types of tasks, activities and types of feedback used in different language classes.

Keywords: *written feedback, oral, acquiring language, efficient learning process.*

Giving Feedback on Tasks

As English teachers, we know that feedback can be applied to a range of activities, but in this paper, it refers to a variety of techniques used by the teacher to facilitate learning from the learner to a task or activity and to the importance of it. The teacher is responsible for student's proficiency, for this reason everyone has the right to know its progress. Tasks are integral parts of learning. If they are not evaluated, then the students do not know how have they progressed. For this reason, it is very important to give feedback on tasks.

The emphasis in a communicative task is on successful task completion and consequently the primary focus is on meaning as learners realise their

communicative intentions. (*Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*, p. 167)

A teacher employs a variety of techniques to give feedback to learners. Feedback can be oral and written. Oral feedback is the most natural one of the feedback types, because it can be given instantly and frequently when needed (Clarke, 2003). It depends whether you need to use the first or the second. There are also different types such as teacher or student's feedback (pair, group). The first is traditional, while the second involves more learners and is very good for communication.

While giving feedback:

➢ The teacher directs feedback by beginning from pair to pair or from group to group, and from a question to another question.

➢ Time controlling. It depends on the type of task, on the mistakes or errors the amount of time given to feedback. Feedback from the experience may take 5 to 10 minutes or an extended one up to 15 minutes.

➢ Proficient students grasp feedback quicker than low proficiency ones, for this reason the teacher is responsible to provide feedback to everyone.

➢ The teacher is responsible to low the barriers of anxiety, to encourage students to participate and talk.

➢ The teacher should ask whether students understood after providing feedback.

Teachers might benefit from exploring their feedback practices and developing an awareness of what constitutes effective feedback (Richardson, 2019).

Why should teachers use feedback on Tasks?

Feedback is given for different reasons:

➢ First, it is enjoyable, gives satisfaction and shows to the student if the task is correct.

➢ If it is an oral task, it encourages students to participate, to cooperate and use what they know. At the end of the task, feedback is given by the teacher or by the students. In the second case, it creates a challenge for them.

➢ Students understand not only where the mistakes are but also even, why there is a mistake or an error. They learn from errors. The teacher asks the students what they found difficult to understand or to do.

➢ If students perform a task and we just listen but we do not provide feedback, then the students will never understand what went wrong.

Feedback is a continuing process, thus it is not given just at the end but even while students deal with a task or activity, the teacher monitors and gives feedback. The direct corrective feedback is what EFL students in fact want (Zaman & Azad 2012).

Feedback

1. Teacher: The teacher asks questions to keep students interest high.

➢ If it is a grammar exercise, the teacher may refer to a grammar reference so students can check their answers. As an example grammar books or test books usually have got the answers at the end as Headway Intermediate Tests or Destination Grammar etc.

➢ Answers are provided on the blackboard or on an answer sheet handed to students at the end of the task

➢ Students are divided into groups to check and give the correct answers.

2. Students give feedback

➢ Pair checking. In the same way as they work together, students may correct each other. They collaborate, discuss, use what they know and exchange ideas in the target language. Shy or less proficient students will be motivated to interact with their peers.

➢ From the experience, in simulation classes, we encourage students to take the role of the teacher. This is effective because they take responsibility and ask students to choose someone from the group to conduct feedback.

➢ Students are given some flashcards that have the answer on the back. After completing the task, they can give the correct answer.

As language classes are student centered classes, the introduction of feedback by students themselves gives the opportunity to be leaders and take responsibilities. Thus, feedback as a process itself teaches students to use the most effective techniques. A task gives students the opportunity to interact about the task, use English language and focus on the task aim.

Some tips while giving feedback to students in EFL classes:

1. Be positive

When we always check something, the tendency is to point out mistakes. Well, from the experience this is wrong. We have to choose carefully the words by praising and pointing out with chosen words if there are mistakes. Expressions like: *Ok, but you could have done this…; It may have another word to be used…: Well you see, good job, but next time try to be more precise…* If we immediately say negative words, then the student would not like to speak next time. They would be afraid because of mistakes or errors that they may make. This does not help.

2. Differentiate techniques

Try not to give feedback in the same manner. Once you may mix oral with written feedback. Use different colorful chalks or crayons for different types of mistakes while you give feedback. It depends whether if it is an oral task or a written task while giving feedback. If it is an oral one, let the student finish then you may give feedback. Correction should wait otherwise the student will lose confidence.

3. Involve students on giving feedback

Always choose try to choose tasks that are interactive. In such a way while giving feedback you may choose peer correction technique. Divide students in groups to give feedback to each other. This makes feedback funny and not boring. Students still interact and understand that they learn from mistakes.

4. Do not focus just on some students

In the same way as we give tasks to everyone and in the same way that we choose carefully interactive activities to involve all the students, our primary focus is to listen and to correct everyone not just those that speak more than the others. 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 (Hyland, 2006). We should not discriminate. As soon as we enter in a language class, everyone is important and has to learn in an equal way. Feedback is an important tool of any language classroom. If it is done correctly and effectively it helps students to learn effectively.

Practical Tasks and Feedback

Below there are given some types of tasks given to students that study English as a foreign language and for specific purposes.

*Project-works***:** enables to use different topics with different subjects. Students exploit internet information and draw conclusions.

❖ Example 1ˢᵗ year students of   Business Management

Project*: Create a website, for your school (consider the points why? What to put and what we can do with a website).*

Description

Students are divided in groups of 4. One is the leader. Students work for 20 minutes. While doing the task they collaborate with each other in English language. The aim of the task is to use cognitive knowledge, exploit information, use English language. It is a written task. The teacher monitors. After the task the groups evaluate each other. They give feedback on what they understood, what should they improve.

❖ Example 1ˢᵗ year students of the Faculty of Humanities

Project work:

-Albania and UK landscapes and beautiful sites to visit.

-Education and curriculum development in the Albanian context. A comparison of past and present.

-Languages as a cultural bridge and their role in globalization.

Students are divided in groups of 4. They have to choose between the topics. One is the leader. Students work for 20 minutes. The aim of the task is to use cognitive knowledge, exploit information, use English language. It is a written task. While doing the task they collaborate with each other in English language. The teacher monitors. After the task the groups evaluate each other. They give feedback on what they understood, what should they improve.

❖ Example 1ˢᵗ year students of   Informatics

Project work

Create an ergonomic school. Design the project and give details. Consider technical specifications.

Students are divided in groups of 4. They have to choose between the topics. One is the leader. Students work for 20 minutes. The aim of the task is to use

cognitive knowledge, exploit information, use English language for specific purposes. It is a written task. While doing the task they collaborate with each other in English language. The teacher monitors. After the task the groups evaluate each other. The teacher gives feedback on what they understood, what should they improve.

  Topic for discussion

    Speaking about visiting well known sites

 Suggest a place to visit in your country

 Give arguments about pros and cons of visiting it

    Technology and communication

  Speak about ways of communication that we use nowadays. Which one do you use often?

  The benefits and risks of internet. Playing online games: why and why not?

   What do you consider a virtual crime? How can parents control their children while using internet?

  Students work for 10 minutes. The aim of the task is to use cognitive knowledge, exploit information, use English language. It is an oral task. While doing the task they collaborate with each other in English language. The teacher monitors and interact. The teacher gives feedback on what they understood, what should they improve.

  To relate what is explained in the task description, aim and feedback, let us have a look at what is said about the aim of tasks.

  Tasks of any kind require the activation of a range of appropriate general competences, for example: knowledge and experience of the world; sociocultural knowledge (concerning life in the target community and essential differences between practices, values and beliefs in that community and the learner's own society); (*Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*, p. 167)

  So as it is seen, the task itself requires and evolves different types of knowledge from the student.

  Essays*: enables to use cognitive knowledge, may be used with different classes on different issues.*

 ❖ Example: 1ˢᵗ year students of Business Management
 The economic growth of Albania in the past decade.
 Example: 1ˢᵗ year students of Informatics
 The role of technology in the contemporary society. How has computer changed our life. (1ˢᵗ year informatics students)
 Description

Students work at home. It is a written task. The teacher evaluates and give written feedback. The teacher gives feedback on what they understood, what should they improve.

In the case of tasks designed for language learning or teaching purposes, performance is concerned both with meaning and the way meanings are comprehended, expressed and negotiated. (*Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*, p. 167)

Conclusion

In language classes getting and giving feedback to students on different kinds of tasks or activities, teachers should encourage, should be clear and let the students know that what they do and how do they learn is appreciated. In this way we build student's self-confidence. In student-centered classes, feedback has a special role in acquiring the knowledge through tasks and activities. In the same way as we give feedback on tests being formative or summative, we can give feedback to make them revise and learn from mistakes.

Differentiating feedback techniques encourage and motivate students to interact and collaborate with other peers. The teacher instructs, diagnose and resolve problems and have a clear picture of what should be improved in teaching. Effective teaching has positive effect on learning, the main goal of both teacher and student in a language classroom.

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ESSAYS

PRESENTATIONS

REVIEWS

Regularity in Semantic Change. Onomatopoeias as Centers of Expansion in Romance Languages

Review

Simona GEORGESCU
La regularidad en el cambio semántico. Las onomatopeyas en cuanto centros de expansión en las lenguas románicas. (2021): Strasbourg, Éditions de Linguistique et de Philologie

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After two centuries of Romance linguistics, one might assume there is nothing left to discover: each Romance language has been studied synchronically and diachronically, compared to other languages and varieties, analyzed and dissected to its finest atoms. Nevertheless, there are still plenty of grey areas that may benefit from a historical and comparative approach, especially in the field of etymology, where dictionaries sometimes show hesitations about the origin of certain lexemes and list them with an unknown / uncertain etymology, as expressive formations or as elements inherited from an obscure substratum.

Compared linguistics might shed some light upon the issue, and several studies have shown that there is more than one approach to the matter. Recently, the Society of Romance Linguistics has published an outstanding work authored by Simona Georgescu, which is entitled *Regularity in Semantic Change. Onomatopoeias as Centers of Expansion in Romance Languages* (*La regularidad en el cambio semántico. Las onomatopeyas en cuanto centros de expansión en las lenguas románicas*, Éditions de Linguistique et de Philologie, Strasbourg, 2021).

The research traces the recurrent semantic-cognitive schemes that determine the evolution of onomatopoeias from a typological perspective, and later applies such schemes within the Romance language family in order to identify the etymology of words of an obscure origin. The author first observes that there are certain conceptual areas which, recurrently and regardless of language, contain a

large number of lexemes whose origin is unknown. This category includes Romance terms that refer to, for example, various types of "spherical objects", "protrusions", "cavities" or "small animals" (such as frogs or lizards).

Etymological dictionaries often accept with resignation the apparent impossibility of identifying the origin of the terms, either by offering a compromise solution or by applying the label of "expressive creations". However, as the author points out, this etymological difficulty perpetuated from one dictionary to another is not accidental, since it derives from the chronic habit of ignoring semantics in etymological investigations.

Simona Georgescu revives the century-old observations in Hermann Hilmer's works that had been ignored by linguists, explores and capitalizes these old perspectives and manages to reinterpret them from the perspective of recent linguistic theories. Hilmer's work forms the basis of her theoretical model, but she proposes a new, innovative method of research by placing historical semantics in the foreground and rejecting the traditional etymological approach. The latter sought almost exclusively to explain the phonetic form by applying the classical laws of evolution, while semantic change was interpreted at will, with the mere intention to find the slightest justification for the proposed etymology. Georgescu's book changes this perspective by favoring the concept over the form.

The theoretical basis of this approach is cognitive semantics, whose principles are clearly and concisely described in the first part of the work. Reviewing the most important theories on the cognitive and experiential foundations that underlie the change of meaning, Simona Georgescu aims, among other things, to provide an answer to the question posed by Peter Koch in 2000: are there any cognitive universals that are strong enough to guide, like an invisible hand, the innovations speakers bring on designation and consequently the permanent changes in designation?

In her quest for a viable conclusion, Simona Georgescu starts by analyzing a significant number of empirical data from various Indo-European languages, which prove that semantic evolutions are not chaotic – as assumed in traditional studies – but fall into certain patterns that are valid regardless of time and space. After observing certain meanings in a recurringly polysemous relationship, such as "blow", "spherical object", "instrument", "fragment", "protuberance", "cavity", etc. and, at the same time, the repetition of the same concepts within etymological families, the author establishes a coherent system of semantic trajectories that encompass these seemingly divergent meanings, and thus manages to explain the cognitive connections between them. Thus, the investigation based on numerous examples excerpted from different languages highlights the fact that an original

semantic core, represented by the concept of "sudden and violent movement" ("blow", "cut", "fall"), is the basis for the evolution in two general directions:

- an object involved in the movement: e. g. a falling object (most often a fruit, hence "spherical object"), an instrument used for applying the blow (cudgel, hammer etc.);

- the result of the movement: a fragment obtained from a cut, blow, break; a protuberance seen either as a remnant of a cut object (e. g. stump) or as a projection of an object after the impact with a malleable surface; a trace (left, for example, by a falling object, such as a stain); a cavity (the reverse of the protrusion due to the impact of a body with a surface); a trait (resulting as an effect of such a sudden movement, for example "pointless", "hornless", "blunt" – hence, metaphorically, "stupid", "rude" etc.).

After analyzing this basic concept of "sudden movement" from a typological perspective, the author points out that its verbalization is done instinctively through an onomatopoeia that reproduces the acoustic impression it causes. Thus, it is fair to say that onomatopoeias are some of the most prolific centers of semantic expansion, as the trajectories she identifies outline a well-defined cognitive network with an acoustic sensation as its core.

Based on this network of semantic evolutions, it is possible to advance towards the etymological identification of many lexemes that were presented by dictionaries as having an uncertain origin. This concrete application of the schemes on the lexis with unknown etymology constitutes the second part of the work, in which four etymological families are analyzed, derived from the following roots: *bott-/*butt-, *tokk-, *takk-, *tšott-/*tšutt-.

In order to ensure a scientific approach to etymology, the author consistently uses the comparative grammar/ reconstruction method, based on the model used in the new *Dictionnaire Étymologique Roman* (DÉRom, http://www.atilf.fr/DERom) for the reconstruction of the Old Romance lexis.

Thus, the first step is to identify all the Romance terms that belong to a family. It is precisely this etymological identification that has presented the most difficulties so far, as many words whose phonetic structure undoubtedly indicated a genetic relationship have formerly been separated from their cognates due to an apparent semantic divergence. Or, by proving that all their meanings actually fit inside a single cognitive network, Simona Georgescu manages to establish etymological relationships between words that, not infrequently, appeared in dictionaries as having completely different origins. Also, the trajectories she identified as recurrent in the semantic evolution demonstrate that certain meanings recorded in lexicography as belonging to homonyms are, in fact, polysemy

relationships. Actually, by identifying an original semantic nucleus, the identity between lexemes considered of different origins becomes evident.

After a detailed analysis, the author proposes, at the end of each chapter of the second part of the book, the reconstruction of some Old Romance lexemes whose semantics justify all further developments. The applied chapters, consisting in the actual interpretations and results of the research, investigate a corpus excerpted from numerous sources (lexicographic and other), which illustrates the particular situation of the lexemes and roots in diverse Romance languages and dialects.

Simona Georgescu achieves her goals both in the reconstruction of the etymology of some frequently used Romance lexemes and in the establishment of the bases for a new method of investigation in compared lexicology – or in historical semantics, to be more accurate. Her research is reliable and rigorous, well documented and supported by logical inferences, so it is fair to assume that it will become the foundation for other researches in this scientific field.

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