

## THE NATIONAL CULTURE OF ROMANIANS, A SOURCE OF VALUES, IDEOLOGIES, SYMBOLS FOR ORGANISATIONAL CULTURES

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### Abstract

The aim of this research is to point out the relation between the national and the organisational culture, starting from the aim according to which the foundations of the organisational culture are given by national cultures. In creating the concept of organisational culture, we have to start from the human being, from its historic existence, from the psychology of a nation, in other words from national culture.

*Keywords: national cultures, organisational culture, values, ideologies, symbols*

### 1. Introduction

The access of the individual to organisations involves the existence of certain ideas and feelings which can be developed at the same time and sent to the others or which might be replaced by taking over the already existing values, customs and rules from that organisational environment. The organisational culture emerges from the unification of these convictions, beliefs, ideas, and feelings. The foundation and development of the cultural forms on an organisational level can be reported to other dimensions on a national level. In other words, the organisational culture is part of a national culture. It originates in the history, values, personalities, symbols of a nation, in the successes and downfalls of the social system.

In consequence, our aim was to sum up the most important moments in the national culture of the Romanians, presenting afterwards the values, ideas of the organisational culture on another level. We will draw up small monographs of the concerns, attempts, successes registered in the national Romanian culture in the period between 16<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> centuries.

### 2. Methods

We limited our research to this period for at least two reasons: firstly, we have to comply with the proportions of a research of this type, and secondly, we think that the above mentioned epoch is relevant for the process of training, crystallization and development of the Romanian culture.

### 3. Findings

In the cultural evolution of the Romanians, the 16<sup>th</sup> century marks the incipient period for the Romanian written texts. In this century the Romanian society experienced a series of economic, political and cultural changes opening the daring perspective of emancipation of the Romanian language, and implicitly of abandoning Slavonic languages. The first Romanian literary monuments, materialized either under the form of translated religious texts, or under the aspect of original or processed writings, use a "tiresome and hard language, with an imperfect phonetics, with an archaic morphological structure and a lexicon far away from the wishes of the translator" (Munteanu – Țâra, 1983, p.78). The translated or copied books, besides the well known pattern in the epoch, is sometimes influenced by the linguistic patterns of the area where they appear, pointing out a series of special features which are important for the deciphering of the innovations or the conservatism of the areas, but also for the settlement of the norm-like dialectal divergencies.

The largest number of these Romanian language monuments is registered in Transylvania. "There - unlike Moldova and Muntenia - where the Slavonic, as a cultural language was efficiently protected by the church and the administration - the conditions for the introduction of written Romania were much more favourable in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. First of all, due to the fact that the position of Slavonic was incomparable lower in Transylvania than in the Principates... But at the same time, the general European ideas played an important role for the use of the national written languages which might have come and flourish more easily in Transylvania, because they did not experience any oppositions from the officialities" (*Ibidem*, p.66).

The series of the literary language monuments in the 16<sup>th</sup> century is opened by the *rhotacism texts: Codicele Voronețean, Psaltirea Voronețeană, Psaltirea Scheiană și Psaltirea Hurmuzachi*. Analysing the language of these

writings Ion Gheție formulates the hypothesis according to which there are two layers of language, a Southern one and a Northern one, the latter belonging to the original and the last to the copyist (Gheție, 1974, 35).

Between 1559-1560, as a result of the hard work of the deacon Coresi, 11 church books were published in Romanian in Braşov. Coresi's work was not restricted to the act of printing but also to the language of its texts, leaving out the regionalisms and neologisms which were a heavy coat for the Romanian language of the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

On the same line inaugurated by deacon Coresi, we can find another important printing for our national culture, *Palia de la Orăştie* (1582), with a preface written in Romania, which mentions that as nations have translated the word of God in their own language, "only we Romanians do not have in our language" what other have translated from "Jidovesc, Greek and Serbian".

We mention another religious book copied in 1574 by the deacon Radu from Măniceşti (Muntenia) in the Rhodos island, from the order of Pătraşcu Vodă, which in real life is a reproduction after Coresi's *Tetravanghelul*.

As a consequence of the unfavourable conditions, the book printing process stopped in the last decade of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, being started again in the fourth decade under the care of Matei Basarab in the Romanian Country and Vasile Lupu in Moldavia.

The style of our first books reflects the tendency of the translator to stick to the original, and the inability to give a clear Romanian expression to the ideas and facts transposed to his/her language. A visible detachment from the source can be seen in Coresi's printings where the language becomes plain and usual, being guided to a much higher extent by the spoken language.

The official translation and printing of the church books in Romanian enjoyed full recognition in the middle of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, "when the learned bishops Varlaam and Dosoftei, as well as the rulers Vasile Lupu and Matei Basarab encouraged or were directly involved in the introduction of Romanian in the church and in the chancellor court" (Munteanu – Țâra, 1983, p.79). The cultural men of that period, especially the chroniclers, used the national language to answer to the European humanist principles and ideas they were aiming at.

„Being in a full process of creation and extension with the help of the printing industry, literary Romanian gains a new important field with the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century: *historiography*, after it started be introduced in the previous century in *religious texts*" (*Istoria gândirii lingvistice româneşti*, p.74). The Romanian historiography in Romania is illustrated, as it is known, in Moldavia through the writings of Grigore Ureche, Miron and Nicolae Costin, Ion Neculce, and in the Romanian Country through the writings of the High Steward Constantin Cantacuzino, Radu Greceanu and Radu Popescu, to which two anonymous chronicles are added.

The cult literature of the epoch points out the language preoccupations of the chroniclers subordinated to the historical preoccupations, promoting scientific arguments of the origins of the Romanians. Being preoccupied of the historical evolution of the Romanians, the Moldavian chroniclers and the Hish Steward Constantin Cantacuzino supported the Roman descendancy of the Romanian nation based on linguistic data. The often formulated conviction that language is essential in setting the roots of a nation is also found in *Letopiseţul Ţării Moldovei* (1642-1647) written by Grigore Ureche, but also in Miron Costin's writings; he declares that „the most obvious proof of this nation, of its origins is its language, which is the pure Latin, as corrupted as Italian" (Miron Costin, *Opere*, 1958, p.212).

Besides the hypothesis regarding the etymology of the eponym *valah*, humanists of the 17<sup>th</sup> centuries considered that support of certain historical affirmations is found in the names of places or water. „The preoccupation for etymology, which is more accentuated in the case of Miron Costin, represents a way of setting the historical truth" (*Istoria gândirii lingvistice româneşti*, p.26). Therefore, names as *Bistriţa* (explained by the change of the Latin original name *Repedea*, with its Slavic equivalent *bystro*, *repede*), *Boureni* (from rom.bour), *Roman* (after the name of Dragoş vodă's brother) are just a few examples encountered in the Moldavian chronicles, but which represent an important starting point for the Romanian toponymy even if most of the associations made by the Romanian scholars proved to be inaccurate.

The activity of the chroniclers was not restricted to interpreting church books, but it was focused most of the time, on dealing with the phrase, enriching the Romanian lexicon, the need of introducing the linguistic borrowing. Along with the establishment of the historicity of the linguistic phenomenon, the borrowing was often explained by the direct contact with the other nations and it was considered an immediate cause for the changes in language, as it comes from Miron Costin's statement: "during the time when the Romanians inhabited Maramureş and Olt, the free peasants under the influence of other languages, could not change the Romanian language" (Miron Costin, *Opere*, 1958, p.229). This opinion had higher dimensions for Dimitrie Cantemir which went beyond the attempts of the contemporaries, making a vast reform in the Romanian vocabulary. „Its multiple scientific and literary preoccupations, which are incomparably vaster and more varied than of all Romanian scholars in the old era, forced Dimitrie Cantemir to work with notions and ideas for which the Romanians of that day did not offer a corresponding

terminology. Under these circumstances, his effort to increase the lexical thesaurus with abstract scientific terms (mostly philosophical) seems natural, selecting them carefully from other languages, or creating them by methods specific for Romanian” (Munteanu – Țăra, 1983, p.87). In this context, we exemplify with the famous list of neologisms of the Moldavian scholar which precedes the paper *Istoria ieroglifică* (1705), entitled *Scară a numerelor și cuvintelor streine tâlcuitoare*; 260 terms are explained here, with the precision of a linguist, from an etymological and semantic point of view. It is an interesting manifestation of certain lexicographic preoccupations which announce the future activity of the Ardeal School.

The national culture of the Romanians begins its real road to modernization in the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, under the impulse of the enlightenment ideology. Under the sign of this renewing spirit, according to which nations had to be emancipated from the state of ignorance through learning and science, the Romanian culture gains new coordinates in Transylvania and afterwards in the Principates. In fact, this period is dominated by ideas, values promoted by the well know Transylvanian movement, Școala Ardeleană (The School of Ardeal). „The new trend responded to a primary need, that of affirmation and demonstration of the idea of legitimate rights, from a historical point of view, of the Romanians to be recognised as a nations with the same rights as other nations, and the right to benefit from the benefactions of other cultures and to spread it in schools in the national language ” (*Ibidem*, p.140).

The starting point for this new cultural wave, strongly connected with everything it was happening in Europe, is the editing in Vienna in 1780 of Samuil Micu’s and Gheorghe Șincai’s work, *Elementa linguae Daco-Romanae sive Valachicae*. Although it is written in Latin and only the examples are Romanian, *Elementa...* is the first Romanian printed grammar; moreover it represents a real affirmation of our national conscience. And here they discuss not only the origin and the subsequent development of Romanian but also new debates on its transformation in a language of culture. The paper cannot be taken out of the complex political-social context specific for Transylvania of the 18<sup>th</sup> century serving as a major argument in the Romanian claiming movement; therefore it makes a rigorous demonstration based on scientific arguments of the Latin origin of Romanian, coming to the conclusion that it is an element of Roman language.

Through their actions oriented towards all sectors of life in Transylvania, the leaders of The School of Ardeal open the path to certain substantial reforms in the Romanian culture. Among these, we mention the need of the unification of Romanian by the compliance from all speaker of a certain number of phonetic, morphologic and syntactic rules, elaborating certain principles meant to facilitate the introduction of the Latin alphabet in the Romanian writing; a hard work embraced by other scholars of that time as for example Paul Iorgovici, Radu Tempea, Ioan Piurariu – Molnar, Constantin Diaconovici-Loga etc. The first Romanian grammars are written and the first Romanian dictionaries are scientifically elaborated during this time.

This outburst of our national culture in the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century opens the safe path to its modernization, carried further on new coordinates in the next century.

We outlined the main directions of this vast development field of Romanian in the period of the 16<sup>th</sup> -18<sup>th</sup> centuries in order to update and to reaffirm the concerns, probations, successes and sometimes the exaggerations of the Romanian scholars which managed to make important steps for the development. It is natural to think that from such an organisational culture, the cultures of the organisations from Romania are definitely setting solid grounds. Organisations exist in a mother culture and most of the elements they consist of are derived from the presumptions of the national culture; and the organisations have the power of pointing out, of sometimes amplifying various elements of the mother culture.

We have identified *four types of cultural phenomena* in relation to organisations which refer to:

- the influence of national and local culture through the members of the organisation;
- the influence of the professional community (through social status, relations, ways of thinking);
- the culture of the organisation group (preoccupations, norms, socio-professional categories, way of thinking) which often determine the emergence of subcultures;

-the culture of the organization is characterized by the framework of behaviours and elements offering an internal coherence, as well as through certain practices which are not random.

The organisational culture represents a *framework*. It involves the existence of some relations between the elements composing it and not a despaired collection of reverse habits.

The culture of an organisation consists of a whole inside of which each element answers to the others. This framework is specific for the organisation. There might be common traits to more organisational culture, they can resemble but they cannot be mistaken. The elements of culture represent *types of behaviour*. This means that the behaviour is not singular, ephemeral or accidental. We can distinguish between types, characteristics which are stable and general enough which last and which reproduce. The organisational culture remains a long term

phenomenon which can be modified but this modification is produced due to a slow evolution and not to sudden changes. The types of behaviours are assimilated by individuals.

As the inhabitants of a country have their national culture, the organisational culture is carried by the individuals. The notion of assimilation is essential, because only the sustainable elements are assimilated. The culture assimilation is a slow process involving not only a physical presence but also an interaction and intense and long term learning. On the other hand, the assimilated culture becomes the source of the feeling of cultural background.

Behaviours do not consist of the single elements of the organisational culture. In fact, behaviours are more likely consequences of culture. An organizational culture involves certain behaviours of the members of the organization and discourages others. But the ways in which individuals are complying or not with the cultural facts outline other elements: representations (images), beliefs, symbols, phantasms. An organisational culture has various components. In defining culture we have to take into account the multitude of approaches of this notion and the possibility of omitting each time certain aspects.

An idea already mentioned at the beginning of our research dealt with the connection between the organisational culture and the *national cultures*. For example, for an enterprise with international activity there is the problem of maintaining the features of its culture including the land of origin. It has to integrate the multiple cultural influences of the countries with new branches. Thus, it can find in its own culture its own sources of adaptation to the local contexts, but it can also discover the specificity of its national culture.

The study of the organizational culture gained a higher importance along with the development of transnational societies, with the passing from the general management to international management and then to the global management.

Seen from a traditional perspective, organizational culture can be divided into *objective culture and subjective culture*; the first referring to the *material aspects, the products and the facts* created by an organisation to affirm its personality or identity; the second, fundamental one includes *systems of beliefs and fundamental hypothesis* which, being shared by all members of an organisation allow them to function together. We have to underline the fact that the organisation has on one hand a culture and on the other hand it is itself a culture.

In the first case, the culture is constituted from a framework of *values and fundamental norms, of codes and collective images*, framework of a history and of a patrimony; the culture might be born from the confrontation with the market and from the compromise of the leaders with other actors from the enterprise, all of this being admitted by most of the personnel and translated through rules, myths, customs, taboos, references and procedures of some collective steps.

#### 4. Discussion

Secondly, culture is the synonym for a *cultural identity*, of an outstanding personality, of a profound configuration; it sums up not only the symbolic expressions, but also the framework of the structures in an anthropological sense.

#### 5. Conclusions

In consequence, we think that if the nations recognise their identity through the cultures they have, an organisation might reveal its personality through the culture it relies on. The national culture becomes a source and an expression both for the identity of a nation and for the organisational culture. Similarly on another level of the national culture, the organisational culture "originates in myths, heroes, signs and symbols, it evolves around values inherited by the organisation from its generations, it creates the same type of collective subconscious and it critically influences the ability of the system to change." (Huțu, 1999, p. 97).

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