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# ROMANIA AND THE RHYTHMS OF ITS MODERNIZATIONS

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**Abstract:** *In the geographical area where Romania is located, it represents a singular case: it is the only country that speaks a language of Latin origin. We are trying to assess whether this particularity has been reflected as an encouraging element of its modernization. Throughout history, for Romanians, modernization has been synonymous with Europeanization. During three stages, short in history, Romanians came into contact with Western civilization: Roman colonization, the reverberations of the ideas of the revolutions of the nineteenth century and the post-communist era. We evaluate today, that every time the modernization / Europeanization effort of the Romanians was consistent and fast.*

**Keywords:** *Modernization, Europeanization, Western civilization, the rhythms of modernization, Romania.*

Placed in the South-Eastern corner of Europe, considered in turn "Dacia Felix", "Belgium of the Orient" or "Japan of Europe", the region occupied today by Romania has entered during its history three times in contact with Western civilization. We refer here to the great contacts, respectively to the historical passages in which representatives of the great European constructions, occupiers, traders, or capitals, played a major role in influencing, and even changing the way of life of the local population. For, apart from the periods to which we will refer, Western civilization has continuously shown its influence, more or less obviously, on the territories belonging to today's Romania, at that time state entities (Moldova and Wallachia), or parts of other non-Romanian state constructions (Transylvania in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Bucovina and Bessarabia in the Tsarist Empire).

However we look at things, we must start from the most obvious reality today, the one that makes the Romanian experiment an extraordinary one: the fact that, in this area of the continent, unlike absolutely all its neighbourhoods, Romania, in the past the territories that today compose it, is the only state entity inheriting and speaking a Latin-

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Romance language. "Only that the Romanians are settled in the central-south-eastern European area, and no Romanesque or neo-Latin people are settled around them (...). That is why it was said about the Romanians that they are an "island of Latinity in a great glory" or "a Latin island at the gates of the East"<sup>1</sup>.

This aspect seems all the more important to us today as, as we try to demonstrate the consistent rhythms of Romanian modernization, we will have to refer to the language of Latin origin as an encouraging factor of these rhythms. In fact, we will try to observe which were the factors that supported the rhythm of the Romanian modernizations, rhythms that we declare from now on as appreciable.

We thus propose, in order to highlight the approach and conclusions that we follow, three periods, which we call "contact with European civilization". The first is represented by the period of "Roman colonization", of about 150 years, the second of "liberation from Ottoman suzerainty", of about 150 years, and the third, in progress, of which 30 years have already passed. We will aim to demonstrate, throughout this article, that each contact of the Romanian population (proto-Romanian in the case of the first period) brought with it a consistent adoption of the Western model, later adapted to the "specifics of the race", as E. Lovinescu designated the historical and geographical reality of each people. "Integral imitation is only the first phase of a more complicated process; the second phase is manifested by the elaboration, in a specific form, of the elements of civilization."<sup>2</sup>

Overall, the present paper is an additional effort in the literature, through which we will strive to decipher additional mechanisms and configurations dedicated to the analysis of a process that deserves full attention, namely the historical modernization of Romania, in the context of sporadic contact, in the first two millennia, and permanently from now on, between Western models and values and the native population. Placing this process in a geographical context makes it, as I said, an extraordinary one, related to the options and the history of the neighbourhoods.

In the announced context, we are obliged to make a nuanced clarification, we will not consider the communist era in Romania, as part of the modernization process. This, although first as a source is also of Western ideological origin, later as a process bringing elements of modernization, but only from an industrial perspective and the endowment of the country with wider access to resources (we refer here to

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<sup>1</sup> Ioan Aurel – Pop, *Short history of the Romanians*, Litera Publishing House, Bucharest, 2020, pp. 37-38.

<sup>2</sup> E., Lovinescu, *The history of modern Romanian civilization*, Minerva Publishing House, Bucharest, 1997, p. 309.



electrification and connection of large cities to networks of gas). We keep the option of not assimilating this period with modernization, as long as, in terms of civil rights and freedoms, the dignity of the person and the manifestation of conscience and civic opinion, the mentioned era meant a setback to the risks achieved in the interwar period, such as and a departure from the values of European culture and civilization.

### **Between the Drobeta Bridge and Trajan's Column**

Somewhere, at the beginning of our era, an empire was making its claims and aspirations more and more known at European level - the Roman Empire. How exactly, the area that enters today between the borders of Romania, reached the concerns of the Romans, historians explain, especially that the moment of contact between the Romans and the Dacians, known as Thracians at that time, is symbolic for the Empire itself. "In the centuries before the Roman conquest at the beginning of the 2nd century AD, the territory bordered approximately by the Danube, the Tisza and the Dniester hosted various Thracian peoples, of which the most important from a historical point of view were the Getae and the Dacians. These were two distinct but related peoples, and some historians from antiquity to the present have treated them together, under the name of Getodacians."<sup>3</sup> The real reason for attacking the territories north of the Danube, not yet under Roman rule, lies precisely in the habits of these peoples to make raids and looting in neighbouring territories. "Why did the Romans start attacking the Dacians?" It must be said from the beginning that the Dacians were aggressive. Seeing the riches of the Roman Empire, they always made desolate incursions over the Danube, in regions now ruled by the Romans, and which, for centuries, were under the civilizing influence of Greece."<sup>4</sup> This fact is confirmed by another historian of the Roman Empire. "The first military deeds of Trajan were directed against the Dacians, the most warriors of the inhabitants beyond the Danube, and who, during the reign of Domitian, had unpunished the majesty of Rome."<sup>5</sup>

We are, therefore, in the period between the years 101-106, period in which the same Trajan decides to build the bridge from Drobeta Turnu Severin, in the years 103 = 105, as a sign of the clear decision to annex the northern part of the Danube territories, at Empire. We consider the

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<sup>3</sup> Keith, Hitchins, *Short history of Romania*, Polirom P.H., Bucharest, 2015, pp. 21-22.

<sup>4</sup> Neagu, Djuvara, *A short history of Romanians...*, Humanitas P.H., Bucharest, 1999, p. 12.

<sup>5</sup> Eduard, Gibbon, *The history of the decline and collapse of the Roman Empire*, Humanitas P.H., Bucharest, 2018, p. 51.

symbolic moment as the beginning of the 160-year period (up to 165) in which the representatives of the Empire bring and impose the Roman civilizing model in the Carpathian region. Today, the paucity of data on the details of this process forces us to a large extent, to refer in particular, to the remaining archaeological remains from that period, and to the writings of various sources, rather administrative.

For these reasons, it becomes difficult to go into the depths of the process of "acculturation" that the Geto-Dacian population has recorded. The concept of "Roman colonization", however, includes elements of architecture, engineering, administration, culture, and, especially, language, which historians have recorded at different times. "Romanization took place, as I said, almost everywhere in the Roman Empire, but to varying degrees. In the case of Dacia, Romanization meant the transformation of the ancient country and world of the Daco-Getae according to the image and likeness of Rome, ie according to the model of Roman culture and civilization. (...) For essential, true Romanization, more is needed; it is necessary for the Dacians to accept the language, culture, beliefs and customs of the conquerors, which, over time, has happened. This is the linguistic and spiritual Romanization, the one that is sustainable and through which the specifics of ancient Dacia have changed definitively."<sup>6</sup>

We tried to approach the aspect of Romanization through Latin, the vulgar one in the case of the Geto-Dacians, because this seems to us the key to understanding the whole process of sequential modernization that Romanians produced in the next two sequences of contact with western civilization. In reality, today we wonder what is the deep spring through which, over almost two millennia later, the people formed and remained Latin, after a short sequence in time, relative to the surrounding peoples, manages to demonstrate a close approach and substance so fast compared to the European model. For, as a counterexample to all the peoples around today's Romania, the people heirs of the Roman colonization, manage to keep this binder of substance, namely the Latinity of the spoken language.

We will go further in our approach, recalling once again the speed (at the level of the historical scale and the experience of the neighboring peoples) with which the native people take over the language of the colonizers, assuming this premise. Through the power of cultural penetration of the Latin language, the Romanian people will develop an obvious closeness to the European model, its values and civilization. "If tragic historical circumstances had not settled us for a long time in the moral atmosphere of Eastern life, - vigorous Roman soul Illyrian-Thracian body - we could have entered from the beginning, like other Latin peoples,

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<sup>6</sup> Ioan-Aurel, Pop, *op.cit.*, pp. 78-79.

into the orbit of Western civilization.”<sup>7</sup> For, together with the historians and sociologists of this process of modernization-Europeanization of Romania, we find that the origins of the Romanian people, but also their specific features, bring them closer to the mentioned model.

### **From the "lights" of the French Revolution to the establishment of the nation-state**

If someone looked objectively at the situation of the Romanian provinces in the first half of the 19th century, compared to the moment of December 1, 1918, one could say that the assertion of the Romanian unitary national state is related to phenomenal explanations. At least five historical regions, under two and then three empires, separated from each other, will manage to unite in less than a century, so that in the interwar period it becomes one of the great and consistent European countries. And for this, a binder was needed to keep alive the idea of common belonging to a specific culture, a configurative element of the national ideal, a catalyst for the struggle for unity, and this was the common language, the Romanian language.

The importance of the spoken language now seems even more important to us, as long as it was this that gave rise to the national movements of the mentioned century, in synchrony with the European movements of French origin. “A last cause would contribute to the approach of the public spirit from the two principalities: the awakening of the feeling of Latinity, due to the political and literary movements of the Romanians from Transylvania, who for many centuries endured the supremacy of the Hungarians and Austrians.”<sup>8</sup>

We take this opportunity to emphasize once again the extraordinary phenomenon of Latinity of the Romanian people: at a distance of more than a millennium and a half (275 - 1859), the Latin language inherited from the population left after Roman colonization has preserved the consciousness of ethnic unity throughout radius of the Carpathian Mountains. This in the conditions of registering the same frequency of the appearance of migrating peoples as in the case of the neighbourhoods, and later of the occupation of the Ottoman Empire. “The reality is that, of all the Christian peoples subject to Ottoman rule, the Romanians are the only ones who, in their entirety, have not allowed themselves to be Islamized.”<sup>9</sup>

Against such a background, of Latinity preserved for more than a millennium - now reaffirmed! - Romanians place themselves through their

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<sup>7</sup> E., Lovinescu, *op.cit.*, p. 5.

<sup>8</sup> Pompiliu, Eliade, *The French influence of the public spirit in Romania - Origins*, Humanitas P.H., Bucharest, 2000, p. 227.

<sup>9</sup> N., Djuvara, *Between East and West*, Humanitas P.H., Bucharest, 2007, p. 170.

representatives, especially after the Treaty of Adrianople (1829), near the European movements that will culminate with the moment 1848 - a perfect opportunity to affirm these ideals of Latin nation and self-determination. "Since the Great Revolution, whose principles spoke to the instincts and traditions of our nation, France has become our ideal and we have given ourselves entirely to it. (...)." <sup>10</sup> We intentionally render passages from the vision of the great politician I.C. Brătianu, precisely because of the importance that his vision had in the general course of the Romanian public life, a vision that he acquires in Paris, close to the French political and civic elite. His options later became, along with those of other great Romanians, a national program. "We want Romania to become in close brotherhood with all nations of the same tribe with it, that is, with Italy, France, Spain and Portugal, as the Latin tribe that represents more than all other modern civilization, being in its entirety, to be able to fully fulfil its mission in humanity". <sup>11</sup> We cannot find more eloquent evidence of belonging to European culture, at that time exemplarily dominated by France and the revolutions of 1789 and 1848. From here to the evidence of character similarities there are not many steps to take. "The admitted qualities of the Romanian nature such as forgiveness and indulgence, or other contested ones, such as humility, avoidance of collision with the adversities of life, patience, inclination to compromise - qualities focused on wisdom and tolerance, on diplomatic versatility - integrate very well today in the European identity." <sup>12</sup>

An identity overlap, therefore, starting from the European communion of Latin languages. Is that enough? Is that enough to make the Romanian people an aspirational European people? The most consistent explanation, in this point of our ideational approach, is also offered by E. Lovinescu, the great theorist of the synchronization of the Romanian life with the European one. "Latinity is not a somatic formula either, but a mental conformation; whatever the mixture of blood enters the composition of our race, the Latin mentality configures it in a characteristic and definitive way." <sup>13</sup>

In the paragraphs above we have endeavoured to offer a sufficient explanation for the Romanian adherence to the European culture and values of that time. For, although things are obvious, they require further analysis from the perspective of factual history: for more than a millennium

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<sup>10</sup> I.C., Brătianu, *The fight for national revival*, Tipografia Moldova P.H., Iași, 2002, p. 99.

<sup>11</sup> Ibidem, p. 87.

<sup>12</sup> Grete, Tartler, *European Identity*, Cartea Românească P.H., Bucharest, 2006, pp. 176-177.

<sup>13</sup> E. Lovinescu, *op.cit.*, p. 5.

and a half, the Latin language miraculously preserved in these lands, offers since the eve of 1800, first through the people of Transylvania, then through the political ones from Moldova and Wallachia, a sufficient basis for the consistent adherence to the European culture. We say consistent because the pace of adoption and subsequent adaptation of this culture is really appreciable. "The general trends of political, economic and social development perceptible a century earlier reached their climax in the two interwar decades, when modern Romania was perfected as a nation-state. It was an era of huge vitality and creativity, with the main social classes experimenting with new ideas and forms, from politics to business and from philosophy to poetry. But it was also an era of dissension and division, because Romanians were forced to reorganize old institutions, to reanalyze respected traditions and to attack the problems of bourgeois society in the process of urbanization and growth, common to all of Europe."<sup>14</sup> I deliberately reproduced an entire paragraph from the work of an objective historian, precisely to highlight the evidence of successful modernization of Romanian society in a century since the beginning of the effort - deep synchronization in all areas of human activity, reaching even the great tensions and challenges of Western ideology. We are, at this point, convinced of the consistency of Romanian modernization started in the 19th century and interrupted in the middle of the 20th century, a deep modernization, masterfully highlighted by the historian of Romanian ideologies Zigu Ornea, in his works dedicated to the interwar period. We especially mention the interwar moments and their connections coming from the same history of Romanian modernization, because we would be unfair to claim that this whole road was sprinkled only with flowers, especially since the recent past of the nineteenth century, for example, he had not been able to get over the hardships he had experienced, especially when it came to cohabiting minorities. "The tension between these two elements had become clear during the clashes over the Romanian Constitution in the nineteenth century, which, to the indignation of the Great Powers, denied Jews the right to citizenship in the new state."<sup>15</sup>

From any perspective, however, we would look at the period of at least 150 years of Romanian modernization (even 100 if we take as a starting point 1848 to 1947), we emphasize once again the weight and dynamism of the process of "acculturation." For we are talking about a full takeover of models from all fields (economic, cultural, scientific, social, ideological), so that, together with the famous American historian Keith Hitchins, we

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<sup>14</sup> Keith, Hitchins, *op.cit.*, p. 181.

<sup>15</sup> Marte, Mazower, *The Balkans from the end of Byzantium to the present time*, Humanitas P.H., Bucharest, 2019, pp. 149-150.

emphasize the depth of penetration and interdependence of Romanian culture to the reverberations of time in Europe.

I therefore pointed out the second sequence of modernization of Romania, of a duration comparable to the first: about a century and a half of coming into direct contact with Western culture and civilization. We feel the need for a qualitative evaluation, and that is why we will say: in both situations, the cultural model (Roman at the beginning of the millennium, French in the XIX-XX centuries) was superior to the local model. Moreover, we emphasize the depth of the “acculturation” registered by the Romanian people, which in the second stage of contact already has as a catalyst factor the Romanian language (of Latin origin), which helps to spread European values and models through intellectuals and political elite. Romanian.

### **Between "Wake up, Romanian" and the leader of the polls on "trust in the EU"**

The third stage we are experiencing today, of entering into interdependence with European values already has a much more consistent stake: European "integration", ie Romania's entry into the institutional, supranational and probably continental construction called the European Union. With a short history, on the scale of the great trials of only thirty years old, Romania's return to the full European trajectory is on the same coordinates of dynamism, as the first two.

This contemporary sequence, of course, suffers from route evaluations, especially from the perspective of the political class which, at least in its first stage, was post-revolutionary. But with the year 2007, the year of Romania's official accession to the European Union, based on the negotiations started in 1999, this path establishes its pillars in terms of the direction to follow. And here we have to say it, the main vector of supporting this trajectory was, and is, the popular will. This was the element that guided national politics in such a way that the pro-European option of the electorate imposed this orientation.

The internal, spirit resort of the nation that coordinated this orientation is the subject of the next subchapter. We want here, in order to demonstrate once again the deep and consistent way in which the Romanian population attaches (or re-aligns) to European values, to highlight two aspects already suggested throughout our work: the obvious adherence to the EU representative institutions and the obvious signals that Romanians offered in 2018-2019. In light of the first of the suggestions, headlines like “52% of Romanians have a positive image of

the EU, compared to the European average of 43%”<sup>16</sup> or “Romanians trust the EU and its institutions”<sup>17</sup> they have become common both in the country and at EU level, where Romanians' trust in the European Union always occupies a top position. Regarding the second aspect, which we will generically call “Configurations of Romanian Europeanism”, we mention three edifying examples: the demonstrations organized in Romania during 2018 for the rule of law, the rejection by absence of the referendum on family support and the penalty vote recorded in the European elections.<sup>18</sup>

We emphasize these three configurations manifested by the Romanian people 30 years after the anti-communist revolution, because they seem to us substantial configurations of the European spirit of the Romanians. In the regional context, especially through the demonstrations for the rule of law - fundamental value of the European Union, through the recognition of minority rights - also, the value of the Union, and by penalizing the ruling party in 2019, following anti-European signals sent by it, Romanians reconfirms their adherence to the European model. This time, only 30 years after the re-engagement with the EU culture and values, the Romanians prove for the third time consistency in terms of assimilating and assuming their European destiny.

### **Conclusions: From adaptation to the adoption of the model, for Romanians, modernization means Europeanization**

The whole equation that mirrors the modernization process of Romania seems to be in a single letter that differentiates the terms of the "adaptation-adoption" binomial. In fact, the two terms are specific to the processes we are referring to: modernization, ie adoption of a superior model, Europeanization, ie acceptance of alternative models. In reality, of course, the depths of the binomial have explanations of appreciable depths that extend from the sociological themes of "acculturation" and "interdependence", passing through concepts of "characteristics of race", "imitation" and "spirit of the ages", to reaches results as “adaptation” and “integration”.

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<sup>16</sup> *Autumn Eurobarometer 2018: 52% of Romanians have a positive image of the EU, compared to the European average of 43%*,

[https://ec.europa.eu/romania/news/20181221-eurobarometru-toamna-romania\\_ro](https://ec.europa.eu/romania/news/20181221-eurobarometru-toamna-romania_ro).

<sup>17</sup> *Romanians trust the EU and its institutions*,

[https://ec.europa.eu/romania/news/20200310\\_romanii\\_au\\_incredere\\_in\\_institut\\_iile\\_sale\\_ro](https://ec.europa.eu/romania/news/20200310_romanii_au_incredere_in_institut_iile_sale_ro)

<sup>18</sup> Dorin Dobra Blog: *Three reasons why we can be proud of our people*, <http://www.dorindobra.ro/2019/06/13/trei-motive-pentru-care-putem-fi-mandri-de-poporul-nostru/>.

We will offer or recognize the contemporary process of modernization of Romanians an even more dynamic rhythm in the third stage, due to the diffusion systems of the model characteristic of the era we are going through. This aspect of diffusion has already been observed and analysed by sociologists, even by the Romanians, since the second stage (19<sup>th</sup> century) of this process. Only at that time the telegraph, later the telephone, the railways and, later, the radio, were the tools of the diffusion of the superior model. Today, in a world where every event is "lived in real time by any receiver", the level of connection to the media of the higher model is even higher. Moreover, the integration presupposes the agreed agreement to take over the entire community "acquis", so the whole legislative package that implements the European model and values.

For Romanians, modernization is similar to Europeanization, at least this historical experience proves it. The supreme Roman civilization, the spirit of the French Revolution, or the communitarian acquis, all represented in their time superior models of what the Romanian people had practiced before. The speed of their reception and, then, their adoption, this is the great success in this process. "Thus, of all the Orthodox peoples in Eastern Europe, Romanians were the ones whose westernization was the fastest and most spontaneous, the most spontaneous, favoured by belonging to the family of neo-Latin peoples and Italian sentimental and temperamental affinities. and French, finally, by the almost obsessive assertion of Latinity, which became an idea-force in the struggle for emancipation."<sup>19</sup>

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# GOD, CREATION AND TRUTH IN THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE GREAT THINKER PETRE ȚUȚEA

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**Abstract:** *Knowing God is a difficult challenge for philosophy, which often has recourse to what is perceived by the senses, looking for a definition of God, creation and truth. Unlike the great philosophers of German, French and other origins, the Romanian philosopher Petre Țuțea succeeds in the supreme demonstration. Through his theological philosophy, he manages to reach the knowledge of truth in its pure version, the truth being not a definable concept, but the Unique God revealed. His demonstration supposes a high knowledge of the world of philosophical ideas, from which he cites, as well as a knowledge of dogmas, as an expression in human words of truth above all reason.*

**Keyword:** *God, creation, truth, philosopher, Petre Țuțea*

## Introduction

One of the most important Romanian philosophers named Petre Țuțea represents, for the Romanian people, the light of the permanently lit candle, which illuminates all those who love knowledge. His writings, not few in number, can be grouped into several sections by the respective covered topics, and his theological-philosophical writings occupy the most important place, because through them the philosopher Petre Țuțea enters the mystery of the knowledge of God, mystery which offers him a different philosophical vision, a spiritual experience, an experience that exceeds the limits of rationality.

In the vision of this master of thought and of words full of content, God is not a concept, an idea or an impersonal force that hides in His transcendence, but is the Trinity of Persons, a living God and a God at work who can be known by human persons also through the truth expressed in creation. The incarnation of the Son of God, "in the fullness of time" (Gal. 4: 4), can be considered as the absolute expression of the truth revealed in history.

The view about knowing the truth supposes an analysis of creation from the top down, "the world must be seen from the top down, so order is thus possible and any good deed must express the truth coming from

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above."<sup>1</sup> In other words, truth - in the absolute sense of the word - must be revealed, all truths contained in the theories of world philosophy being only partly the truth, therefore relative truths. The ignorance of the revealed truth puts man in a position to replace faith by science, and the soul by the interest that gets the first place. As subjected to time, the man who becomes a slave to science and interest comes to meet his end on a road to nowhere.

Only divine grace is the guarantee of truth, and the mystics of the Church of God "spread the fruits of grace and the joy of living over everybody,"<sup>2</sup> through the true knowledge of God. Man, through the immortality of the soul and through freedom, as a divine gift received from God through the act of creation, participates in the truth, through a direct relationship with the Creator. This is the fundamental difference between the truth of the Church and the truths of science, philosophy and mythology. The first relates man to God, so the knowledge of the truth starts from the top down, from God to man, through the act of revelation, while the truths of the other sciences begin the search for the truth from the bottom up. According to the philosophy of the theological thinker, the existence of a truth in science is not totally excluded, but compared to the truth of revelation, it has a limited character, "it is less significant than the truth revealed transcendentally in essence."<sup>3</sup>

### **Creation in Petre Țuțea`s vision**

The foundation of the creation is the Logos which, according to the Gospel of St. John, was from the beginning with God, and "all things were made by Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. In Him was life and life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not" (John 1: 1-3). The perfection of the Logos, as true God, can be known by man referring to Him "as the first cause."<sup>4</sup> Only through this way of relating can one think the real meaning of the concepts of truth, order, and hierarchy, terms which, without relating them to Christ, become limited to the imperfections of the world resulting from the wrong choices of men.

The consequence of this idea is clearly that God cannot be considered the author of evil in the world. Creation is not an emanation from God, a

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<sup>1</sup> Petre, Țuțea, *The Philosophy of the Nuances*, Diana Press Publishing House, Pitesti, 2012, p. 102.

<sup>2</sup> Ibidem, p. 105.

<sup>3</sup> Petre, Țuțea, *Man - a Treatise of Christian Anthropology*, Timpul Publishing House, Bucharest 2001, p. 14 (Romanian version).

<sup>4</sup> Toma de Aquino, *De ente et essentia*, Romanian – Latin bilingual edition, Polirom Publishing House, Iași, 2008, p. 65.

fact highlighted by the philosopher Herbart, who "considered pantheism, pan-Satanism, because by identifying the Creator with creation, it makes him partaker of the evil in the world."<sup>5</sup> The understanding of God in non-theological terms has consequences for the understanding of creation in general and of man in particular, a man who, being fallen, as Luther argued, can no longer relate correctly to the Creator, hence the salvation is possible only by grace, scripture, and faith. That is why it is imperative that philosophy and theology be expressed theologically in order to be able to highlight in correct terms the revealed divine truth.

Accepting the dialogue between man and the devil in the paradisiacal state is the beginning of the fall of man, who loses the divine grace, so he loses the main method of knowing the truth. Once grace is lost, the scientist is always in search of the truth, but his limitation expresses only a relative truth. Through the loss of paradise, as a result of disobedience to the divine command, "begins the history of man, a researcher, permanently incomplete, who seeks and seeks himself incessantly"<sup>6</sup>.

All the sciences of the world, mathematics, psychology, philosophy, thought of from a Christian perspective, aim to express in their language "the approach of the spirit to the world of order, hierarchy and meaning"<sup>7</sup>, all related to the First Cause, i.e. God. From this way of relating we understand that the world has a beginning and an end. Its beginning is the creative act of God, and its end can only be thought of in eschatological terms. These terms highlight by themselves the Absolute, so not an infinite emptiness, but the eternity of salvation and by no means "the swallower infinite of the mortals anchored here."<sup>8</sup>

The fundamental difference between the sciences of the world - in which mathematics and philosophy occupy the most important place - and the lucidity of the mystic consists of the fact that the latter surpasses in knowledge, by faith, any limitation of his condition. Having the awareness of death means, for the mystics, only the possibility of the human being to live forever in the love of God, through the immortal part of him, that is, through the soul. Such an experience and its results surpass the results of science which, by not bringing man back to God, limits him to the sensitive, to the world of pleasure, usefulness and pride. The knowledge that the mystic of the Church of God acquires is superior precisely by the fact that it exceeds the condition of the limits imposed by science.

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<sup>5</sup> Johann, Friedrich, Herbart, apud. Petre Țuțea, *Man - a Treatese of Christian Anthropology*, p. 16.

<sup>6</sup> Petre, Țuțea, *Man - a Treatese of Christian Anthropology*, p. 20.

<sup>7</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>8</sup> Ibidem.

The sciences are defined by the two main components: object and method, seeking the truth from the perspective of the useful. This form of language, when used regarding the transcendence of God, is inconclusive. Without the understanding of creation, man, trapped in the nets of the relative truths of the sciences, constantly runs on a path of knowledge that has no real purpose, but only an imaginative one. Without understanding the creative act and without relating to the One behind the creative act, man becomes a rational being, completely subjected to sensitive limits, that goes nowhere, that "does not know the beginning and the end of things"<sup>9</sup>, the matter of whose he is so subjected to.

In their research, sciences are often situated between an opaque concept and an intangible ideal, and research results are defined by four categories: quantity, quality, relationship and modality. Starting from here, it results that a series of words such as truth, good, beautiful, human, sacred, freedom, logic, in scientific language, do not exceed the subject-object relationship. This relationship, harmful to man, keeps man anchored in a state of pseudo-knowledge, in which he knows nothing of the sacred mysteries. "The whole language of the autonomous man distances him from the Divinity, that is, from the perfection to which Christ brought him close."<sup>10</sup>.

The data of the world, regarded from the perspective of knowledge without God, express the "real" in an imperfect manner. The consequence is that the autonomous man cannot know himself. True knowledge comes from God, through uncreated divine grace. By grace, man knows creation, that is, the beginning, and he also knows the end of materiality, so he knows how to go towards God through his immaterial part, that is, through the soul.

### **The Truth in Petre Țuțea`s Philosophy**

When it comes to the truth, the philosophy of the great Romanian thinker highlights, from the very beginning, the opposition between the truth of faith and the truth of reason. If the latter is a utility imposed by the material world, the former is the mystery by which human rationality knows true living in truth. In the philosophy of Mr. Petre Țuțea, truth is by definition transcendent, so it can be found in its full form neither in the intellect, in things, nor in the relationship between intellect and things.

According to philosophical analysis, truth cannot exist only in the intellect, being rather inserted in things. The formula of the Blessed

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<sup>9</sup> Alkmaion from Crotona, *The Difference between Men and Gods*, apud. Wilhelm Capelle, *Die Vorsokratiker*, second edition, Berlin, 1961, p. 84.

<sup>10</sup> Petre, Țuțea, *Man - a Treatise of Christian Anthropology*, p. 22.

Augustine "it is true what is seen,"<sup>11</sup> would somehow explain the theory according to which what is accessible to the senses is true. Of course, this theory cannot be accepted as valid, because there are many examples that can prove the falsity of the above statement. If, for example, groundwater is not visible, it does not mean that its existence is not true. It follows that truth and untruth result from the understanding of the intellect, so truth is not in things.

Truth exists only in relation to God. "The existence of truth is linked to its extramundane uniqueness, appearing in human history in the sacred form of revelation."<sup>12</sup> The intellect-thing relationship can only express a relative truth. Truth in the pure, unique sense, can be found neither in man's intellect, nor in things. It can be experienced only in the relationship between the Divine and the human, a relationship characteristic for Christianity.

Such a truth, characterized by an incomprehensible depth, is difficult to express in words that modern man, surrounded by pleasure and pain, could understand. Only the truth of revelation, coming from God, is unchangeable. What science once considered being the truth, the new discoveries prove to be otherwise, which means that truth as a product of human reason can only be relative. The consequence is that in order for the truth to be full truth, it must be revealed. "Only by the truth of the Divine intellect are natural things called true."<sup>13</sup> By not knowing the First Cause and the end of all creation, man is in a search for the truth, a truth that can only be understood through the correct relation to God and His creation.

The whole philosophy of the great Romanian thinker regarding the truth is that God Himself is the Only truth. The only way to know the truth is the revelation from the word of Scripture. Christ Himself answers to his disciples by saying, "I am the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14: 6). Any other philosophical form of expressing the truth is in fact a non-expression. Knowing the truth outside of revelation is a continuous search, a search that can refer only to forms of relative truths, which the human intellect deduces from what it understands, but also from created things.

It is difficult for the sciences to understand the idea of truth that can only be expressed theologically. The sciences can be wrong because the truth has no foundation in man or in things. "All philosophical quotations

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<sup>11</sup> Blessed Augustin, *Confessions*, bilingual edition, translation by Eugen Munteanu, Humanitas Publishing House, Bucharest, 2018, p. 14.

<sup>12</sup> Petre Țuțea, *Man - a Treatise of Christian Anthropology*, p. 28.

<sup>13</sup> Blessed Augustin, *Summa Theologica*, vol.1, translation by Alexander Baumgarten (coord.), Cristian Bejan, Andrei Bereschi, Gabriel Chindea, Marcela Ciortea, Emanuel Grosu, Laura Maftai, Mihai Maga, Adrian Muraru, Laura-Maria Popoviciu, Vasile Rus, Delia Savinescu, Wilhelm Tauwinkl, Polirom Publishing House, Iași, 2009, p. 124.

on truth will have an illustrative character for the philosophical untruth and its positioning as a liberating mystery in mysticism.”<sup>14</sup>

Any science, including philosophy, seeks the truth starting from a worldly thinking, a speculative thinking, but as it lacks the certainty of dogmas, it gets a pseudo-knowledge of the truth. Speculation cannot be a criterion for discovering the truth, given that the truth does not even have to be discovered, as it is a given of revelation. "Truth exists as a unique truth, or else it does not exist at all. Either God, or nothing"<sup>15</sup>.

In a similar paradigm, the French philosopher Bossuet states: "God is the present truth of all spirits from himself and the true source of intelligence."<sup>16</sup> The consequence of this statement is that pure truth has its origin neither in things, nor in human intelligence, truth being the origin of intelligence. From a theological perspective, truth is received through revelation and grace by those who love God, and those who are separated from God, who are in a constant search for truth but do not relate to, as said above, revelation, do not taste the highest knowledge, the one above any rationality.

## Conclusions

The vision of the Romanian philosopher Petre Țuțea regarding God, creation and truth is a vision based on many deep reflections, which aim to demonstrate that apart from revelation, through which man knows God and creation, therefore the beginning of the world and implicitly its end, it is not possible to reach the knowledge of the truth. Moreover, this knowledge does not imply that the human intellect gets lost in the many hypotheses that lead to nowhere, but on the contrary, it supposes a stabilization of human thought in the act of revelation, through which God reveals Himself and His work to humanity. So truth is by definition sacred. "Through its transcendent source it takes the form of dogma, transcending the field of probing reason."<sup>17</sup> Therefore, God reveals himself to man, not out of necessity, but out of love, so that man may know the truth and the crown of creation dignity that the Creator Himself offered him. Through this understanding, man knows the transcendent nature of the sacred subject of dogma.

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<sup>14</sup> Petre Țuțea, *Man - a Treatise of Christian Anthropology*, p. 30.

<sup>15</sup> Antonin-Gilbert, Sertillange, *L'Idée de Création et ses Retentissements en Philosophie*, Paris, 1945, p. 68.

<sup>16</sup> Jacques-Bénigne Bossuet, *Traité de la connaissance de dieu et de soi-même*, Ghent University, Digitised 20 Apr. 2009, p. 100.

<sup>17</sup> Petre Țuțea, *Man - a Treatise of Christian Anthropology*, p. 32.

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# ON THE PRESENT LIMITS OF PRESENTISM

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**Abstract:** *"Presentism is one of the major metaphysical theories about the reality of moments of time. Presentism, contrary to eternalism, states that the present moment has a special ontological status, namely the status that qualifies the real existence. Presentists also usually claim that presentism, in contrast to eternalism, is compatible with our commonsense attitudes regarding existence in time and our common experience of temporality. This study is focused on a critical evaluation of the supposed compatibility of presentism with the rationality of our common experience of time. The first part of the study analyzes the crucial differences between the conceptual presupposition of presentism about the passage of time and our actual experience of the passage of time. The second part of the study scrutinizes the essential disparities among the theoretical notion of the present moment in presentism and the present moment in our experiential reality. Thus, this study will conclude that presentism doesn't appear to be conservatively compatible with our experience of time, and therefore the preference of presentism, merely by the merits of commonsense, doesn't seem to follow."*

**Keywords:** *ontology, nature of time, presentism, eternalism, commonsense, experience, liminality, awareness.*

## Introduction

Presentism is one of the main contemporary philosophical theories in the dispute over the reality (nature) of time. The dispute over time consists in the disagreement about the ontological nature of individual moments of time. Presentism assumes that the ontological nature of the present moment is radically different from the ontological nature of other moments (past or future). According to presentism, the difference between those diverse moments is maximal, namely existential. Presentists, thus, usually believe that only the present moment, ontologically speaking, is real<sup>1</sup>, hence the name presentism. The competitive philosophical theory, in this dispute over the reality of time, is eternalism. Eternalists, unlike

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<sup>1</sup> M., Hinchliff, 'The puzzle of change.' *Philosophical Perspectives Metaphysics*, Vol. 10, 1996, p.122.

presentists, typically assume that the ontological nature of the present moment is not radically different from other moments (past or future).<sup>2</sup> The difference here is again based on existential quantification. Therefore, eternalism presupposes that the past and future moments are, ontologically speaking, always equally real as the present moment, hence the name eternalism.

The common origin of the recent formulation of this dispute over the reality of time is usually traced back to the (once) novel implications of the theories of time of modern physics.<sup>3</sup> The interest in presentism and eternalism was mainly motivated by a plethora of philosophical reflections on the aspects of theories about space-time, four-dimensionalism, the theory of relativity, or even modern physics *per se*.<sup>4</sup> The standard formulation based around this understanding of the dispute over the reality of time then maintains that eternalism seems to be, from the point of view of science, more credible than presentism.<sup>5</sup> This study, however, isn't dedicated to this well-known discussion about the supposed compatibility of eternalism and incompatibility of presentism with modern physics or science as such.

The main aim of this study is centered on a critical analysis of a second form of compatibility, namely the alleged correspondence of presentism with commonsense<sup>6</sup>, our common experience, and intuitions about the reality of time. After all, it is very reasonable to assume that common people, apart from some theoretical physicists and four-dimensionally minded philosophers, typically believe that the present moment has a special status. For example, our distant forefathers *once were*, but sadly *are not*, except in the form of memories and legacy. Lunar outposts maybe

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<sup>2</sup> T., Sider, *Four-Dimensionalism: An Ontology of Persistence and Time*, Oxford: Oxford University, 2001, p. 12.

<sup>3</sup> Albeit, I don't want to imply that this debate is necessarily rooted only in modern philosophical reflections of natural sciences, nor would I like to allude that presentism and eternalism are entirely novel concepts. For theological implications and historical interpretations of this debate see for example recent surveys: P., Volek, 'Das Verständnis des zeitlosen Gottes', *Scientia et Fides*, Vol. 7, No. 1, 2019, pp. 111-126.; B., Dragoš, 'Ontology of Time in the Texts of St. Thomas Aquinas' *Studia Theologica*, Vol. 21, No. 4, 2019, pp. 19-34.; D., Saudek, *Change, the Arrow of Time, and Divine Eternity in Light of Relativity Theory*, Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020.

<sup>4</sup> See, for example: H., Putnam, 'Time and Physical Geometry' *The Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. 64, No. 8, 1967, pp. 240-247.

<sup>5</sup> D., Peterson, M., Silberstein, 'Relativity of Simultaneity and Eternalism: In Defense of the Block Universe' in V. Petkov (ed.), *Space, Time and Spacetime*, Heidelberg: Springer, 2010, p. 230.

<sup>6</sup> As per the ordinary exposition of the term. For an analysis of the differences between commonsense and good sense see, for example: G., Pohoata, 'Kindness-The Teleological Creed of Human Condition' *Cogito-Multidisciplinary Research Journal*, Vol. 7, No. 2., 2015, pp. 22-26.

once *will be*, but certainly *are not*, except in the form of fantastical anticipations. Therefore, the special status of the present seems to be the status of the real, and not only intentional, existence of things, objects, events, and beings. Thus, presentism seems to be more natural regarding the common and commonsense assumptions about time.

But perhaps the story isn't that simple. This study, regarding that, is based on the problematization of the ordinary notion of the correspondence of presentism with our commonsense notion of time. I will try to show that presentism could be, in some instances, also perceived as incompatible with some of our actual experiences and notions about the common nature of time. In what follows I will, therefore, try to clarify the definitional groundings of the theory of presentism (section 1.), and describe typical motivations for the preference of the theory of presentism (section 2.). After that, I will continue with a critical analysis of presentism regarding our common notions and experience of the passage of time (section 3.). And in the last part, I will try to reconstruct differences between the notions of the present in the theory of presentism and our actual experience (section 4.). Thus, I will try to argue against the present (actual) limits of the theory of presentism.<sup>7</sup>

### **Presentism and the reality of time**

The dispute over the reality of time is constructed on the question about the ontological reality of moments of time. The question about the ontological reality of moments of time usually depends on the existential quantification about objects (in the broad sense of the term) present in this or that moment. The discrepancy between presentism and eternalism then consists in the different views on the existence of the maximal contents (objects) of moments of time.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> The study is based on research systematically outlined in Odorčák, J., 'Identita, konštitúcia a perzistencia' in P. Volek et al. (eds.), *Problém identity osoby v stredovekej a súčasnej analytickej filozofii*, Ružomberok: Verbum, 2010, pp. 60-88; J. Odorčák,, 'Prezentizmus a plynutie času' *Ostium*, Vol. 12, No. 4., 2016, pp. 1-11.; Idem, 'Prezentizmus a prítomný moment' *Ostium*, Vol. 13, No. 1, 2017, pp. 1-7.

<sup>8</sup> The dispute is, by default, built on the relational ontology of time. This entails that time is defined by its contents (i.e. objects) and not treated as a separate substance (substantial ontology). The analysis of benefits or doubts of relational and substantial ontologies of time is out of the scope of this study. For an informed review of these ontologies and their implications see, for example: J., Benovsky, 'Relational and Substantial Ontologies, and the Nature and the Role of Primitives in Ontological Theories', *Erkenntnis*, Vol. 73, No. 1, 2010, pp. 101-121.

Presentism assumes that only the present moment is ontologically real.<sup>9</sup> Based on the given definition of ontological reality, this refers to the fact that presentism presupposes the real existence of only those objects that are in a certain present moment.<sup>10</sup> Thus, only those objects that exist in the present moment are truly existing. On the other hand, it also means that presentism is a view about time, which assumes that objects located in past and future times simply do not exist. Therefore, the grounding conviction of presentism is the assumption that there isn't just a subjective (our perception), but also an objective (existence) difference between the present moment and other moments of time (past or future). This difference is maximal, meaning that while objects from the present exist, objects from other moments (past and present) simply do not exist. So, for example, if a presentist would have to make a list of all existing objects, then this list would entail you, this study, the device on which you are reading this study, and all other objects (in the broad sense) that exist at the current present moment. The presentist register, however, wouldn't include objects that have once existed in other present moments, such as the Colossus of Rhodes for example, or may exist in any other present moments, like commercially effective fusion reactors for instance (if there will be any). Thus, according to presentism Colosseus of Rhodes really doesn't exist, period. Simply put, presentism claims that only the present objects exist.<sup>11</sup>

The competing view on time, eternalism, assumes that all moments of time (past, present, and future) are ontologically real.<sup>12</sup> Thus, objects from all other past and future moments are equally real as the objects form the current present moment. Therefore, the underlying characteristic of eternalism is the assumption that only from the subjective point of view (our current perception) is there a difference between the present moment and all other moments of time. However, according to eternalism, from the ontological point of view, there is no existential difference between the objects from the past, present, and future moments. So, that means, that if an eternalist had to make a list of all existing objects, then it should include not only you, this study, the device on which you are reading this study, but also the Statue of Zeus at Olympia, Dyson spheres (if there will be any), and all other objects that are in all of the moments of time. Thus, according to eternalism the Statue of Zeus at Olympia exists, as it happens,

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<sup>9</sup> M., Hinchliff, 'The puzzle of change.' *Philosophical Perspectives Metaphysics*, Vol. 10, 1996, p.122.

<sup>10</sup> N., Markosian, 'A Defense of Presentism' in D. Zimmerman (ed.), *Oxford Studies in Metaphysics, Volume 1*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004, p. 47.

<sup>11</sup> J., Gołosz, 'Presentism and the Flow of Time' *Axiomathes*, Vol. 27, 2017, p. 286.

<sup>12</sup> T., Sider, *Four-Dimensionalism: An Ontology of Persistence and Time*, Oxford: Oxford University, 2001, p. 11.

the statue is just temporal far away from us, from our current present moment and present perspective. In a nutshell, eternalism claims that objects from all moments of time exist.<sup>13</sup>

Thereby, presentism and eternalism are based on a categorically different evaluation of the difference between the present moment and other moments of time. For presentism, the difference is objective, therefore existential. Hence, presentism assumes that the different moments (and objects) of time *really are* that different. For eternalism the difference is just subjective, therefore more or less relative, perspectival, anthropocentric, and/or psychological. Hence, eternalism maintains that the different moments (and objects) of time *really are not* that different. For short, the difference between presentism and eternalism rests in the disagreement about the supposed reality of composite moments of time.

### **Presentism, common sense, and the reality of time**

It's probably not that surprising, that these substantive differences in the answers to the question about the difference of moments of time come from diverse motivational backgrounds about the right groundings of a coherent philosophy of time.

Eternalists usually claim that their philosophy of time is motivated and grounded by the concept of non-anthropocentric and physical nature of time, and therefore assume that eternalism is the more objective account of time.<sup>14</sup> For example, many authors point out that eternalism, contrary to presentism, is compatible with the relativity of simultaneity<sup>15</sup>, the special theory of relativity<sup>16</sup>, or even hospitably compatible with the underpinnings of modern physics as such.<sup>17</sup> Presentists then typically counterargue by elaborating modes of presentism that could somehow accommodate the concept of the reality of relativity of simultaneity.<sup>18</sup> Or if anything else fails, then they typically step back into discussions about the irrelevance of the distinction between presentism and eternalism in this

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<sup>13</sup> R.T., Mullins, 'Four-Dimensionalism, Evil, and Christian Belief', *Philosophia Christi*, Vol. 16, Iss. 1, 2014, p. 119.

<sup>14</sup> D., Peterson, M., Silberstein, 'Relativity of Simultaneity and Eternalism: In Defense of the Block Universe' in V. Petkov (ed.), *Space, Time and Spacetime*, Heidelberg: Springer, 2010, p. 230.

<sup>15</sup> M., Schmidt, '*Identita a pretrvovanie v čase*', Banská Bystrica: Belianum, 2019, pp. 12-18.

<sup>16</sup> S., Saunders, 'How Relativity Contradicts Presentism' in C. Callender (ed.), *Time, Reality & Experience*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002, p. 279.

<sup>17</sup> M., Slavov, 'Eternalism and Perspectival Realism About the "Now"' *Foundations of Physics*, 2020, p. 2

<sup>18</sup> N., Markosian, 'A Defense of Presentism' in D. Zimmerman (ed.), *Oxford Studies in Metaphysics, Volume 1*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004, pp. 77-78.

particular regard<sup>19</sup>, or to meta-discussions about the relation between physics and metaphysics in general.<sup>20</sup> The acceptance of this strategy may vary, albeit it seems for sure true, that one or another form of absolutism could have many other unintended consequences. However, as was noted before, this study isn't dedicated to the apologetic or unapologetic examination of eternalism, so let us continue with the other side of the coin of the dispute about the reality of time.

Presentists usually suggest that their philosophy of time is motivated and grounded by the evidence of sheer plausibility.<sup>21</sup> This plausibility is, by presentists, reconstructed mainly along the axis of ordinary time comprehension.<sup>22</sup> Presentists typically point out to commonplace opinions and intuitions of ordinary people about a special status of the present.<sup>23</sup> The singular status of the present seems to be the point, concept, and reality, by which we typically delimitate different parts of the course of time. The present, thus, seems to be the orienting mark, the beacon of our common understanding of time. Without this beacon, we would be lost and couldn't practically comprehend what time *is* or should *be*. Hence, presentism that maintains this special status of the present moment seems to be, contrary to eternalism, the true notion and theory of time. Many presentists, therefore highlight that presentism is the standard philosophy of common people, which is based on widespread and fundamental intuitions about time orientation<sup>24</sup>. Presentists, however, usually don't maintain only that presentism is a philosophy of the average Joe (for which he probably doesn't even know the name), but also believe that presentism is, therefore, a philosophy of the commonsense as such. The supposed commonplace intuition about the special status of the present moment is, by presentists, typically used to strengthen the case for

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<sup>19</sup> M., Dorato, 'The Irrelevance of the Presentist/Eternalist Debate for the Ontology of Minkowski Spacetime' in D. Dieks (ed.), *The Ontology of Spacetime (Volume 1)*, Amsterdam and Oxford: Elsevier, 2006, p. 93.

<sup>20</sup> Thus, leading the way to the field of meta-theoretical notions about the relevant explanatory groundings for knowledge. For a more detailed discussion on the topic of the methodology of philosophy and science see, for example: K., Hawley, 'Science as a Guide to Metaphysics?' *Synthese*, Vol. 149, No. 3, 2006, pp. 451–470; A., Botez, 'Integrative Concepts of 20th Century Science', *Cogito-Multidisciplinary Research Journal*, Vol. 2, No. 2., 2011, pp. 5-15; P., Volek, 'Methods of Metaphysics and Natural Sciences: On their Similarities and Differences' *Filozofia*, Vol. 73, No 5, 2018, pp. 345-355.

<sup>21</sup> J., Gołosz, 'Presentism and the Notion of Existence' *Axiomathes*, Vol. 28, 2018, p.412.

<sup>22</sup> N., Markosian, 'A Defense of Presentism' in D. Zimmerman (ed.), *Oxford Studies in Metaphysics, Volume 1*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004, p. 48.

<sup>23</sup> R., De Clercq, 'Presentism and the Problem of Cross-Time Relations' *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, Vol. 72, No. 2, 2006, pp. 386–402, p. 386.

<sup>24</sup> J., Tallant, 'Ontological cheats might just prosper' *Analysis*, Vol. 69, 2009, p. 425.

presentism by appellation to common reasons about time functions.<sup>25</sup> For common people, these functions may serve for the purpose of differentiation between past, present, and future events, but from a more broad ontological point of view, they may specify the true limits of existence. Thus, presentists believe that we are commonplace presentists because presentism is ontologically true. Or to put it in another way, the ontological reality of presentism implicates the practical reality of our intuitions, notions, opinions, experiences of time. Without the ontological reality of presentism, all of these common notions of time would lose their ground and meaning.<sup>26</sup> Therefore, some authors assume that a possible abandonment of presentism would lead to the collapse of our rationality, or even would result in the cessation of our humanness.<sup>27</sup> Long story short, according to presentists, presentism represents the true commonsense philosophy of time, a philosophy that correspondences with our uttermost common experience of time.

Nevertheless, it seems also to be clear, that this broad motivational strategy for the preference of presentism has some obvious limits. For example, the a posteriori fact about human temporality may not necessarily entail that presentism is a priori true. It's for sure true, that human beings aren't timeless beings, but that doesn't necessarily determine that time is only such or such. If the contrary would be true, then presentism couldn't be false in any case. However, if presentism couldn't be false in any case, then there also wouldn't be any reasons for postulating reasons for the preference of presentism and the correspondence of presentism with our common experience.<sup>28</sup> Basically, even the implausibility of eternalism from the point of view of common humans doesn't necessarily entail the plausibility of presentism. Simply, because both theories could be false.

Thus, the crucial step for the credibility of this motivational strategy for presentism seems to dwell in a tangible explication of experiences that actually, and not only superficially, support presentism. Experience may differ, but presentists usually claim that there are two central components of the correspondence of presentism with the common human experience of time. The first component consists in the supposed correspondence of

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<sup>25</sup> Ibidem, p. 425.

<sup>26</sup> M., Dorato, *Time and Reality. Spacetime Physics and the Objectivity of Temporal Becoming*, CLUEB, Bologna, 1995, p. 40.

<sup>27</sup> W.L., Craig, *The Tensed Theory of Time: A Critical Examination*, Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2000, p. 149.

<sup>28</sup> Thus, the whole debate would be based on circular reasoning. For a more favorable reading of circularity in argumentation see, for example: T., Čana, 'Dummett on the Circularity in the Argumentation' *Filozofia*, Vol. 73, No. 6, 2018, pp. 469-480.

presentism with our common experience of the passage of time.<sup>29</sup> After all, we certainly believe that time somehow passes. The second component rests on the assumed correspondence of presentism with our ordinary and direct experience of the present moment.<sup>30</sup> And indeed, we certainly also believe that there is something like the present.

Albeit, the whole problem with all of this is, that there could be a couple of good questions about whatever these common beliefs, anticipations, and experiences of commonsense really are the same as the groundings, expectations, and theoretical models of presentism. The rest of this study is dedicated to a critical analysis of both of these components of presentism's supposed correspondence with our common experience with time.

### **Presentism, common sense, and the reality of the passage of time**

It's without a doubt very usual to thinking about time in terms of succession of different moments of time. We usually assume that the past is somehow replaced by the present. And we also believe that the present will somehow be succeeded by what the future brings. Time appears to be a continuous alternation of events, things, objects, actions, a process of gradual becoming, and also a course of subsequent loss of being. Time flies, time passes, time is the constant flux. If anything, then at least this looks like to be our ordinary day to day, moment to moment experience of time. Presentists, therefore vehemently claim that this experience of the passage of time is one of the key components favoring presentism.

However, there are two sets of arguments in favor of presentism in this regard. The first set of arguments is usually centered on critical remarks about eternalisms failures by the merits of our common experience with the passage of time that then point out for presentism.<sup>31</sup> This set of negative reductio arguments typically go along the lines (for simplicity): Presentism and eternalism are the main theories about the reality of moments of time. Eternalism assumes that all moments of time are equally real, eternal, thus unchanging. Common people assume that moments of time are passing, changing. Therefore, presentism is true (e.g. in the sense of commonsense).

Certainly, this kind of argument is typically constructed in a much more complex way, but the point is always more or less the same: the

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<sup>29</sup> J., Gołosz, 'Presentism and the Flow of Time' *Axiomathes*, Vol. 27, 2017, p. 293.

<sup>30</sup> T., Sider, *Four-Dimensionalism: An Ontology of Persistence and Time*, Oxford: Oxford University, 2001, p. 11.

<sup>31</sup> K., Miller, J.W., Loo, 'Presentism, Passage, Phenomenology and Physicalism' *Manuscripto*, Vol. 39, No. 4, Campinas Oct./Dec., 2016, p. 184.



unchanging feature of moments assumed by eternalism seems to be a difficult concept for people to grasp, or either to live by. Eternalists confronted with this kind of thought usually try to somehow smooth up or to refine their semantical, epistemological, and/or ontological notion of unchanging and moments.<sup>32</sup> Alternatively, eternalists simply bait the bullet of incompatibility of eternalism with the passage of time but point out to other disadvantages and weaknesses of presentism (i. e. the problem of cross-time relations<sup>33</sup>, the problem of triviality<sup>34</sup>). Nevertheless, it may be fair to say that this type of eternalist contra arguments has some obvious limits, namely the limits of our essential experience as timebound and noneternal beings. Furthermore, even if this wouldn't be the case, then eternalism would have to somehow credibly deconstruct the modality of the distinctive notion of eternal for the eternal, and noneternal for the non-eternals.<sup>35</sup>

However, we can set these metaphysical (and even theological<sup>36</sup>) worries aside for the simple cause that eternalism isn't the target of this study, but moreover also for the mundane reason that this set of arguments is clearly invalid. The main problem with the conclusion, apart from other things, depends on the reading and validity of the first premise. Eternalism, in this regard, may be false, but that doesn't mean that presentism is necessarily true. After all, people could have these experiences with the passage of time also then, when eternalism but also presentism would be false. The demolition of eternalism by this set of negative arguments says nothing about the fortitudes of presentism. At best, it says that presentism *may* be true regarding the common experience. The strength of these arguments, therefore crucially depends on the possibility of positive notions of presentism regarding the noted experience.

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<sup>32</sup> See, for example: M., Nelson, 'Eternalist Tensism' *Inquiry*, Vol. 58, No. 6, 2015, pp. 590-605.

<sup>33</sup> T., Sider, *Four-Dimensionalism: An Ontology of Persistence and Time*, Oxford: Oxford University, 2001, p. 25.

<sup>34</sup> A., Aderonke, 'Nefarious Presentism: A Recourse to Primitivism' *Conatus*, Vol. 5, No. 1, 2020, pp. 9-26.

<sup>35</sup> Memorably Albert Einstein has once tried to console the family of his deceased friend V. Besso by contending that: "*Now Besso has departed from this strange world a little ahead of me. That means nothing. People like us, who believe in physics, know that the distinction between past, present, and future is only a stubbornly persistent illusion*" A., Einstein, 'Letter to V. Besso' in P., Speziali (ed.), *Albert Einstein-Michele Besso correspondence 1903-1955*, Paris: Hermann, 1955, p. 537.

<sup>36</sup> For example, it could be the case that eternalism may implicate distinctive consequences for the problem of divine omnipotence. For a dissection of the concept of omnipotence see: M., Amini, 'Theological revisionism: From God to maximal God' *Cogito-Multidisciplinary Research Journal*, Vol. 8. No. 2, 2016, pp. 49-55.

This brings us to the second, more constructive, set of arguments. The second set of arguments is usually focused on the positive validation of presentism by the merits of our common experience with the passage of time.<sup>37</sup> This kind of positive reconstruction arguments typically go along the straightforward figures of (for brevity): Presentism and eternalism are the main theories about the reality of moments of time. Presentism assumes that all moments of time are only temporary, thus the present moment is constantly changing. Common people assume that moments of time are passing, thus changing. Therefore, presentism is true (e.g. in the sense of commonsense).

Without a doubt has this argument a lot to unpack (for example the aforementioned problem of the reading of the first premise), but in a general sense it can be seen as an explication of a more positive set of motivations for the benefits of presentism: presentism's concept of a changing present moment seems to be in correspondence with the passage, the change of moments typically assumed by common people, by commonsense.<sup>38</sup>

Or maybe it is not. Presentists certainly presuppose a change of the present moment, but that doesn't necessarily entail that they presume the same change as the change supposed and/or experienced by common people. The main problem here is, that it seems to be true, that the passage of time may consist in the alternation of individual moments of time, but it is questionable if this alternation of moments necessary entails the experience with successive oscillations of present moments supposed by presentism. Presentists usually presuppose that the present moment is ontologically defined by its discontinuity, and therefore also by the constant creation and extinction of the present moment.<sup>39</sup> According to presentism, present moments perpetually pop up and go out of existence, so to speak. Therefore, according to presentism, the passage of time is always a series of existentially stroboscopic glimpses of the present moment. This oscillatory ontology may be true, albeit it is very doubtful if this ontology correspondences with common people assumptions, commonsense notions about the reality of time, let alone the reality as such. The problem is that, as it happens, the presentist has absolutely nothing other than the present moment, therefore she is necessary forced to accept that the passage of time is that of a constant of creation out of nihilo, but also destruction into nihilo. However, it is very debatable that

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<sup>37</sup> K., Miller, J. W., Loo, 'Presentism, Passage, Phenomenology and Physicalism', *Manuscrito*, vol. 39, no.4, Campinas Oct./Dec. 2016, p. 186

<sup>38</sup> M., Dorato, 'Presentism and the Experience of Time', *Topoi*, Vo 34, 2015, p. 266.

<sup>39</sup> S., Baron, D., Braddon-Mitchell, 'Presentism, Continuous Time-Travel and the Phenomenology of Passage', *Erkenntnis*, 2020, p. 8.

common people think, suppose, or even imagining that the world is at any present moment constantly created and destructed. And it would be likewise very dubious to assume, that people also have precisely this experience of an unending construction and destruction of the world and by this themselves. After all, it would be much more common to assume, that commonsense and common people presume and experience, that the world (and themselves) simply is, or that the world has some durable existential continuity. Sure, presentists could argue, that there aren't any holes (nonexistence) in the stroboscopic light of the present, therefore people just naively assume and experience continuation, but that does subsequently mean that our common beliefs and experience with the passage of time is clearly different from the theoretical notion of the flux of the present in presentism. Thus, the problem here seems to be, that the presentist needs, for the sake of the validity of presentism, a reinterpretation, and therefore also a reconfiguration of our common experience with the passage of time. The appraisal of the feasibility of this presentistic reinterpretation, or even the examination of the pros and cons of this presentistic reinterpretation, is outside of the scope of this study, but it can be with confidence noted that many of the preferred solutions would have prime consequences for the common notions of passage of time. Basically, because they would have to reinterpret our commonsense notion of the passage of time, or they would have to reinterpret the standard notion of the passage of time in presentism. So, or so, common people and presentism could still have different views on the passage of time, and therefore the correspondence of presentism with the common view on the passage of time doesn't follow. For short, the second and third premise of the positive sets of arguments may state different things, therefore the conclusion doesn't necessarily follow. And if the conclusion doesn't necessarily follow, then it's hardly a convincing argument for presentism.

### **Presentism, common sense, and the reality of the present**

As was noted before, presentism's change of the present moment may be different from the change of the present moment we believe in, so to speak. However, that doesn't mean that we should abandon all of the possible forms of the experiential in presentism. Quite obviously, even if the alternation (passage) of the present may differ from experience to theory, then it still would be absurd to state that humans haven't any special relationship with the present. They sure have. For example, it is pretty solid to assume that for common people the present is something that is distinctive. The present seems to have a radically different, more vivid status than the future or the past. Certainly, we have some actual

transient memories of the times past, and we also have some actual open anticipation about the futures, but all of them seem to be somehow interwoven and interconnected to a point of perceived and experienced actualness, namely the present. The present, by the merit of this complex directness, has features that we usually don't assume for the past or future.<sup>40</sup> Thereby, the present seems to be the sharp knife cutting between the *long-gone* and not existing, and the *soon to be* but not existing. For short, the present is always here, and the present is the place to *be*. And presentism has the present.

The obvious argument for presentism in this regard is then build upon the conjecture that the common notion and experience of the present moment matches the presentistic claims about the sole and whole existence of the presence, thus marking a decisive point for the ontology and theory of presentism as such. Explications of this proposition may vary, but in its simplest form, the argument approximately states: Presentism and eternalism are the main theories about the reality of moments of time. Common people assume an objectively distinctive reality of the present moment. Presentism, but not eternalism, presupposes an objectively distinctive nature (e.g. existence) of the present moment. Therefore, presentism is true (e.g. in the sense of commonsense). As in previously stated cases, the reasons for adoption of this argument depend also on other presuppositions around the right methodological groundings of the whole dispute about the reality of time, but the gist of the argument seems to be uncontroversially straightforward: presentism's special and non-eternal status of the present moment seems to be more in line with our ordinary notions of the present and vice versa.<sup>41</sup>

Sure, eternalist confronted with this line of thought may step up to the demands of the argument by elaborating some kind of innate or humanly biased present compatible with eternalism<sup>42</sup>, but the requirements of the argument for the objectivity of *the* present would thus be lost. Hence, presentism seems to be originally compatible with *the* and *our* present, therefore superior.

However, by this logic, the argument then also crucially depends on the originally experiential facets of our present and the present in presentism. And exactly therein also may be the potentially fatal problem of the whole argument. For all that is worth, the present moment could for

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<sup>40</sup> C., Hoerl, 'Experience and Time: Transparency and Presence', *Ergo*, Vol. 5, 2018, p. 128.

<sup>41</sup> T., Sider, *Four-Dimensionalism: An Ontology of Persistence and Time*, Oxford: Oxford University, 2001, p. 11.

<sup>42</sup> For a more credible and nuanced version see, for example: M., Slavov, 'Eternalism and Perspectival Realism About the 'Now'', *Foundations of Physics*, 2020.

different people mean diverse qualities by the merits of varied phenomenal and personal experiences of time. Nevertheless, there seems to be some conjunctive perimeter for the different encounters with divisive qualities of the present, namely the sheer simultaneity of these qualities or objects they depend on. In other words, our experienced present appears to be minimally that, which isn't experienced as temporarily distinct and separated.<sup>43</sup> Thus, the present seems to be most of all a functional indication that some qualities, objects, events, processes, and so on, occur together in the same moment, happen at the same time. The presence is thereby a moment in which we are, on the basis of our common experiential knowledge, unable to confirm that some or other objects are separated from each other in time. But this perceived non-separateness has likewise some evidential limits.

First of all, it is pretty evident, that this presence directly depends on physical, physiological, biological, and other courses necessary for the delivery of the information about the presence. Our senses do best as they can, but they can't transgress our usual nerve conduction velocity, let alone beat the speed of light. Material and biological beings just need time to process information from the senses. This natural process has some lags, and so then implies that we actually perceive events from the past as present.<sup>44</sup> Maybe one day we will be able to somehow change these limits of our neuronal information processing time, but at the present moment, our present seems to be naturally gimping behind the actual present. However, this also just conclusively means that we actually must have internally some sort of the present that just naturally waits behind our external present.

And this brings us to the second problem. Even if we look away from the problem of the delay of our external present and focus our attention on some internal aspects of our present, then the problem of limits continues by the merits of borders of awareness. Not only the processing of information takes time, but also the awareness of the content of this information has some time limits. Human awareness can differentiate between some nonconcurrent qualities, but it definitely can't discriminate between *all* of the nonconcurrent qualities. A simple example is the refresh rate of the cathode ray tube, the number of times per second that an old television displays a new image. Our awareness simply can't, under a certain refresh rate, discriminate between temporarily distinctive flashes of a screen. The flashes seem to be immediate for us and thus the evening

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<sup>43</sup> A., Connor, J., Smith, 'The Perceptual Present' *Philosophy Quarterly*, vol. 69., Iss. 277, 2019, p. 818.

<sup>44</sup> Le Poidevin, R., 'Perception and Time' in M. Matthen (ed.), *Oxford Handbook of the Philosophy of Perception*, Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2015, p. 462.

with the TV could be born. And this seems to be also true for the simultaneity of many of the qualities we perceive as timely coincident and are aware of as concurrent. The threshold for our perception of different events and qualities as simultaneous may vary from subject to subject, but the empirical research on time perception puts the borderline limit below 11 milliseconds.<sup>45</sup> Under this threshold humans simply can't tell the difference between asynchronous events, they experience them as synchronous. Thus, the commonly experienced present has a minimal threshold, a duration.

However, you may ask, what has all of this in common with presentism? Nothing. And that is precisely the main problem. Presentists describe the present in various theoretical forms and differently-abled modes. For example, they define the present as an instantaneous moment of time<sup>46</sup>, or a noncontinuous atomic moment<sup>47</sup>, but none of the dominant definitions of the present in presentism entail that the moment has the aforementioned duration.<sup>48</sup> The cause for this is the simple reason that any duration of time positively is an aggregate of moments, whatever they may be. And a collection of moments isn't a single moment. Thus, presentist are generally bound to the presuppositions of a present moment without a duration. The present without a duration, however, isn't the present with the duration that humans usually experience. Therefore, the argument for presentism's supposed compatibility with the common experience of the present may not be sound, because presentism presupposes a different present than the commonly experienced present.

Hence, presentism correspondence with the common experience of the present moment doesn't seem to follow. However, there are two options by which a presentist could forego this kind of conclusion. The presentist could for instance somehow openly incorporate the experienced present into presentism. According to this option, presentism then is a theory that supposes that only the experiential present moment is real. This would also consequently entail that presentism's correspondence with

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<sup>45</sup> Wittmann M., 'The Duration of Presence' In: Mölder B., Arstila V., Øhrstrøm P. (eds) *Philosophy and Psychology of Time. Studies in Brain and Mind*, vol 9. Springer, Cham., 2016, pp. 101-113. p. 103.

<sup>46</sup> J., Benovsky, 'The Present vs. the Specious Present', *Review of Philosophy and Psychology*, Vol. 4, 2013, p. 193.

<sup>47</sup> F., Orilia, 'This Moment and the Next Moment' in V. Fano, F. Orilia, G. Macchia (eds.) *Space and Time: A Priori and A Posteriori Studies*, Berlin: De Gruyter, 2014, p. 171.

<sup>48</sup> The notable and bravura exemptions are, for example: H., S., Hestevold, 'Presentism: Through Thick and Thin', *Pacific Philosophical Quarterly*, Vol. 89, pp. 325-347.; Pezet, R., E., 'Duration Enough for Presentism', *Axiomathes*, Vol. 30, 2020, pp. 391-421.

our experience is pretty straightforward because the second and the third premise of the argument would then speak about the same subject, the same present. Thus, the correspondence of presentism with our experience of the present could be saved, albeit for a specific prize. Specifically, for the prize of ontological confusion. Presentism isn't just a theory of the present, but presentism is especially a theory about the ontology of time, a theory about the reality of objects. By this option presentism then would collapse into a form of mini-eternalism, a position that maintains that objects exist for a brief, but nevertheless a continually extant amount of time. The difference between eternalism and presentism then would dwindle into a rhetoric disagreement about the adoption of a shorter or longer period of time for the reality of objects. Moreover, presentism then also could be perceived as an incoherent position that entails that there really are different sets of existing objects for different humans, as the experiential present may vary.

However, a presentist could also take the road of a second option. Presentists could simply maintain that the presentism present has a theoretical priority and a practical superiority before any other form of the so-called present. This option then wouldn't certainly entail that presentism is ontologically confusing (apparatus for other things), as this kind of presentism would be directly built upon the classical notion about the difference between presentism and eternalism. This solution also wouldn't imply an inconsistency in the reality of different sets of objects for different subjects. Albeit this option has also a prize. Notably the loss of the experienced present in the methodological and theoretical labyrinth of the present in presentism. Both of these presences still would be different, thus presentism's correspondence with our experience of the present would be gone and lost for good, or bad.

### **Conclusions**

Presentism is by presentists usually painted out as the correct viewpoint of the common man, the accurate attitude of the commonsense, and the right ontology for the actual time. A philosophy that isn't corrupted by many of the theoretical speculations and shortcomings that inadvertently may cause a silly separation of information from knowledge. After all, philosophy has the privilege of complicating things, but principally for the whole sake of a prospect for a balanced, sensible, and good life. And living by eternalism isn't that easy, or rather it could be nonsensical by the cause of an eternal falsity of our senses. Quite contrary to that, our senses and awareness commonly and firmly inform us that there is something special in time, namely a present that changes. Presentism, as the name has it, has a present. Yet, the problem with

presentism is, that it isn't just a label, but most of all a specific theory about the ontological reality of time. The nature of ontology and experience may vary. And if they may vary, then a presentist has to make the right choice for a comprehensible endeavor. The passage of time and the present itself may be formalized in a fashion that isn't theoretically inconsistent, but then the correspondence of presentism with the monotonous requirements of the common in commonsense may fade out. Hence, presentism is in correspondence with our experience only then, when our practical experience is reinterpreted, and thus changed by a theory that could be, for all we know, false. That's why living by eternalism may be absurd, but living by presentism may be fickle. And maybe this is also the common ground for the dispute about the end user's needs for a time.

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# MISOGYNY IN WESTERN PHILOSOPHY AND THE IMPORTANCE OF GLOBALIZATION OF FEMINISM

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**Abstract:** *Feminism analyzes the various types of resistance the women's movement has encountered. These issues include sex-role stereotyping, women's self-image and public image, the social role of womanhood, and politics of patriarchal language. Feminist thought is centered around issues like women's role in reproduction and the role of socialization in a male-dominated social culture. In this work, we propose to highlight the endemic misogyny inherent among some western philosophers by noting how philosophy disregarded the inclusion of women in the category of rational subjects in which women were devalued by making them seem inferior and as well show the importance of globalization of feminism.*

**Keywords:** *Feminism, Male and Female Nature, Socialization.*

## Introduction

Feminism has been considered the outcome of western culture and society. Feminism has not been defined in unequivocal terms so far. It is more described than defined. In common parlance, feminism is known as a movement “of women, by women, and for women” to achieve women's rights. It is also known as the 'women's liberation movement'. Feminists make us believe that feminism stands for gender equality, independence, and empowerment to women<sup>1</sup>. Sexual freedom, reproductive rights, equality of opportunity, etc., are its other goals. The idea of ‘feminism’ is to fight against domination, discrimination and subordination<sup>2</sup>. Through this movement, the women question the conventional and traditional attitudes of society and men towards women. According to them most societies divides all sexes into different cultural, economic or political spheres, and women are less valued against men. The word ‘feminism’ stands for sexual equality combined with a commitment to eradicate sexual domination and

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<sup>1</sup> Samuel Akpan, Bassey, and Gabriel Bubu, Ncha, "Gender Inequality in Africa: A Re-Examination of Cultural Values.", *Cogito*, Vol. 11, Issue, 2019.

<sup>2</sup> bell, hooks, "A Feminist Sexual Politic: An Ethics of Mutual Freedom", *Feminism Is for Everybody*, 2018, p. 85.

to transform the society. It represents the major changes in social thinking and politics because only feminism radically questions the understandings of men, women and social structure which maintain the difference. In this sense, it is a social force. It is aimed at ending the domination of men, in all spheres of life, in family, society, public and private activities. Feminists are against the sexual discrimination and sexual segregation of women in workplaces and domestic life. They question the superiority of man, his polygamous nature and sexual power at the expense of the subordination of women by men for their selfish interest.

The history of mankind is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations on the part of man toward woman having indirect object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over her. The 1848 Seneca Falls Convention formally engaged the fight for 'women suffrage'. The first society for women's rights was founded in 1866 by a French Women, Maria Desraismas a well-known feminist. By the turn of the Century, many meetings and publications all over Europe highlighted the issue of women. Feminism is generally thought of as a phenomenon of the 19th and 20th centuries<sup>3</sup>. Most Anglo-American studies of the women's movement acknowledge some forerunners in the English and French Revolution. But only with Seneca Falls does a continuously developing body of feminist thought seem to emerge.

Today, most feminists are no longer interested in achieving empty equality with men. They showed the inadequacy of the prevailing social and political theories in addressing problems that were unique to women and so rather than simply providing new answers to old problems, they demonstrated that the problems themselves have been conceived too narrowly and needed to be reconceptualized. Feminists challenged both existing political theories, the patriarchal conception of political philosophy itself and urged for redressal and alternative measures to tide over the suppression imposed on a lot of women. This paper discusses the endemic misogyny of some western male philosophers where they disregarded the inclusion of women in the category of rational subjects and devalued women by making them seem inferior to men. This work also shows the importance of the globalization of feminism.

### **Tracing the Misogynous: An Exploration into the Foundations of Philosophy**

The history of sexism and misogyny has largely been ignored by the academic philosophical mainstream; often dismissed as unimportant, 'a kind of a local accident' whose recognition does not affect philosophical

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<sup>3</sup> Michael Flood, "Involving Men in Efforts to End Violence against Women", *Men and Masculinities*, vol. 14, no. 3, 2011, p. 367.

discussion and theorizing. Concerned with the apathy extended to issues relating to women, feminist found it crucial to make a critical analysis of philosophy moving on to investigate the overt and covert ways in which the devaluation of the women is found to be inherent in the most enduring ideals, the central concepts, and the dominant theories of philosophy. They began by examining if there is any justification for the ideals of reason and virtue to be considered as 'masculine', whether there are any underlying motives that regard the content of philosophical theories as 'masculine'<sup>4</sup>; can philosophy be seen as 'gendered' even in cases where such things as the nature of women and men are not apparently under discussion? The analysis of this kind of 'masculinity' goes much deeper than merely cataloguing or analyzing overt instances of misogyny or sexism.

Sometimes some philosophers speak directly about 'the woman', prescribing her role, making claims about her abilities and inabilities, stating her desires<sup>5</sup>. At other times the message is indirect – a passing remark hinting at the drawbacks, their emotionality, irrationality, unreliability, etc., thus condemning them. The process of delineation often occurs in far more subtle ways when the central concepts of philosophy – reason and justice; characteristics that are taken to chiefly define human beings – are associated with traits historically identified with masculinity leaving femininity empty.

In several ways, philosophical assumptions about women and gender are captured by the existing 'dualism' between man and woman. A dualism that lacks any symmetry. It is not an innocent way of dividing up the world into the duality of male and female. In such a dualism woman is always defined as that which is not man; she is a "minus male"<sup>6</sup> who is identified by the qualities that she lacks? Men, who are identified as the "natural" occupants of the sphere of rationality, are contrasted to women who occupy the sphere of emotions and are thereby lacking in rationality<sup>7</sup>. This dichotomy leaves women two unacceptable options: either they can talk like women and be "feminine" but irrational or they talk like man and be rational but "unfeminine"<sup>8</sup>. Dualism sets women in contrast and opposition to men. The dichotomies such as man/woman, reason/emotion represent fundamental polarities, embedded deep within western

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<sup>4</sup> Jill Morawski, "Feminism: Feminism and Philosophy", *Encyclopedia of Psychology*, Vol. 3, 2004, p. 349.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, p.354.

<sup>6</sup> Evelyn Fox, Keller, and R. Grontkowski, Christine, "The Mind's Eye" *Discovering Reality*, 2003, p. 209.

<sup>7</sup> Stephen Corrigan and John, Corrigan, "Men, Women, and Emotion", *Business of the Heart Religion and Emotion in the Nineteenth Century*, 2012, p. 129.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid, p.208.

philosophy and reflected in the structures of language. These contain a set of implicit assumptions that assign a prominently advantaged and a dominant value to the first term (man) clearly subduing and disadvantaging the second (woman) thus representing two hierarchical power relations governing social practices.

Also, the denial of women as rational agents has since long been evidenced in philosophical writings. Aristotle believed that “the woman has (a deliberative faculty) but it is without authority”<sup>9</sup>. Consequently, “the male is by nature superior and the female inferior; the one rules and the other is ruled”<sup>10</sup>. Luce Irigaray shows that the masculine definition of the concept of truth and rationality is central to Plato's concept of knowledge. In her analysis she carefully dissects the elements of the allegory and draws out their significance. She begins by observing that the prisoner is brought out of the cave as a child is brought out of the womb in a difficult delivery<sup>11</sup>. This statement sets up the basic interpretive elements she employs in her analysis. The feminine imagery is negative: the cave represents a woman's womb; breaking out of the womb means breaking into truth and knowledge. Masculine images, on the contrary, are positive: throughout the allegory light and knowledge are associated with the masculine, earth and non-knowledge with the feminine. This dichotomy becomes clear in Irigaray's statement that the earth is defined as “dark holes in which lucid season risks drowning”<sup>12</sup>. The connection between light and knowledge establishes an association that came to dominate western thought: vision is a “masculine” sense, while touch, on the other hand, is a feminine one. The certainty of knowledge is always associated with “seeing”, a masculine way of knowing from which the feminine is excluded.

Thinkers of the Middle Ages agreed with the Greeks that God made woman to be a helper in procreation for man because “woman's power of reasoning is less than a man's”<sup>13</sup>. Modern philosophers, including many liberals, have held a substantially similar view. Hume, Rousseau, Kant, and Hegel had doubts about women being rational agents. Hegel, for instance, believed that women's deficiency in the “universal faculty” was such as to render women as different from men as plants were different from animals<sup>14</sup>. This tendency had to be challenged by feminists who shared the

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<sup>9</sup> María Luisa Femenías, “Women and Natural Hierarchy in Aristotle”, *Hypatia*, vol. 9, no. 1, 1994, p. 167.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid*, p.169.

<sup>11</sup> Luce Irigaray, “This Sex Which Is Not One”, *Feminisms*, 1977, pp. 368.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibidem*, p.302.

<sup>13</sup> Alison M., Jaggar, *Feminist Politics and Human Nature*, Rowman & Littlefield, 1988, p. 264.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid*, p.263.

characteristic liberal belief that individuals are entitled to political rights only in virtue of their capacity for reason.

Modern European philosophy recognizes ‘reason’ as a male attribute. The identification of reason with masculinity can be traced back to the Greeks who shaped western thought as a masculine enterprise and by extension inculcating female subservience. The first democratic structure in ‘Ancient Greek’ excluded women and children from deliberation<sup>15</sup>. Luce Irigaray shows in her analysis of the allegory of the cave avers that the masculine definition of concepts of truth and rationality are central to Plato’s concept of knowledge. She observes that the feminine imagery is considered as negative where care represents a woman’s womb and breaking out of womb means breaking into truth and knowledge. Masculine images, on the contrary, are positive where light and knowledge are a representation of the masculine, earth and non-knowledge of the feminine<sup>16</sup>.

Descartes a French philosopher of Enlightenment was no exception. His dualism of mind and body contributed to the modern entrenchment of the dichotomy and association of reason with masculinity in a large way. His mind body dualism has reinforced the effects of the symbolic opposition between male and female<sup>17</sup>. Thus, Cartesian dualism worked as a catalyst in the development of the idea of a strict separation between ‘reason’ as the logical cognitive faculty of the mind, which gives rise to knowledge. As a result of the dynamics of duality, emotion along with embodiedness and passions was associated with the realm of irrationality, from which ‘knowledge’ could never accrue. This idea was furthered by the French Enlightenment writers, who took French Revolution as the opportunity to sweep away not only the old feudal hierarchical political, social and economic order, but also all the authority based on tradition, prejudice and irrationality replacing it with an all-powerful cognitive universal reason, divorced from the so-called confusing context of body, and emotions only to establish yet again, another hierarchy<sup>18</sup>.

The association of the masculinity with rationality, the feminine with irrationality in the history of western thought has been extensively documented in contemporary feminist scholarship. Okin’s *Women in*

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<sup>15</sup> Adriana Cavarero, “Feminism and Ancient Greek Philosophy”, *The Routledge Companion to Feminist Philosophy*, 2018, pp. 23–34.

<sup>16</sup> Irigaray, Luce, *op.cit.*, 279.

<sup>17</sup> Marie-Frédérique Pellegrin, “Cartesianism and Feminism”, *The Oxford Handbook of Descartes and Cartesianism*, 2019, pp. 564–579.

<sup>18</sup> E. Manion, “New French Feminisms: An Anthology”, *Telos*, vol. 1980, no. 45, 1980, pp. 211–215.

*Western Political thought*<sup>19</sup> (1972) and Elshlain's *Public Man, Private Woman* (1981)<sup>20</sup> argue that the exclusion of women from the sphere of rationality is the cause of their exclusion from the political sphere. Since women are not rational they cannot be allowed to participate in the realm that is the highest expression of man's rationality: politics.

Liberalism, as a product of the rationalism of Enlightenment thought, defines man as rational, autonomous, equal, and free of the bias of subjectivity. On the face of it liberalism appeared to include women in its programme but the founding fathers of liberalism, among them John Locke and Rousseau excluded women from the sphere of rationality and politics. Liberalism derives its definition of self from the Enlightenment dualism between the rational and the irrational. In its original formulation liberalism explicitly excluded women from the sphere of rationality and politics. This exclusion was effected by building on the dualism between the public and the private, placing men in the former category and relegating women to the latter. The postmodern feminist critique argues that liberalism despite its emancipatory emphasis, is rooted in an epistemology that bars entry of women from the liberating realm of politics by defining them as irrational. They argue, furthermore, that the rational/ irrational, public/private dichotomies are fundamental to liberalism's epistemology; they cannot be "opened up", eliminated or reversed without altering that epistemology beyond recognition. Their argument differs from that of the radical feminist, however, in that they want to displace rather than reverse these dichotomies.

Although Locke excluded women from the sphere of rationality and politics by arguing that they "cannot know and therefore must believe", liberal feminists have attempted to alter Locke's verdict on women. In "*A Vindication of the Right of Woman*" (1967) Mary Wollstonecraft attempts to open up the sphere of rationality in order to establish woman's status as a "rational creature"<sup>21</sup> (1967: 1950; Donovan, 1986: 9). She argues that if men and women were educated similarly, the physical differences between them would disappear.

As Foucault has shown, this basic dualism of subject/object can be traced to the Greeks, it is most fully realized in Enlightenment thought and its offshoot, humanism. Like the rational irrational dualism, the dichotomy between subject and object is central to Enlightenment epistemology

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<sup>19</sup> L.K. Kerber, & S.M. Okin, „Women in Western Political Thought“, *The History Teacher*, 15(3), 1982.

<sup>20</sup> Don Herzog, "Public Man, Private Woman?", *Household Politics: Conflict in Early Modern England*, Yale University Press, 2013, p. 122.

<sup>21</sup> Mary Wollstonecraft, "A Vindication of the Rights of Woman", *Ideals and Ideologies: A Reader*, 2016, p. 430.



which defines knowledge in terms of absolute truths that are acquired by individual autonomous subjects. The two dualisms are related not only because the privileged element is associated with the male, the disprivileged with the female. They are also linked because the definition of rationality posited by the Enlightenment is dependent on the acquisition of knowledge by an abstract subject of a distinct and separate object.

The feminist critique of subjects and objects is wide-ranging. The first clear statement of the implications of this dualism for the status of women is that presented by Simone de Beauvoir in the *Second Sex*. In the *Second Sex* de Beauvoir attempts the solution to the problem of the exclusion of women from the realm of the subject: bringing women into the realm of the subject. De Beauvoir begins her analysis with the statement: (A)woman is always the “other” to man’s “Absolute”. Her first point is that this fundamental distinction between self and other is not symmetrical. The absolute human type is man; he is both positive and neutral. Thus woman is always defined as peculiarity; she is “not man”. Simone de Beauvoir goes on to assert that woman is compelled to assume the status of Other in man’s world<sup>22</sup>. For her the fundamental condition of woman is that she is locked into an Otherness that is central to human life.

Further, de Beauvoir asserts that women are incapable of action and are thus condemned to passivity. What are commonly defined as the primary ‘activities of women, giving birth and sucklings’<sup>23</sup>. Women’s incapacity to act and her inherent passivity is rooted in what de Beauvoir sees to be the fundamental difference between men and women: men are capable of transcendence while women are mired in immanence. Owing to the weightage given to rationality feminists were forced to recognize the indisputable physical differences between women and men. We have seen already, however, that liberals view human beings as essentially rational agents and deny the physical basis of the capacity of reason, and if there is any it is a part of human essence. Feminists argued that since, physical structures, height, the weight of an individual are irrelevant to his rational capability therefore the physical characteristics such as race and sex should also be irrelevant. Thus generating another view that male and female are identical, or to put it more accurately, there is no such thing as male and female nature: there is only human nature and that has no sex. Mary Wollstonecraft, therefore, campaigned consistently for educational opportunities for women, arguing that it is the lack of such opportunities that account for women’s failure to develop fully their capacity for rationality.

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<sup>22</sup> Simone De Beauvoir, “The Second Sex”, *Classic and Contemporary Readings in Sociology*, 2014, p. 118.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid, p.94.

## **Feminism as a Social Reform Movement**

For centuries the lives of women revolved around the husband, home, and family. However, when the great Revolution broke out in America in 1774, the women despite their domestic duties were forced to participate in revolutionary activities. This was a great burden; At every house women, including children, were making cartridges, running bullets, making wallets, baking biscuits, and at the same time, crying and bemoaning the fact that their husbands and sons had to fight for their liberation. They did not know if they see their men again<sup>24</sup>. The 19<sup>th</sup> Century feminists saw far greater differences between the "male" and "female" nature than their present counterparts do. They were convinced that women's biological inheritance included many feminine characteristics and that their natural instincts suited them primarily for homemaking and childcare. They argued, however, that these differences do not justify the unfair treatment brought to them by society. For contemporary feminists, different processes of socialization account for a larger part of the observed differences in men's and women's behaviors, while biology plays only a minor role. Feminism analyzes the various types of resistance the women's movement has encountered. These issues include sex-role stereotyping, women's self-image and public image, the social role of womanhood, and politics of patriarchal language. Feminist thought is centered around issues like women's role in reproduction and the role of socialization in a male-dominated social culture. Women started questioning this enforced inactivity and their economic and social dependence on men. The transition through industrial organization to capitalism created various job opportunities for women in the fields of finance and business, but economic independence was robbed by men through marriage. Women were subjected to all kinds of restrictions, whereas men were enjoying several rights in society. In general established laws, customs, attitudes, and habits of thinking were slow to change, especially when they involved the acceptance of new ideas about women and their place in society.

By the 1830's and 1840's increasing efforts were made to awaken women to ask for full enfranchisement. Paullina Wright Davis, Lucretia Mott, Lucy Stone, Ernestine Rose, Abigail Kelley Foster, and Angelina and Sarah Crimka spoke out for women's rights. Books such as Margaret Fuller's *Women in the 19th Century* (1845) had an influence. However, the credit for an organized movement for women's rights goes to America, beginning with the Seneca Falls Declaration of Sentiments and Resolutions. In June 1848, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Lucretia Mott, Martha C. Wright, and Mary Ann Mclintock issued a call for a convention to

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<sup>24</sup> Perry Willson, "‘Io Sono Mia’: Feminism in the ‘Great Cultural Revolution’, 1968–80”, *Women in Twentieth-Century Italy*, 2010, p. 160.

discuss the rights of women, meeting in the Wesleyan Chapel at Seneca Falls, New York, on July 19th and 20th 1848. The idea sprang up during a social gathering of Lucretia Mott, a Quaker preacher and veteran social activist, Martha Wright, Mary Ann McClintock, James Hunt, and Elizabeth Cady Stanton<sup>25</sup>.

Stanton drafted 11 resolutions for the “Declaration of Sentiments” that guided the Seneca Falls Convention. With Frederick Douglass arguing eloquently on their behalf, all 11 resolutions passed, including the most radical demand and right to vote. As such the debates culminated in the first women’s rights convention, the convention adopted a Declaration of Principles patterned on the American Declaration of Independence. Signed by 68 women and 32 men, the Seneca Falls Declaration stated: “We hold these truth to be self-evident that all men and women are created equal.”<sup>26</sup> The convention demanded for women the right of equal education and the right to preach, to teach, and to earn a livelihood. It also passed a resolution stating “that it is the sacred duty of the women of this country to secure to themselves their sacred right to the elective franchise.”<sup>27</sup> Thus was laid the foundation for the woman suffrage movement in the United States. The radical demand for suffrage at Seneca Falls carried the social of political revolution for women’s rights into a new era. Special support for this historic event came from Elizabeth Cady Stanton. After a heated debate, the convention agreed to acknowledge the right of American women to elective franchise.

A final clause to the resolution was added by Lucretia Mott urging men and women to work for professional and vocational equality. It was one of the historic events to note that one of the signatories of Seneca Falls Declaration, Charlotte Woodward Pierce, lived to vote until the Presidential election of the United States in 1920. Though the Declaration never became an official manifesto of the movement, its philosophic rationale was taken for granted by the later advocates of women’s rights. Only after the passing of the Nineteenth Amendment to the American Constitution in 1920, the document acquired historic value and became an inspiring symbol of the feminist movement. The Seneca Falls convention was followed by conventions in other states of US in 1850. The first national convention was held in Worcester, Massachusetts, with delegates from nine states present. Another convention held in Syracuse, New York in 1852 was significant because it marked the first joint venture of Susan B.

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<sup>25</sup> George Gilbert, “Women, Nationalism and the Russian Right (1905-1917)”, *Quaestio Rossica*, vol. 5, no. 3, 2017, p. 658.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid, p.658.

<sup>27</sup> Immanuel Ness, “Encyclopedia of American Social Movements”, *Encyclopedia of American Social Movements*, 2015, p. 54.

Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, who for the next 50 years were in the forefront of the fight for equality for women in the US<sup>28</sup>. The convention idea continued to spread until women in many States were gathering to launch educational and legislative programs to change the US constitution's and gain legal recognition of women's right to vote. Even more basic to women's future than the pursuit of suffrage was the long struggle for the elimination of economic and social injustice to which they had been subjected for generations. Americans have matured during that era affected by three great wars. Working women advanced in respect of their better representation in the professions and in the labor force. Even though they gained an improved legal status in 1960s, the psychological wound as a result of the grievances of 1848 continued to cause pain. There was continuity of themes. Women's suffrage has dominated the international feminism for almost 70 years. At first, they based their demand for the vote on the Enlightenment Principle of Natural law, regularly invoking the concept of inalienable rights granted to all Americans by the Declaration of Independence. Charlotte Perkins Gilman in *Women and Economics* (1898) insisted that women would not be liberated until they were freed from the "demotic mythology" of home and family that kept them dependent on men<sup>29</sup>.

"Internationally the 'question of woman' and the growth of feminism is woven together with the history of nationalist movements which are demanding equality and free government. First wave feminism emerged in many countries in similar ways. For example feminist literature and writing, internationally, drew attention to issues of education and emancipation and women's associations emerged from nationalist parties. The International Women Suffrage Alliance dedicated itself in 1913 to Asian women's emancipation and by the Second World War there were national women's councils in 16 Third World countries. In the early decades of the 20th century there were visits of European feminist campaigners to the Third World, for example Ellen Key, Annie Besant and Margaret Sanger while Third Women made reciprocal journeys. The domain of second wave feminism had an even wider sway than first wave feminism. Feminist campaigns are inevitably shaped by national priorities and national politics. "Feminism is an historically diverse and culturally varied international movement. Its political aims have been endorsed world- wide; in the United Nations Decade for Women 1975-85; at the International National Conference attended by people from 151 U.N. countries; by the success of abortion and equal rights reforms and Acts prohibiting sexual discrimination. Yet the value of feminism and its radical

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid, p.56.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid, p.64.

implications lie as much in its direct actions and the way in which feminist ideas are now part of everyday thinking.

### **Globalization of Feminism**

20<sup>th</sup> Century European and American feminism eventually reached into Asia, Africa and Latin America. As this happened, women in developed countries, especially the intellectuals were horrified to discover that women in some countries were required to wear veils public or to endure forced marriage, female infanticide, or widow burning. Many Western feminists soon perceived themselves as saviors of the third world women, little realizing that this perceptions and solutions to social problems often differ with the real lives and concerns of women in these regions.

The conflicts between women in developed and developing nations have played out most vividly at international conferences. After the 1980 World Conference of The United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace conducted in Copenhagen, women from less developed nations complained that the veil for women and the female genital surgery had been chosen as conference priorities without consulting them<sup>30</sup>. It seemed that their counterparts in the West were not listening to them. During the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo, women from the Third World Countries protested outside because they believed the agenda had been hijacked by Europeans and Americans. The protestors had expected to talk about ways that underdeveloped countries were holding their women in the state of backwardness. Instead, the conference organizers chose to focus on contraception and abortion. Third world women, especially scholars of Muslim women's rights noted that they could not very well worry about other matters of the veil for women and the female genital surgery when their children were dying from thirst, hunger or war. The Conference instead centered around reducing the numbers of third world babies in order to preserve the earth's resources, despite the fact that the first world really consumed much of these resources.

Feminism now achieved significant gains for women, with the eradication of female genital surgery in many African countries, and government efforts to end widow burning in India for instance, and maltreatment of widow in many Asian and African countries. More generally, and especially in the West, feminism have influenced every aspect of contemporary life, communication, and debate, from highlighting the

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<sup>30</sup> Jodi O'Brien and Marcella C. Gemelli, "United Nations Decade for Women", *Encyclopedia of Gender and Society*, 2012, p.65.

concern of the women and their rise in academic fields such as Women's Studies, Eco-Feminism, Sports, laws, and inequality in organized religion which have all been affecting the women in many parts of the world. In the earlier phases of feminism, the feminists have focused largely on the reform of women's social position, arguing that they should have access to education, work or civil rights. During the latter half of the 20th Century, however, feminists become increasingly interested in the variety of social practices including theoretical ones through which our understanding of femininity and masculinity are created and maintained. As a result, the scope of feminist enquiry has broadened to include, for example, jurisprudence, epistemology, and psychoanalysis.

### **Conclusion**

The present-day feminist thought encompasses a moral vision and emerges as a holistic, anti-militaristic and life-affirming philosophy. Feminism is committed to the struggle for equality of women, an effort to make women full human beings. However, the struggle for equal rights historically and politically emphasizes the value of women as they are. Feminism, as a philosophy of reform, envisages profound changes in traditional social structures, such as, the family, in the economic role and power of women, and finally in fundamental attitudes and personal relationships, leading to a just social order.

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# THE CONCEPT OF THE HISTORICAL PROCESS IN KARL MARX'S FORMEN

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**Abstract:** *This essay analyses the concept of "historical process" formulated by Karl Marx in the work *Formen, die der capitaleistischen Produktion vorhergehen*. Marx emphasizes the way in which a real historical process can be revealed only when certain conditions arise which will be fully realized only in the capitalist mode of production. These conditions will lead to the emergence of the employee and modern individualism.*

**Keywords:** *historical process, mode of production, social relations, property, wage labour.*

The aim of this essay is to analyse the concept of *historical process* that we encounter in Karl Marx's *Formen, die der kapitalistischen Produktion vorhergehn*<sup>1</sup>. Here, the historical process only appears as a specific quality of particular communities in which a discontinuity has taken place and been verified, a qualitative change taking place between *the original conditions of production* and the member of the group. With this concept, Marx clarifies the principle of human reproduction - obviously, not only from the point of view of biological generation - that consists, on one side in the appropriation of external objects; and on the other side, in their submission to a subjective purpose, by seeing the object as the rendering of one's own activity, and not only as a prerequisite. This subjectivation is, in fact, the "formation of the object" in itself. Or, for Marx, the original conditions of production cannot be engendered by

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<sup>1</sup> K. Marx, *Formen, die der kapitalistischen Produktion vorhergehn*, in Id., *Grünrisse der Kritik der politischen Ökonomie, (Rohentwurf) 1857-1858*, Dietz Verlag, Berlin 1953, tr. it. *Lineamenti fondamentali della critica dell'economia politica. 1857-1858*, La Nuova Italia, Firenze, 1974, vol. II, pp. 94-148.



themselves: consequently, the mechanisms of unification between individuals and the natural conditions of their exchange with nature, leading to an appropriation of the external world, are not susceptible to explanations - which would be equivalent to asserting that they are not the results of an historical process. And we emphasize once more the fact that Marx places here a clear equivalence between theory (explanation) and history (historical process), between a logical and a descriptive category. This allows us to understand that certain notions, such as “historical processes”, are already loaded with meaning inside his theories. and not just simple expositive constructs.

In fact, Marx clearly states that, in the situation of unity between man and nature, we cannot speak about a “historical process” but only about limited and repetitive development. Only when a real separation between individuals and natural conditions of existence is achieved, and just in this particular circumstance - verified, in a complete and exhaustive way, in the relationship between capital and wage-earning work - can one speak about historical processes and, consequently, offer explanations. The isolated individual, who Smith and Ricardo place, in nature itself, as the point of departure of history, reveals himself to be in fact its historical result.

Every time that labour presents itself in an inseparable homogeneity with the organic body (which happens when using cattle in agricultural jobs, and also in the event of employment of slaves or servants for working the land, although with a different degree of intensity), in other words when this unit is posited as an inorganic condition of production, then the full development of subjectivity and therefore of the historical process is not possible.

In the words of Sofri, “Marx places at the origin of human history an ingenuous relationship between man and nature, with the earth seen as the inorganic condition of its reproduction [...]. The relationship between man and earth is mediated by his belonging to a community, which forms the presupposed basis for the appropriation and exploitation of the soil”<sup>2</sup>.

In *Formen* subjectivity and historical process appear as the two faces of the same coin, so we could assert that the first represents the weft and warp of the second.

One of the historical conditions for the development of capitalism is the separation of free labour from the means of labour and the material of labour (these last two elements, the means of labour and the material of labour, constituting the objective conditions for the realization of free labour).

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<sup>2</sup> G. Sofri, *Il modo di produzione asiatico - The Asian way of production*, Einaudi, Torino, 1969, p. 43.

Therefore, the separation of the worker from the land and, subsequently, the disintegration of small real estate properties and of collective property occurs in the first instance. In both forms of property (small real estate property and collective property), man enters a property relationship with the objective conditions of his own labour: therefore, the union between labour and the presupposed materials/means of labour is verified. The worker possesses “an objective existence independently from work/labour [...] he is the owner of the conditions of its effective existence”<sup>3</sup>.

Individuals perceive themselves either as separate owners of properties situated one beside the other (in the case of small real estate properties) or as incarnations of common property (in the case of collective property).

The scope of labour in these primitive forms of property and relative community is not the production of a value (better: value production is not the essential scope, since although there happens to be a surplus that can be exchanged, this is a residual, marginal fact that does not affect the fundamental reason of existence of these social forms), but the maintenance of the individual, his own family and his entire community.

Therefore, the original shape of social relations between individuals is that of relations between owners (in the two already presented forms); the figure of the worker, in its exclusive, pure shape, is successive and is an historical product, meaning that it is not immediately present but needs particular conditions that can only be created by the development of production, relationships of property and social relationships.

Gregarism, which is a natural community founded on consanguinity, introduces itself as the presupposed owner of the land. The tribe is the preliminary condition for the appropriation of the objective conditions characterizing individual and collective life. Private property belongs, at the same time, to the community. The work process is not the title on whose basis one approaches property, but the product of gregarism.

A more complex typology, as consequence of a more dynamic society, is verified as a result of widening natural groups. The community is, still, the presupposed fundament - but ceases to appear as the common substance of which every individual is a manifestation. This is verified when the fulcrum of associate life stops being the countryside and becomes the city. While, in the old typology, the village is an appendix of the countryside, when the city becomes stabilized it is reduced to being an accessory of the latter. In the city, the community acquires an external existence separated from that one of single individuals. And as a collective

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<sup>3</sup> K. Marx, *Lineamenti fondamentali della critica dell'economia politica - Fundamental directions in the critique of political economy, 1857-1858*, voll. II, p. 95.

unit it opposes others of its kind, appropriating, through war, the exclusive use of land. In the cities, due to military necessity, segmentation of society and the formation of a two-tiered system of property occurs: on the one hand *ager publicus*, collective ownership that meets common needs and, on the other hand, individual ownership. The latter is no longer just the temporary possession of a common good but is completely separate from *ager publicus*. In tribal systems individual possession can be enhanced only through temporarily working together, for example through the construction of large collective works, such as the aqueducts. When this function of valorisation, mediated by collective labour, gradually declines, the purely natural character of the communities dissolves.

The community - which Marx defines *tout-court* as a State - in the city is, at the same time, a reciprocal relationship between free and equal individuals and a guarantee of this same mutuality. In fact, the single individual is a private owner only in his quality as member of the State. Being a citizen is a prerequisite for owning individual property, and not vice versa. The importance of the State as a precondition is such that the purpose of free farmers is to not to accumulate wealth but to reproduce those conditions that make them community members. When guaranteed self-sufficiency, their excess time is put at the service of the State, for example, in warfare. As Marx accurately summarizes: "ownership of their work is mediated by the conditions of labour, from the plot of land which, in its turn, is guaranteed by exceeding labour loaned by members of the community in the form of military service etc."<sup>4</sup>. The community member reproduces himself through cooperation in labour done in the service of the community and not by means of collaboration in wealth-producing labour. The owner of a private farm holds it in his quality as a citizen and, in turn, as the State's landlord.

Another form of property is that which Marx calls Germanic. The Germanic community is not concentrated in cities. Classical antiquity is characterized by cities based on land ownership and agriculture. The Asian model is instead an undifferentiated unit of villages and countryside. The Germans lived in small family groups separated from each other. In this case the community acquires consistency only in particular cases, for example, during an assembly in which general questions are discussed. Here there is no union, but a meeting of subjects who are also land owners. The community has no independent existence, as in ancient cities, since there is nothing that represents it symbolically (i.e. the existence of administrative officials in charge of the different needs of social life). The Germans have common property existing alongside private one, but this is

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid., pp. 101-102.

not the *ager publicus* of the Romans representing the economic existence of the State, but a part of the territory that is not subdivided since it serves, in this form, as a means of production (e.g. for hunting, firewood etc.). For the Germans, the common ground is only considered as integration of individual property. While in ancient times, private property is mediated by the community (the individual owns it only as a member of the community), for the Germans it is the existence of the community and the *ager publicus* which have to be mediated by the subjectivity of the individual (better, mediated by reciprocal relationship between self-employed owners). It's the house which constitutes the autonomous centre, after the Germans. Says Marx:

*“In the Germanic community form the peasant is not a citizen of the State; that is, he is not an inhabitant of the city; at its base there is the isolated, independent family habitation, guaranteed by the union with other similar habitations of families of the same tribe who assemble occasionally for war, for religious reasons, in order to decide in matters of justice etc, with the aim of putting into effect such mutual guarantees. Individual real estate ownership is introduced here neither as an antithesis of communitary real estate nor as being mediated by it, but quite the opposite. The community exists only in the mutual relations between these land owners. The communitarian property in itself is thus introduced as a collective accessory element regarding individual residences in connection with the habitat of the tribe and the appropriation of land. The community is not the substance in which the single individual is only introduced as an accident; neither is it the general element, that is an unit in existence either for its ideal image, or the existence of the city and its urban needs in contrast with the needs of a single individual [...] on one side the community itself is a community of language, of blood, etc which presupposed an individual owner; on the other hand, it exists in concrete terms only in the effective assembly re-united for common scopes”<sup>5</sup>*

The Germanic model is cantered on the countryside, proceeds along a trajectory that sees a deep rift between city and countryside and, at last, demands the assertion of a process of urbanization of the countryside (contrary to antiquity that knew instead an inverse process, the ruralisation of the city).

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid., pp. 107-108.

All three forms of precapitalistic production (Asian, ancient and Germanic) have in common one fundamental aspect: agriculture and real estate represent the base of economic order. Here, the aim of economic activity is the production of use values and the reproduction of the individual in his relationships with the community he belongs to. As a result of that, the following are verified:

- the appropriation of the natural conditions of labour and land, appropriation that is not a consequence of labour but presupposes labour;
- the main objective condition of labour is not introduced as produced by labour, but as already existing as nature;
- the relationship with land seen as property of the individual is introduced, from the beginning, as an objective way of existence that is a presupposed requisite for the development of the activity, and not just a simple result.

After all, Marx asserts that the existence of property presupposes that of community, as no property would exist without community, just as no language would exist without community either. The relationship between man and land, in the shape of property, is always mediated by the occupation, either pacific or violent, of a physical space by part of a group - in a natural way, or a historically evolved way. The individual cannot introduce himself as an isolated individual anymore, as it happens with the modern wage-earning worker. That which Marx describes in *Formen* is this very process leading from the original natural condition in which the community is a presupposition of property upon the conditions of labour (the community is the substance and the individual - just an accident of it)<sup>6</sup> to the complete separation between individual and the property of instruments of labour, that characterizes the capitalist mode of production.

For the community to continue to subsist in the previous conditions is necessary that the objective conditions presiding the reproduction of already existing relationships between individuals and communities are reproduced.

In reality the simple circumstance that increases the production amount or the population places the premises for the overcoming those conditions, and therefore for the disappearance of natural communities and their forms of property.

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<sup>6</sup> Says Marx: “relationship with the objective conditions of labor is mediated by existence as a member of the community; on the other hand the effective existence of the community is determined by the form of property upon objective conditions of labor”<sup>6</sup>, *Ibid.*, p. 109.

In precapitalistic modes of production, the reproduction of already existing relationships between the individual and the community is the base for the development of the individual and, therefore, this development is limited, because predetermined by the reproduction of the *status quo*. For individuals, existing relationships in a community are introduced as presuppositions and therefore objective.

In natural communities a free and complete development of the individual is not possible since this would enter in contradiction with the conditions of reproduction of the original relationships of the community. The more resistant community is, for Marx, that which he defined as Asian, since in it the individual never becomes independent when confronting a community where production is self-sufficient and manufacture, closely tied to agriculture.

But which is the limit for the means of productions and their correlated antique social orderings?

Marx writes a beautiful page of the *Grundrisse* in which, at first sight, he seems to celebrate “the elevated” ancient conception according to which man is always the scope of production. In this context the problem is which owner generates a better individual and citizen, and not one with greater wealth. The modern world turns all that over: the purpose of man becomes production, and the scope of this latter is wealth. The scope of modern vision is “petty” only if it is maintained within “the limited bourgeois form”<sup>7</sup>, inside of which it appears like alienation, renunciation on the part of man to place his own fine advantage, independently, above an external one.

However, forced by the narrow cage into which bourgeois economy constrains the existence of wealth, it - Marx writes - is none other than the “universality of the needs, the abilities, the enjoyments, the productive forces [...]. What is this, if not the full development of the dominion of man over the forces of nature, or those of so-called nature, and even those of his own nature? Which thing is this, if not the absolute manifestation of its creative dowries, presupposing that the previous historical development, which renders equal to itself the totality of development, that is of the development of all human forces as such, were not measured on a meter already given? In which man it is not reproduced in a determined dimension, but produces his own totality? Where he does not try to remain something in becoming but is in the absolute movement of becoming?”<sup>8</sup>.

Therefore, for Marx, the separation between individual and community, the division that generates the modern, consists in producing, on the base of past development, in itself, the conditions of its own

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 112.

<sup>8</sup> Ibidem.

reproduction; in transforming that which appeared as a condition into a result.

The isolated man, the free worker who sells his own labour force are not natural conditions but the fruit of long historical transformations. Marx writes; “man isolates himself only through the historical process. Originally, he is introduced as a being who belongs to the human species, to the tribe, like a gregarious animal [...] Exchange is one of the main means of this isolation. It renders gregarism superfluous and it dissolves it”<sup>9</sup>.

Which are the necessary conditions for capital to find the free worker?

In the first instance, dissolution of the relation with the land as a natural condition of production, since all the forms in which this type of property is present presuppose a community in which the land is owned in common. That presupposes, in its turn, that the producer possesses the necessary means for living both before and during the production act. In fact, as owner of common property, this supplies him with all the requirements he needs in order to survive.

Secondly, the relationship in which the worker turns out to be also the owner of the labour instruments must be decomposed. The property of these latter demands one preliminarily particular form of manufacturing labour, that of handicraft. The system of corporations, in which the capitalist it is still introduced under the figure of the master, is connected to this last one. Here we find the heredity of work techniques, the organization of labour and the instruments of labour.

And lastly, the dissolution of those relationships in which the workers are a direct part of the objective conditions of production, and as such they are appropriated (slaves or serfs). For the capitalist, the condition of production is labour and not the worker. Labour, in fact, can be completed, as an example, also by machines.

These are, for Marx, “the historical presuppositions necessary in order to find the worker as free worker, as working ability lacking in objectivity, purely subjective, in counterpoint to the objective conditions of production and to his non-property, linked to other people's property, being valuable in itself, as capital”<sup>10</sup>.

But it is necessary to underline that we are not here in front of a flat historicism, the present is not already inscribed in the past, it is not a necessary development of it. The historical process, for Marx, does not indicate a concatenation but a transformation, and the result is not predeterminable.

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid., p. 123.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p. 126.

Let us pull the lines of reasoning to their natural conclusion.

To a determined plurality of modes of production corresponds a determined plurality of social formations. How do we pass from one social formation to the other? Marx writes that “a social formation does not perish until it has developed all the productive forces to which can give place”. The development of productive forces engenders the passing of the social form but it does not destroy the same (that is, it does not destroy the development of productive forces, or better - it does not destroy the same productive forces). In other words, the development of productive forces destroys the correspondent social formation but without involving the dissolution of the same productive forces. Indeed, productive forces are transferred (their development is free of their old covering origin, and it is either transferred or it produces) another social formation to which they have given life through a new way of production.

That implies the individuation of a place in which the continuity of productive forces (continuity being understood here as continuity in the increase of intensity), meets the discontinuity of historical ages. Marx calls this “the economic formation of society”. The economic formation of society is, after an expression used by Cesar Luporini, a “*unicum continuum*”<sup>11</sup> that transgresses the discontinuity of historical ages, means of production and social formations.

The notion of the economic formation of society is used by Marx in order to designate the non-interrupted continuity of economic weaving, in the discontinuity and successive plurality of social formations. It denotes something that cannot be locked up in the specificity of a particular way of production, or one particular social formation.

But, above all, the concept of an economic formation of society offers Marx the occasion to raise the problem of the continuity and discontinuity of historical course.

The precapitalistic individual forms characterized in *Formen* do not exhaust the past at all. Marx’s problem is that he has a theory of the historical process that provides a reason for the occurrence of the capitalist way of production. To such an end, it distinguishes between elements presenting a character of continuity (productive forces, economic formation of the society) and others that introduce a discontinuity character (production means, social formations).

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<sup>11</sup> C. Luporini, “Marx secondo Marx - Marx according to Marx”, in *Critica Marxista*, 2-3, (March-June 1972), p. 54. The article has been reprinted in the *Dialettica e materialismo - Dialectic and materialism*, Editori Riuniti, Roma, 1974, volume of the same author.



Therefore, Marx reconstructs a historical process delimited in time and space, the capitalist way of production, in which various social formations interact within the increase of productive forces (the development of the economic formation of the society). The inner connection between various ages of the social process of production, that is their continuity, appears, when analysed *a posteriori*, to introduce a necessity character. But this is only an appearance, since it is an *a posteriori* matter.

The historical course is, instead, empirical and not teleological; however, it always re-produces itself in specific “forms”. Thus, such forms (we remember that, for Marx, forms are means of production, social formations), are not just solidifications of empirical material; they are not only in relation with the material conditions which produce them, but also present a systematic character. This means they, as forms, are internally connected - beyond being logically and individually connected - with a determined way of production. These forms command the historical course: the dialectic relationship between systematic development of forms and historical processes is the architrave that supports the mature work of Marx.

Therefore, if a “necessity” exists for Marx, it is only of a structural type, relative to the effects forms have upon the historical process. The effects of forms upon historical processes leave space for the opportunity of arranging the empirical, not in an indefinite way, but only inside possibilities determined by the same forms. A logical process that designs a type of evolutionist, therefore necessary, distance can only be found inside a fixed way of production. While the nexus between a way of production and another way of production is not totally dedicated to the case but attached to a series of real possibilities. Therefore, this continuity concerns the concrete (or the content, if we use the rhetorical figure of contained/container); while the discontinuous concerns the forms (means of production, social formations; that is, that which comes from the part of the container), shapes that must systematically be constructed through abstraction (see, to such purpose, the *Introduction to Il Capitale*). The Vera Zasulič<sup>12</sup> letter of February 1881 excludes one needful interpretation of the various social formations.

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<sup>12</sup> Vera Zasulič's letter to Marx and Marx's reply can be read in full, including the various drafts of it written by Marx in the appendix to Teodor Shanin's (ed.) volume, *Late Marx and the Russian Road. Marx and the Peripheries of Capitalism quantity*, Monthly Review Press, New York 1983, pp. 98-126. A partial translation into Italian of Marx's reply to Zasulič is in K. Marx, *Forme economiche precapitalistiche*, Editori Riuniti, Rome, 1977, pp. 157-60. On Marxian thinking about the Russian peasant world see P. P. Poggio,

*Il Capitale* introduces, therefore, a systematic and non-historical development of forms, that is, the continuous genesis of more and more complex shapes - and not the development of a unique form. The systematic and non-historical development of forms gives place to one radical differentiation of the same forms, because of the empiricism of their own contents. And, just for this reason, those contents can appear for what they are, that is - show their own factuality, and in such become accessible.

This is one of the merits of the scientific works of Marx: to have guaranteed a non-empirical access to the empirical.

Or, which is the connection between the two plans? That is, between empiricist processualism and the succession of forms? The connection is given by a mutual nexus of dependency: the succession of forms (that is, the discontinuous) can solely be conceptualized only when represented as generated by empiricist processualism but, at the same time, empiricist processualism is governed by forms. This circularity has a logical *prius* in forms. In what measure Marx remembers such purposes can be found in the *Preface* to the first edition of *Il Capitale*: “for the analysis of economic forms one cannot use either the microscope or chemical reagents: one and the other must be replaced by the force of abstraction”<sup>13</sup>.

The choice of abstraction, that privileged approach for the study of empiricist materials, does not have a conventional character but results necessarily once one has established the objective - to realize “the critique of political economy” - as stated in the subtitle of his more famous work. Only the reloading of the factual inside the domain of the critique of political economy will be able to concur with a historiography that is not just a chronological succession of pure external nexuses. The natural object has to be divested of its empirical garments by the means of a phenomenological approach which captures, primarily, the *form* in which it presents itself. The “form of the thing” is not an idea and an impalpable essence, but the way in which the thing is introduced, in which it appears to us externally. If not for the tie between form and object, the concrete shape of every object would become less important. The question on the nature of the “thing”, that is the logically coherent elaboration of the object, outside of every historical appraisal, does not mean we should arrest ourselves to purely speculative elaborations, but should earn a

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*La rivoluzione russa e i contadini*, Jaca Book, Milan 1977, new edition 2017; E. Cinella, *L'altro Marx*, Della Porta Editore, Pisa, 2014.

<sup>13</sup> K. Marx, *Il Capitale*, libro I, Editori Riuniti, Roma, 1974), p. 32. On the separate-concrete relationship in Marx the old but always valid volume by E.V. Il'enkov, *Dialektika abstraktnogo i konkret'nogo v "Kapitale"*, Marksa, Moskva 1960, in Italian translation -. *La dialettica dell'astratto e del concreto nel Capitale di Marx*, Feltrinelli, Milano, 1961. was used.

historical dimension connaturate to the “same thing”, by approaching the temporality of every object, and replacing the outer connections by an objective nexus. After all, the phenomenological analysis of the empirical meets the systematic plan, but this encounter, however, is not accidental - is not the draft of an immediate subsumption of representations under a concept - but demands “a preliminary critical act”, a critique of political economy without which that encounter would have only a categorial character.

Only through the elaboration of forms, the *empiria* is recovered and rendered present in a way more conspicuous and perspicuous than its interlacing of history and arrangements. For forms, any reference to the concrete has a constituent character.

Therefore, the passage between form and matter, both discontinuous and continuous, is possible since the form, as already seen, is a unit of the multiple and this multiple does not have an individual, but a collective character. Moreover, the discontinuity of forms places them in contradiction to themselves, and the overcoming of this antagonism takes place during the historical process, in a social *praxis* that is not conventional (that is, constituted through a relation between persons presupposed to belong to the *praxis*; but it is the same *praxis*, by its impersonal character, that constitutes the basis of relationship between individuals, which will appear as a result). Therefore, it is “the advent of *praxis* as a social process which conditions a return to history in a determined form [...] That is, we see how, inside the *empiria* (at this point, already becoming history) can be constituted the structure, identical with the production of its effect”<sup>14</sup>.

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<sup>14</sup> C. Luporini, *Marx secondo Marx - Marx according to Marx*, quoted work., p. 81.

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# CRISIS, JUSTICE, MESSIANISM: WALTER BENJAMIN'S "CRITIQUE OF VIOLENCE"

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**Abstract:** *This essay dwells on Walter Benjamin's early and important essay "Critique of Violence" (1921). I begin by examining the significance and multivalence of crisis for Benjamin's work. I proceed by outlining the significance Weimar crisis not only for Benjamin's essay, but for Carl Schmitt's work. Further, I outline the significance of an internalization of crisis by the "Critique of Violence", particularly as regards its method of exposition. I subsequently examine Benjamin's analysis of the significance for justice of the proletarian general strike, especially as regards its similarities and differences from Georges Sorel's Reflections on Violence (1909). In the last section of the essay, which focuses on Messianism, I dwell on one of the key differences between Benjamin and Sorel, namely the importance of the theological for the former. I conclude with a brief reflection on the surprising affinities between Benjamin's Messianism and Lenin's uncharacteristic lapse into utopianism in State and Revolution (1917).*

**Keywords:** *Walter Benjamin; Georges Sorel; Carl Schmitt; V.I. Lenin; Law*

In his last and most famous text, "On the Concept of History" (1940), Walter Benjamin notes that "articulating the past historically does not mean recognizing it 'the way it really was'", but rather "appropriating a memory as it flashes up in a moment of danger".<sup>1</sup> It is a statement that departs quite sharply from the premises of Hegel's own famous *dictum*, at the end of his Preface to *The Philosophy of Right*, according to which the "owl of Minerva" takes flight "only when the shades of night are gathering". "Philosophy", in Hegel's own gloss, "always comes too late", for it does not "appear until reality has completed its formative process"<sup>2</sup>,

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<sup>1</sup> Walter Benjamin, "On the Concept of History", trans. Harry Zohn, in *Selected Writings, vol. 4, 1938-1940*, ed. Howard Eiland and Michael W. Jennings, Cambridge, MA: Belknap, Harvard University Press, 2003, p. 391.

<sup>2</sup> G.W.F. Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, trans. S.W. Dyde, Mineola, NY: Dover Philosophical Classics, 2005, p. xxi.

until a given epoch has fully developed and worked through its set of constituent contradictions.<sup>3</sup> Unlike Hegel, who can be reckoned to represent a conception of historical dialectic that has no place for any thought of catastrophe—since for him, evil has no substance other than its very unreality, its lack of grounding on the self-development of actuality<sup>4</sup>—Benjamin sees in historical retrospect neither the possibility of an objective knowledge of totality nor the stoic serenity of a philosophical gaze that knows itself as having come “too late”. He advocates, on the contrary, the necessity of a fully subjective and politically subjectivizing grasp of determinate constellations of the past and, at the same time, he testifies to the unbearable pressure exercised on thought by the unrelenting urgency of redeeming social existence from the future prescribed by the hegemonic configuration of this past, by the fact that it is a past for the “victors”.

But if it is “redemption”, rather than “knowledge”, that can be said to shape Benjamin’s conception of our relationship to the historical past, this conception can also be differentiated from that equally famous phrase Adorno was to use at the end of his post-Holocaust *Minima Moralia* (1951): “The only philosophy that can be responsibly practiced in the face of despair is the attempt to contemplate all things as they would present themselves from the standpoint of redemption. [...] Perspectives must be fashioned that displace and estrange the world, reveal it to be, with its rifts and crevices, as indigent and distorted as it will appear one day in the messianic light.”<sup>5</sup> The difference between Benjamin’s and Adorno’s perspectives is encapsulated in the temporal difference indexed by their respective keywords: “moment of danger”, on the one hand, “standpoint of redemption” on the other. For Adorno (who in this sense stands at Hegel’s antipodes), catastrophe is something that has always already occurred and has to be confronted as having always already occurred. It is, in fact, the effective precondition and foundation of thinking as an irreducibly *modern* task, its horizon of possibility in the actuality of the modern (the subtitle of *Minima Moralia*, “Reflections from Damaged Life”, is quite ample testimony to this premise). For Benjamin, on the contrary, catastrophe is

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<sup>3</sup> See Stathis Gourgouris, “The Concept of the Mythical (Schmitt with Sorel)”, *Cardozo Law Review*, 21, 1999, pp. 1495-1496.

<sup>4</sup> See Carl Schmitt, *The Crisis of Parliamentary Democracy*, trans. Ellen Kennedy, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1988, p. 56: “Hegel’s philosophy contains no ethic that could provide a foundation for the absolute distinction of good and evil. According to this philosophy, the good is what is rational at the current station of the dialectical process and thereby what is real [...] Evil is unreal and only conceivable insofar as something out-of-date can be thought, and thus perhaps explicable as a false abstraction of reason, a passing confusion of a particularity closed in upon itself.”

<sup>5</sup> Theodor Adorno, *Minima Moralia: Reflections from Damaged Life*, trans. E.F.N Jephcott, London and New York: Verso, 1996, p. 247.

precisely that which a radical conception of history must seek to avert. While in Adorno, then, “messianic light” retains the Hegelian element of belatedness, retroactively restoring the negative truth of the catastrophic distortion of a world in which reification reigns supreme, Benjamin’s messianism has a decisively *activist* dimension, prescribing a “blasting out” of the continuum of a history viewed in the light of *impending catastrophe*.<sup>6</sup>

In the Judeo-Christian and religious conception of time and of history, catastrophe is of course the result of a *crisis*, of a divine judgment. But the semantics of *krinein*, i.e., of deciding and judging, are of course far broader: in classical Greek, *crisis* is first of all the ability to discriminate between the similar and the dissimilar. As such, it is a fundamentally ethical and political virtue, the foundation of correct judgment; it also signifies the practical test, trial or tribulation to which one may be subjected in order to prove one’s skills or abilities (in modern Greek, we speak of “academic crisis” to refer to the procedure of evaluation an academic undergoes in order to achieve promotion); *crisis* is also connected to *eris*, to strife and struggle between two parties, and thereby to that which decides this strife, as in “*ē ton oplōn crisis*”: the judgment of arms, the resort to arms as a means of settling a conflict or dispute. Further, *crisis* may also refer to the result or consequence of an action, and to decision over a crucial or vital course of action, such as war; to the juridical process of a trial, and to its result in a decision, a court verdict; and finally, and as an term of medical provenance, to the intensification, reactivation or worsening of an ill state of affairs, a disease or distemper.

Ethics, politics, law, war, medicine and medical diagnosis; objective situation and subjective evaluation; overwhelming and even crushing sovereign judgment and the individual right to think and decide for oneself, to preserve the autonomy of that right, even to fight against sovereign power for that right: To think of *crisis* is to think with, and to think of, the possibilities and tensions inherent in an alternately Greek and Jewish, Judaic, and Christian, religious and secular, theological and political legacy. My broader thesis is that what I just described as a specifically activist and interventionist dimension in Benjamin’s thought (particularly as regards his developing philosophy of history) has to be grasped in terms of that thought’s profound attunement to the complex question of *crisis*; and secondly, that it is this profound attunement, this exceptional sensitivity to the question of *crisis*, that confers on Benjamin his lasting actuality, his critical importance for our own, contemporary “moment of danger”. It is then in the light of the constellation

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<sup>6</sup> See Walter Benjamin, “On the Concept of History”, p. 396 (Thesis XVII).

unexpectedly formed between his own hermeneutics of historico-political urgency and those imposed on us by contemporary conditions that I would like to discuss his earlier, infamously difficult and abidingly enigmatic “Zur Kritik der Gewalt” (“On Critique of Violence”, 1921).

“Crisis” is first of all a concept that belongs to the historical conjuncture in which “Critique of Violence” was born. The essay was written in 1921 and was originally published in the 47<sup>th</sup> issue of the *Archiv für Sozialwissenschaft und Sozialpolitik* in the same year.<sup>7</sup> It emerges, in other words, roughly in the middle of the first, intensely troubled period of the Weimar Republic, which can be said to begin with the October 1918 communist rebellion that exploded in Kiel and to end with Adolf Hitler’s failed Beer Hall Putsch in November 1923. In between these five years, a revolution broke out and a Republic was declared in place of the monarchy (both in November 1918); Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht were murdered by the *Freikorps* in the wake of the Spartacist uprising in Berlin (in January 1919); a Soviet republic was declared and quickly put down in Munich in the same month; and a virulent economic crisis, due in part to the destructive consequences of the First World War and exacerbated by the odious reparation payments agreed upon in the Treaty of Versailles, hit the country, resulting in temporary debt default, invasion by Franco-Belgian troops, prolonged strikes in protest, and hyperinflation so extreme that by the month of Hitler’s failed putsch, one new German mark was worth one trillion older (or *Papier*) marks and less than one fourth of a US dollar.<sup>8</sup>

At a second level, however, “crisis” is also a concept that informs the theoretical investigations of the essay’s explicit and implicit interlocutors, whether they be political allies or enemies—or indeed both at once. Even a cursory reading of the essay shows us that Benjamin bases much of his interrogation of the limits of both natural and positive law’s conception of violence on Georges Sorel’s *Reflections on Violence* (1909), an essay we know he read as early as 1919, after Ernst Bloch’s and Hugo Ball’s recommendation. As Beatrice Hanssen notes, evoking Gerschom Scholem’s remarks on the subject in his *Walter Benjamin: The Story of a Friendship*, Ball and Bloch introduced Benjamin to Sorel at a time when they were jointly discussing the “‘question of political activity’ in the wake of the Bolshevik Revolution, the collapse of the German empire, and the

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<sup>7</sup> See Giorgio Agamben, *State of Exception*, trans. Kevin Attell, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005, p. 52.

<sup>8</sup> See Peter Gay, “A Short Political History of the Weimar Republic”, in *Weimar Culture: The Outsider as Insider*, New York: Harper & Row, 1970, pp. 147-155.



short-lived 1919 Munich soviet republic.”<sup>9</sup> Sorel’s critiques of social-democratic parliamentarianism<sup>10</sup>, state militarism and bourgeois pacifism<sup>11</sup>, and the political general strike<sup>12</sup>, as well as his distaste for the variety of Marxian and Hegelian progressivism that shaped Social Democratic political tactics in countries like France and Germany are all dimensions of Benjamin’s own argumentation, and it is arguable that Sorel’s influence can be traced in Benjamin’s work well beyond his early years: it is difficult, for instance, to understand Benjamin’s attack against “historicism” and against the progressivist conception of history in his last work, “On the Concept of History”, without knowledge of Sorel’s critique of pre-Marxian and Marxian historiography and epistemology in *The Illusions of Progress*. Certainly, the “Critique of Violence” directly acknowledges Sorel’s influence by referring specifically to his positive counterpart to the “political general strike”—the “proletarian general strike”—and by linking it to what Benjamin describes as the “pure” violence of messianic justice.<sup>13</sup>

Sorel’s investigation, however, is already shaped by the belief that the bourgeoisie had entered a phase of terminal economic and moral crisis, something which in Sorel’s often highly critical view of Marx disproved the Marxian (but also Social Democratic) thesis that proletarian revolution would take place in the midst of conditions of capitalist “vitality”.<sup>14</sup> “The ideology of a timorous, humanitarian bourgeoisie professing to have freed its thought from the conditions of its existence”, Sorel argued at a time when he was unaware of the fervent nationalism, chauvinism, and finally fascism that this “timorous” and “humanitarian” class was to soon embrace in the midst of bitter imperialist rivalry, was part and parcel of a “degeneration of the capitalist economy”.<sup>15</sup> Whereas the “bourgeoisie with which Marx was familiar in England” was “animated by the conquering, insatiable and pitiless spirit”<sup>16</sup> of creators and discoverers, the bourgeois had now become a decadent class”, he noted. It was a prisoner of its own

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<sup>9</sup> Beatrice Hanssen, “On the Politics of Pure Means: Benjamin, Arendt, Foucault”, in *Violence, Identity and Self-Determination*, ed. Hent de Vries and Samuel Weber, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999, p. 236.

<sup>10</sup> See Georges Sorel, *Reflections on Violence*, trans. Jeremy Jennings and T.E. Hulme, ed. Jeremy Jennings, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999, pp. 48-49, 67, 103, 220-223.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 62-63, 65, 75-78, 92, 105-108, 243.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 143-173, 201-202.

<sup>13</sup> See Carlo Salzani, “Violence as Pure Praxis: Benjamin and Sorel on Strike, Myth and Ethics”, *Colloquy: Text Theory Critique*, 16, 2008, pp. 20-24, 35-37.

<sup>14</sup> Sorel, *Reflections on Violence*, *op. cit.*, pp. 79-80.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 71-72.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p.75.

“cowardice”, and hence historically “condemned to death.”<sup>17</sup> Hence—this was the fundamental assumption of Sorel’s broader approach—only proletarian violence could, however barbaric it itself might seem from a bourgeois perspective, save the world from the catastrophe of a barbarism bred by the degeneration of political life into mere haggling and meretricious wheeling-and-dealing; only the proletariat could help Europe avoid the destiny of a relapse that would return it to its state after the fall of the Roman empire, in the era of early Christianity.<sup>18</sup>

The fact that the seminal jurist and political theorist Carl Schmitt, who was to infamously join the National Socialist party (NSDAP) in May 1933, was Benjamin’s other—and less explicit—interlocutor in “Critique of Violence” has been established by a number of the essay’s contemporary interpreters, including, most famously, Giorgio Agamben and Jacques Derrida.<sup>19</sup> Less attention, however, has been paid to the theoretical and practical import of “crisis” for this second, and less explicit, intertextual conjuncture: Schmitt’s *Die Diktatur (Dictatorship)*, which was published in 1921, in the same year as “Critique of Violence”, argued for the necessity of allowing recourse to effectively dictatorial decision (on behalf, at this stage, of the *Reichspräsident*) in periods of political crisis, when parliamentary legislative bodies proved too weak to take necessary action for the preservation of the political order. Schmitt’s concurrent theoretical distinction between constituent and constituted power corresponds not only to the terms introduced in a revolutionary context by Abbé Sieyès<sup>20</sup>, but, as Agamben notes, to Benjamin’s own distinction, within “Critique of Violence”, between “law-making” and “law-preserving” violence. Indeed, Benjamin’s reference to the “woeful” spectacle of parliaments that “cannot achieve decrees worthy” of “the revolutionary forces to which they owe their existence”<sup>21</sup>—thus illustrating the emergence of a *critical*, crisis-

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid., pp. 62-63.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., pp. 82-85.

<sup>19</sup> See Agamben, *State of Exception*, *op. cit.*, pp. 52-53; and Jacques Derrida, “Force of Law”, trans. Mary Quaintance, in *Acts of Religion*, ed. Gil Anidjar, London and New York: Routledge, 2002, pp. 259-261, 263, 281-283. However, Derrida’s claims that Schmitt congratulated Benjamin on the “Critique of Violence”, or that there was “correspondence” between them other than Benjamin’s letter to Schmitt in 1930 are historically unfounded. See Jan-Werner Müller, “Myth, Law and Order: Schmitt and Benjamin Read *Reflections on Violence*”, *History of European Ideas* 29, 2003, p. 460.

<sup>20</sup> See Abbé Sieyès, “What is the Third Estate?” (1789), *From Enlightenment to Romanticism, Anthology I*, ed. Ian Donnachie and Carmen Lavin, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003, pp. 70-76.

<sup>21</sup> Walter Benjamin, “Critique of Violence”, trans. Edmund Jephcott, in *Walter Benjamin, Selected Writings, Vol. 1, 1913-1926*, ed. Marcus Bullock and Michael W. Jennings, Cambridge, MA: Belknap/Harvard University Press, 1996, p. 244. See also Agamben, *State of Exception*, *op. cit.*, p. 54; Derrida, “Force of Law”, *op. cit.*, pp. 281-282.

induced and crisis-inducing conflict between constituent and constituted power—resonates with Schmitt’s conservative anti-parliamentarianism almost as much as it does with Sorel’s radical counterpart.

Schmitt’s *Political Romanticism*, published in 1919—in the first year of the Weimar Republic’s brief life—had proleptically attacked a European philosophical and ethical tradition for whose nerveless formalism “a legal or a moral decision would be senseless”, and took it to task as doomed to “complete passivity”, to an incapacity for “political productivity”. Schmitt’s position here recalls, though it is far from politically identical to, Sorel’s excoriation of bourgeois parliamentary decadence.<sup>22</sup> In *Political Theology*, which he published in the year after the publication of Benjamin’s essay and which is in turn cited by Benjamin in his own 1928 book on the *Origins of German Tragic Drama*, Schmitt conceptualized the sovereign right to decide on the exception in terms, once again, of a dialectic between economic and political *crisis* as objective phenomena, on the one hand, and the subjective realm of sovereign *krinein* or judgment, on the other. For Schmitt, sovereign judgment is that which tautologically authorizes itself to determine the very existence of an objective situation that would justify a subjective decision on the adoption of exceptional juridical and political measures.<sup>23</sup> *The Crisis of Parliamentary Democracy*, which followed in 1923, the last year of the first period of the Weimar Republic’s turbulent life, is, as its title already suggests, a response to Weimar political instability which sharply contrasts a degraded and corrupt liberal “parliamentarism” with “democracy” proper:

[...] parliamentarism has already produced a situation in which all public business has become an object of spoils and compromise for the parties and their followers, and politics [...] has become the despised business of a rather dubious class of persons. [...] The belief in parliamentarism, in government by discussion, belongs to the intellectual world of liberalism. It does not belong to democracy. Both, liberalism and democracy, have to be distinguished from one another [...] one has to say that a democracy—because inequality always belongs to equality—can exclude one part of those governed without ceasing to be a democracy [...] Neither in the Athenian city democracy nor in the British Empire are all inhabitants of the state territory politically equal. [...] Universal and equal suffrage is only, quite reasonably, the consequence of a substantial equality within

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<sup>22</sup> Carl Schmitt, *Political Romanticism*, trans. Gary Oakes, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1986, pp. 124-125.

<sup>23</sup> Idem, *Political Theology: Four Chapters on the Concept of Sovereignty*, trans. George Schwab, Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2005, pp. 5-15, 31-32; and Agamben, *State of Exception*, *op. cit.*, pp. 54-55.

the circle of equals and does not exceed this equality. Equal rights make good sense where homogeneity exists. But the “current usage” of “universal suffrage” implies something else: Every adult person, simply as a person, should *eo ipso* be politically equal to every other person. This is a liberal, not a democratic idea [...]

The distinction between the two concepts on the basis of a distinction, one might say, of situated, concrete universality versus abstract and spurious universality, led Schmitt to compare fascism, which he would come to embrace politically, with “Bolshevism”, on the grounds that both “were certainly antiliberal but not necessarily anti-democratic.” At the same time, Schmitt dedicated two chapters—“Dictatorship in Marxist Thought” and “Irrationalist Theories of the Direct Use of Force”—to the task of attacking both Hegelian Marxist and Sorelian anti-parliamentarism. Therefore, Schmitt sought to clearly differentiate his own position both from the Hegelian-Marxist precept of a “rational” or “educational” dictatorship and from Sorel’s own more recent anarchosyndicalism, his revolutionary “irrationalism” and the advocacy of direct proletarian action—in short, from the positions which Benjamin’s 1921 “Critique” seemed to embrace.<sup>24</sup>

But there is also a third level at which “crisis” conceptually operates in Benjamin’s essay, and this will turn out to involve not simply the *content* of his argument on the crisis of traditional conceptions of legality and legitimacy when it comes to the use of force, but also its *form*. As both Jacques Derrida and Martin Blumenthal-Barby have pointed out, Benjamin’s argumentative procedure seems to consist in a double movement. On the one hand, it proceeds by positing a proliferating series of binary oppositions. In the expository order of the essay, these involve: means versus ends, natural versus positive law, sanctioned versus unsanctioned force, natural versus legal ends, active versus passive conduct, law-making versus law-preserving violence, pure versus violent means, the political general strike versus the proletarian general strike, mythic violence versus divine violence, retribution versus expiation, and power versus justice. On the other hand, each of these oppositions is, as we move on to the next in the series, revealed to have been merely temporary and provisional, and hence each in turn is retroactively grasped as incapable of offering a neatly marked and unequivocal path toward a

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<sup>24</sup> Idem, *The Crisis of Parliamentary Democracy*, trans. Ellen Kennedy, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1988; Idem, *Political Theology*, *op. cit.*, p. 43; and Gourgouris, “The Concept of the Mythical”, *op. cit.*, pp. 1489-1490, 1492-1500.

politics that could be safely declared both just and revolutionary.<sup>25</sup> It is difficult to describe Benjamin's mode of proceeding as properly dialectical (since conceptual antitheses are neither preserved nor consistently raised to a higher level in each new pair), but it might not be entirely accurate to present it as aporetic either. For the "Critique", intended, we know, as part of a characteristically unfinished book-length project provisionally entitled *Politik*, constitutes something like the centerpiece of a series of subsequent forays into the questions of pure means, fate, guilt, retribution and expiation, mythic violence and demonic prehistory, messianic violence and redemption which Benjamin was to undertake in a number of essays and essay fragments he wrote in the period between 1916 and 1922. Hence, the notion of a "pure means" is explored in relation to a non-communicative theory of language in "On Language as Such and the Language of Man" (1916); the concepts of fate, guilt, mythic prehistory and mere or natural life are prominent in "Fate and Character" (1919; pub. 1921), "Capitalism as Religion" (1921), and "Goethe's *Elective Affinities*" (1919-1922; pub. 1924-1925); divine or messianic violence is a central concern in "World and Time" (1919-1920) and "The Meaning of Time in a Moral Universe" (1921), where the distinction between retributive and expiating violence is also made; and, finally, the "Critique" is preceded by an immediately related number of notes on Herbert Vorwerk's essay "The Right to Use Force" (1920).<sup>26</sup>

My argument, however, is that "the Critique" is no grand synthesis of these series of forays—or that, if there is synthesis, it is an elliptical and disjunctive one. I will attempt to show that, in fact, doing justice to the "Critique of Violence" hermeneutically is a task that compels us to confront the ways in which its very understanding of justice, of a just *krisis* or judgment on the uses of force, is mediated by a sort of *discursively internalized, formalized crisis of the very process of exposition*. And yet—

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<sup>25</sup> See Derrida, "Force of Law", *op. cit.*, pp. 264-265, 272; and Martin Blumenthal-Barby, "Pernicious Bastardizations: Benjamin's Ethics of Pure Violence", *MLN* 124.3, April 2009, pp. 729-730.

<sup>26</sup> Though a number of Benjamin's deconstructive readers (Derrida and Hamacher especially) pay much attention to the import of "On Language as Such and the Language of Man" (the earliest of these texts), thus assimilating the "Critique" to a reading that privileges its linguistic dimensions over its historico-political ones, they have tended to underestimate the import and significance of many of the others. Yet the conceptual vocabulary of the "Critique" clearly contains pointers to a dense network of further sources, both in Benjamin's own previous work and in that of writers including Kant, Kelsen, Vorwerk, Schmitt and Sorel (not to mention Benjamin's friend Scholem and possibly even Franz Rosenzweig), none of whom are involved much in the linguistic aspects of its investigation, and all of whom weigh heavily in its more properly legal, ethical and political dimensions.

and this simply complicates matters further—this internalized crisis is not equivalent either to simple incoherence or to the dead-ends of pure *aporia*: Benjamin, after all, is taking an explicit political position in support of the radical left in Weimar Germany and he is doing so a mere two years after the Spartacist uprising and the killing of Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht by the Freikorps, under the auspices of German Social Democracy.

Let me begin, then, by noting that the structure of the “Critique” is marked by a curious and, as it were, exceptional asymmetry: the question of “class struggle” and the “revolutionary general strike” is broached twice and is the only concrete topic that returns in different sections of the essay. On the first occasion, the revolutionary general strike illuminates the indifference of the distinction between “natural” and “legal” ends, given the fact that the mere *acknowledgment* of a right to use the strike as a means toward the attainment of “natural”<sup>27</sup> ends (the right to better working conditions or to better wages, for instance) is in a basic sense a *radical* gesture: it threatens the state monopoly on legitimate violence and hence posits a possible threat to the existence of law as such.<sup>28</sup> Benjamin thus argues that the state concession of a right to strike putatively renders “organized labor” a formal internal antagonist of state sovereignty, for it makes of it an exception, “the only legal subject” “apart from the state” that is “entitled to exercise violence.”<sup>29</sup> That the state concedes this right after having first construed it passively, as a right “to escape from a violence indirectly exercised by the employer”<sup>30</sup>, is, Benjamin contends, unimportant. However “passively” it is construed, every strike minimally contains an element of “extortion” on the part of the striker, while its so-called “active” deployment in the proletarian general strike is violent in the different sense that it uses a legally conferred right to “overthrow the legal system that has conferred it”.<sup>31</sup> The “revolutionary general strike” thus produces a situation of “crisis” which compels the state to violent reaction against the exercise of a right it has itself conferred. Therefore, it unveils an inner contradiction at the heart of the legal system. It exposes, first of all to the working class, the groundlessness of the metaphysics of legality and hence its thorough determination by the dictates of class dominance and class force.

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<sup>27</sup> “Critique of Violence”, *op. cit.*, p. 240.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.238-239.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p.239.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 239-240. For an elucidation of the semantic complexities involved in Benjamin’s use of the notions of “active” and “passive” versions of the right to strike see Salzani’s useful clarifications in “Violence as Pure Praxis”, pp. 23-24.

Hence for Benjamin the conferral of the right to strike is, as the second reference to the issue makes clear, itself part of an effort to forestall “violent actions the state is afraid to oppose”—to avoid a crisis in the order of political and economic rule.<sup>32</sup> On the other hand, and here is the moment when Sorel’s argument enters the picture for the first time, the “proletarian general strike”, which provokes the state to violent response, is not quite violent in the same way:

Whereas the first form of the interruption of work [the political general strike] is violent, since it causes only an external modification of labor conditions, the second, as a pure means, is nonviolent. For it takes place not in readiness to resume work following external concessions and this or that modification to working conditions, but in the determination to resume only a wholly transformed work, no longer enforced by the state, an upheaval that this kind of strike [the proletarian general strike] not so much causes as consummates. [...] the violence of an action can be assessed no more from its effects than from its ends, but only from the law of its means. State power, of course, which has eyes only for effects, opposes precisely this kind of strike [the proletarian general strike] for its alleged violence, as distinct from partial strikes, which are for the most part actually extortionate. Sorel has explained, with highly ingenious arguments, the extent to which such a rigorous conception of the [proletarian] general strike per se is capable of diminishing the incidence of actual violence in revolutions.”<sup>33</sup>

Indeed, in *Reflections on Violence*, Sorel had drawn a sharp distinction between “violence” and “force”, noting that “the object of force is to impose a certain social order in which the minority governs, while violence tends to the destruction of that order”. Force is thus the weapon of “the bourgeoisie” “since the beginning of modern times”, while “the proletariat now reacts against the middle class and against the State by violence.”<sup>34</sup> In his *The Sociology of Virtue*, John Stanley accordingly observes that Sorel’s positive revaluation of *violence* is attendant on a broader moral and normative revaluation of its specifically proletarian import: “Working-class violence must be relatively free from vengeance, jealousy, hatred and tyrannical bloodletting. If violence on the part of the working classes does in fact contain these elements, it is no different from the force and brutality employed by the old rulers.” In turn, the possibility

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid., p.245.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., p.246.

<sup>34</sup> Sorel, *Reflections*, *op. cit.*, pp. 165-166.

of the distinction is immediately dependent on the prospect of the destruction of the machinery of the state, understood as precisely an apparatus for the application, reproduction and perpetuation of force: in seeking to destroy this apparatus, and to the extent that it prevents itself from simply taking it over and using it for its own ends, proletarian violence is self-restricting; it is in fact the opposite of *brutality*, its negation.<sup>35</sup> The distinction is arguably operative in the Sorelian notion of the proletarian general strike that Benjamin adopts and endorses: though it certainly involves an active use of violence, the proletarian general strike is also one whose demand for justice is not a demand for *anything* in particular—for this or that policy or form of compromise and settlement. It is hence *not a means toward an end* that could in any way be fulfilled by the state. Rather, it seeks *the end of the state itself*, setting itself, Benjamin says, “the sole task of destroying state power.”<sup>36</sup> Hence, however much the proletarian general strike might seem violent at a merely *phenomenal* level, it is not so at the *substantive* level<sup>37</sup>, where it functions as “pure” rather than “violent” means<sup>38</sup>, that is to say, as *means without an end*.

We have then *two* perspectives involved: one is predicated on appearance and linked to the standpoint of state power, which, Benjamin notes, “has eyes only for effects”<sup>39</sup>; the other concerns the ability to discern and discriminate—to exercise *krisis*, to produce a *critique*—on a difference that is not quite reducible to the realm of intelligible phenomena, for that realm is the domain of a blindness proper to state power itself. When it comes to the questions of violence and the law, of violence and justice, and finally of law and justice, the ambiguities that haunt the essay from the beginning, from its very title (“Gewalt” in Benjamin’s German is both “violence” and “force”),<sup>40</sup> do not constitute signs of antinomy or *aporia*, but rather expressions of an implied *difference in perspective*, the latter pointing at once to an epistemological and a political question.

Matters, however, are significantly complicated by the fact that, unlike Sorel, who argues squarely within this logic of a radical incompatibility

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<sup>35</sup> John L. Stanley, *The Sociology of Virtue: The Political and Social Theories of Georges Sorel*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981, p. 243.

<sup>36</sup> “Critique of Violence”, *op. cit.*, p. 246.

<sup>37</sup> See “Critique of Violence”, *op. cit.*, p. 236; and Derrida, “Force of Law”, *op. cit.*, p. 265.

<sup>38</sup> “Critique of Violence”, *op. cit.*, p. 245.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 246.

<sup>40</sup> See Derrida, “Force of Law”, *op. cit.*, p. 234; and Werner Hamacher, “Affirmative, Strike”, trans. Dana Hollander, in *Walter Benjamin’s Philosophy: Destruction and Experience*, ed. Andrew Benjamin and Peter Osborne, London and New York: Routledge, 1994, p. 127. For a comprehensive treatment of the term in western political theory see Etienne Balibar, “Reflections on *Gewalt*”, trans. Peter Drucker, *Historical Materialism* 17, 2009, pp. 99-125.



between ideological and critical, order-preserving and order-questioning, bourgeois and proletarian perspectives on the question of what violence is, Benjamin will also ground his critique on what appears to be a *theological* foundation. This gesture becomes increasingly visible in the last few pages of the “Critique”, where Benjamin will link the “pure” violence he first theorized in connection to the proletarian general strike to what he calls “divine” or “messianic” violence. This latter, however, is *also* marked by an irreducible law of divided perspective. In the fragment “World and Time”, written shortly before the “Critique”, Benjamin would accordingly note:

authentic divine power can manifest itself *other than destructively* only in the world to come (the world of fulfillment). But when divine power enters into the secular world, it breathes destruction. That is why in this world nothing constant and no organization can be based on divine power, let alone domination as its supreme principle.<sup>41</sup>

In the “Critique”, where this duality of perspectives returns in the guise of the seemingly untraceable, unlocalizable difference<sup>42</sup> between the Greek Gods’ destruction of Niobe and the Jewish God’s destruction of Korah, between two sorts of divine annihilation<sup>43</sup>, Benjamin admonishes that “it is never reason that decides on the justification of means and the justness of ends” but “fate-imposed violence” and “God” respectively.<sup>44</sup> The essay closes with the remark that it is somehow both hardly possible and hardly urgent to “decide when unalloyed [that is, pure] violence has been realized in particular cases.”<sup>45</sup> Indeed, Benjamin adds, “only mythic

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<sup>41</sup> Benjamin, “World and Time”, trans. Rodney Livingstone, (edited by) Bullock, Marcus; Jennings, W., Michael, (1996) *Selected Writings, Vol. 1*, p. 226.

<sup>42</sup> On the difficulty of differentiating between the two, see Blumenthal, “Pernicious Bastardizations”, pp. 742-744; and Tracy McNulty, “The Commandment Against the Law: Writing and Divine Justice in Walter Benjamin’s ‘Critique of Violence’”, *Diacritics* 37.2-3, Summer-Fall 2007, p. 42.

<sup>43</sup> See “Critique of Violence”, *op. cit.*, p. 250.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 247. Compare with Benjamin’s roughly contemporary essay on “Goethe’s Elective Affinities”, trans. Stanley Corngold, *Selected Writings Vol. 1*, p. 342: “true reconciliation exists only with God. Whereas in true reconciliation the individual reconciles himself with God and only in this way conciliates other human beings, it is peculiar to semblance-like reconciliation that the individual wants others to make their peace with one another and only in this way become reconciled with God. [...] true reconciliation with God is achieved by no one who does not thereby *destroy everything—or as much as he possesses—in order only then*, before God’s reconciled countenance, to find it *resurrected*” (emphases mine).

<sup>45</sup> “Critique of Violence”, *op. cit.*, p. 252.

violence, not divine, will be recognizable as such with certainty [...] because the expiatory power of violence is invisible to men.”<sup>46</sup>

Thus, although the “Critique” readily concedes that no “conceivable solution to human problems” is possible “if violence is totally excluded in principle”<sup>47</sup>, it also refuses to substantialize proletarian violence: to bastardize pure means by rendering them something that could be converted back to a standardizable and generalizable positive law.<sup>48</sup> Indeed, the proscription of a gesture that would annul the singularity of pure means—and thus destroy their very status as pure means—is one of the vital concerns of the last section of the essay, and occurs precisely in the name of justice: to regard just ends “as capable of generalization”, Benjamin significantly notes, “contradicts the nature of justice.” Ends “that in one situation are just, universally acceptable, and valid are so in no other situation, no matter how similar the situations may be in other respects.”<sup>49</sup> The divine commandment against killing, apparently simple when viewed abstractly, “becomes inapplicable, incommensurable”, once it has been violated, for no “judgment of the deed can be derived from the commandment”. The condemnation of all violent killing of one person by another on the commandment’s basis is thus “mistaken”, for the divine commandment is *not* law. It is merely a “guideline for the actions of persons or communities who have to wrestle with it in solitude” or to “take on themselves the responsibility of ignoring it”.<sup>50</sup> The political implications of these prohibitions against conceptual reification and legal instrumentalization—against a surrender to the limitlessness and catholicity of the “spirit” of the law, and thus against, as Tracy McNulty suggests, the paradoxically legalist implications of the customary Pauline variety of antinomianism—are articulated with considerable force in the text that most directly leads to the “Critique”, Benjamin’s notes on “The Right to Use Force”:

no contradiction in principle can be discerned between force [*Gewalt*] and morality, and on the other hand [...] a contradiction in principle is perceived between morality and the state (or the law). An exposition of this standpoint is one of the tasks of my moral philosophy, and in that connection the term “anarchism” may very well be used to describe a theory that denies a moral right not to force as such but *to every human institution, community or*

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid., p. 252.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., p.247.

<sup>48</sup> See “Critique of Violence”, *op. cit.*, p. 252: “all the eternal forms are open to pure divine violence, which myth bastardized with law. [...] all mythic, lawmaking violence, which we may call ‘executive,’ is pernicious.”

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., pp. 247-248.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., p. 250.

*individuality that either claims a monopoly over it or in any way claims that right for itself from any point of view, even if only as a general principle, instead of respecting it in specific cases as a gift bestowed by a divine power, as absolute power.*<sup>51</sup>

It will then have been a fundamental dimension of Benjamin's argument in the "Critique" that though there exists no fundamental contradiction between *Gewalt* and justice, there *does* exist one between justice and the juridical institutionalization of *Gewalt*. Institutionalization—the re-conversion of *Gewalt* into law, general principle, standard—is the enemy of justice, which is itself divine in the sense that it is properly non-instrumental, without measure and incalculable<sup>52</sup>, and which for that same reason always presupposes the assumption of ineluctable *responsibility*, including the responsibility to decide on the commission of acts of revolutionary violence, but without recourse to any *a priori* certainty over whether they authentically constitute forms of "pure" or "divine" violence. In McNulty's words:

While for Paul the written law is a distorting representation that impedes access to a higher truth, both Benjamin and Kant imply that the pure symbolic, represented by the commandment as distinct from normative law, is the only possible path to justice: not because it represents the will of God, but because it obliges the subject to "wrestle in solitude" and so assume responsibility for his own freedom.

If the "Critique" refuses to "freeze" the numerous conceptual antitheses it evokes, if it thereby refuses to convert them to a simple and usable means toward the definition of a violence that would escape both lawmaking and law-preserving functions and therefore deserve the name of justice, it is because it would rather do justice to justice itself. Doing justice to justice involves both *taking sides* (as Benjamin decidedly does in siding with the proletariat against the capitalist state) and *refusing to substantialize this taking of sides into law*, into abstraction and generality, into a mechanical and perniciously theological faith in the justice of any

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<sup>51</sup> W. Benjamin, "The Right to Use Force", trans. Rodney Livingstone, *Selected Writings*, Vol. 1, 233 (the last emphasis is Benjamin's own, the preceding ones are mine). See also *One-Way Street* (1923-1926; pub. 1928), trans. Edmund Jephcott, *Selected Writings*, Vol. 1, *op. cit.*, p. 481: "The killing of a criminal may be moral—but never its legitimation."

<sup>52</sup> See Derrida, "Force of Law", *op. cit.*, p. 244: "Law is not justice. Law is the element of calculation [...] but justice is incalculable, it demands that one calculate with the incalculable [...] the decision between just and unjust is never insured by a rule."

self-proclaimed new order. The question, to use McNulty's expression, cannot be simply what the proletarian strike struggles *against*; it also needs to be what it has to struggle *with*, what its putative relationship to justice forces it to confront *within itself*. As the extract from "The Right to Use Force" suggests, the gift of divine power that grounds the right to use violence is "absolute" not at all in the sense that it legitimates absolutism, but in the very different sense that it is *unconditional* and hence, that it comes with no *a priori* guarantees and with no safety instructions for use. It is "absolute" in its *demands*, to put it simply, and not regarding the privileges that it confers.

Readers of Benjamin's essay have often critically remarked that to the extent that it contains a political theory at all, it is a highly utopian one: evasive to the point of obscurity, on the one hand, and unrealizable, on the other. Yet, however surprising this might seem, the adjective "utopian" has negative meaning in the essay itself. Following in the path of Sorel's own pronounced anti-utopianism in *Reflections on Violence*<sup>53</sup>, and perhaps finding in it a stance compatible with a Judaic proscription against the envisioning representation of the future and of the divine<sup>54</sup>, Benjamin identifies "utopia" with "program" and hence with "lawmaking violence", thus opposing it to his conception of *justice*. This does not prevent him, in the passage I've cited from "World and Time", from suggesting that "authentic divine power", the power he putatively locates in the "pure means" of the proletarian general strike, could reveal itself as non-destructive only "in the world to come." Nor does it prevent the "Critique"

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<sup>53</sup> See Sorel, *Reflections on Violence*, *op. cit.*, pp. 28-30, 31-32, 114, 116, 118-119, 129-133, 220-224; and Antonis Balasopoulos, "Georges Sorel and Critical Anti-Utopianism", *Polis*, Volum VIII, No. 4 (30), Serie nouă, noiembrie-februarie 2021 (forthcoming)

<sup>54</sup> See Salzani, "Violence as Pure Praxis", *op. cit.*, p. 33; Müller, "Myth, Law and Order", 469; "Something's Missing: A Discussion between Ernst Bloch and Theodor W. Adorno on the Contradictions of Utopian Longing", in Ernst Bloch, *The Utopian Function of Art and Literature: Selected Essays*, trans. Jack Zipes and Frank Mecklenburg, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1996, pp. 11-12,

<https://fswg.files.wordpress.com/2014/10/bloch-and-adorno-somethings-missing-and-blochs-essay-art-and-utopia-the-creation-of-the-ornament.pdf> (last accessed 14.12.2020); and Ilan Gur Ze'ev, "Walter Benjamin and Max Horkheimer: From Utopia to Redemption", *The Journal of Jewish Thought and Philosophy*, 8, 1998, pp. 119-155. Udi E. Greenberg takes a different view, arguing that the relationship of the "Critique" to the Jewish messianic tradition is tenuous at best, if not directly oppositional to it (see "Orthodox Violence: 'Critique of Violence' and Walter Benjamin's Jewish Political Theology", *History of European Ideas*, 34, 2008, pp. 324-333. McNulty's ingeniously Kantian "The Commandment Against the Law", on the other hand, actively dissociates Benjamin from Pauline antinomianism, arguing for the significance, within the "Critique", of a Talmudic emphasis on the preservation of the relative and limited character of the written law in opposition to the Pauline tendency to absolutize both law and (thereby) its negation.

itself from envisioning, however circumspectly, “a new historical epoch” founded on the “breaking” of the “cycle maintained by mythic forms of law”, the end of the “dialectical rising and falling” of “lawmaking and law-preserving forms of violence”, and “the suspension of law with all the forces” on which it depends, “as they depend on it.”<sup>55</sup>

In the “Critique”, the negation of utopia as a program or blueprint is thus not a form of anti-utopian political pragmatism but a prerequisite of politically inflected Messianism: Within this early essay, Benjamin is already at work in his effort to convert theology into the secret ally of historical materialism, as the first thesis of “On the Concept of History” was to propose nineteen years later.<sup>56</sup> But precisely to the extent that he does so, he steers clear of both the theologically inflected, statist, and Hobbesian anti-utopianism embodied in Schmitt and of the vitalist and voluntarist dimension of Sorel’s own denunciation of utopia in the name of direct proletarian action. In fact, Benjamin’s essential evasion of the question of the difference between his examples of “mythic” and “divine” violence (the Greek and Jewish legends of Niobe and Korah respectively) suggests that to the extent that theology is active in the essay, it is, however paradoxically, as a path to a critique of theological mysticism, which would consist precisely in privileging the Jewish God over his Greek counterparts. “The tension between the mythic and the divine”, McNulty aptly argues, “cannot be reduced to the opposition between a tyranny coded ‘Greek’ and a justice coded ‘Jewish,’ which is so often read as implicit in the essay. Instead, it suggests that the antagonism between the mythic and the divine, the unwritten and the written, plays itself out in both contexts.”<sup>57</sup>

Ironically, though it is possible to differentiate the “Critique” from both the Schmittian and the Sorelian poles that inform it, it may prove more challenging to disassociate Benjamin’s variety of Messianism from Lenin’s moment of lapse into a puzzlingly paradoxical anti-utopian utopianism. This occurs in *The State and Revolution* (1917), whose fifth chapter, on the “withering away of the state”, envisions communist society as one in which not simply violence and the state but also democracy will have withered away, leaving behind them nothing but a redeemed and redemptive version of that staple of the utopian imagination, habit.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> “Critique of Violence”, *op. cit.*, pp. 251-252.

<sup>56</sup> “On the Concept of History”, *op. cit.*, p. 389.

<sup>57</sup> McNulty, “The Commandment Against the Law”, *op. cit.*, p. 49.

<sup>58</sup> V.I. Lenin, „The State and Revolution”, in *Essential Works of Lenin: “What is to be Done” and Other Writings*, ed. Henry M. Christman, Mineola, NY: Dover Books, 1987, pp. 338.

Lenin, whom Sorel himself famously defended in the 1919 Appendix to *Reflections on Violence*, would thus note:

Only in communist society, when the resistance of the capitalists has been completely broken [...] when there are no classes [...] [o]nly then will really complete democracy, democracy without any exceptions, be possible and be realized. And only then will democracy itself begin to *wither away* owing to the simple fact that, freed from capitalist slavery, from the untold horrors, savagery, absurdities, and infamies of capitalist exploitation, people will gradually *become accustomed* to observing the elementary rules of social life that have been known for centuries and repeated for thousands of years in all copy-book maxims: they will become accustomed to observing them without force, without compulsion, without subordination, without the *special apparatus* for compulsion which is called the state. [...] Only habit can, and undoubtedly will, have such an effect: for we see around us millions of times how readily people become accustomed to observing the necessary rules of social life if there is no exploitation, if there is nothing that causes indignation, that calls forth protest and revolt and has to be suppressed.”

Post-historical (or post-prehistorical) “habit” is Lenin’s name for that which nonviolently ends the need for recourse to revolutionary counter-violence, leading to the supercession of the dialectic between lawmaking and law-preserving force and hence to an era marked by what Giorgio Agamben would call the “deactivation” and “inactivity” of law<sup>59</sup>. This is a utopian prospect, certainly, and Lenin was to struggle with and against it, both in *State and Revolution* and afterwards. But it is also a prospect that resonates with the “Critique”, which, in one of its most enigmatic gestures, returns to the question of the “pure means” (that is to say, the “pure violence”) of the proletarian strike immediately after having broached that of the “unalloyed means” of the “nonviolent resolution of conflict.” Just as Lenin slides surreptitiously from a virulent anti-utopian pragmatism into the future projection of an almost lyrical idyll, Benjamin comes quite near collapsing the meaning of “pure violence” with that of an equally pure non-violence; and thus, of merging an at least putatively apocalyptic Messianism (as previewed in God’s destruction of Korah) with our quotidian and human, here-and-now exposure to language, to the

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<sup>59</sup> Agamben, *State of Exception*, *op. cit.*, p. 64: “What opens a passage toward justice is not the erasure of law, but its deactivation and inactivity—that is, another use of the law.”

symbolic, to representation and to the civilizing import of a tolerance for untruth:

Is any nonviolent resolution of conflict possible? Without doubt. The relationships among private persons are full of examples of this. Nonviolent agreement is possible wherever a civilized outlook allows the use of unalloyed means of agreement. [...] Courtesy, sympathy, peaceableness, trust, and whatever else might here be mentioned are their subjective preconditions. [...] The sphere of nonviolent means opens up in the realm of human conflicts relating to good. [...] Its profoundest example is the conference, considered as a technique of civil agreement. For in it not only is nonviolent agreement possible, but also the exclusion of violence in principle is quite explicitly demonstrable by one significant factor: there is no sanction for lying. [...] This makes clear that there is a sphere of human agreement that is nonviolent to the extent that it is wholly inaccessible to violence: the proper sphere of “understanding”, language.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> “Critique of Violence”, *op. cit.*, pp. 244-245.

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# THE IMPACT OF BREXIT ON THE FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF IFRS AND ACCOUNTING SYSTEM IN THE UK: ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES

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**Abstract:** *The purpose of this article is to investigate the effect of the Brexit on the IFRS and GAAP UK in the post-Brexit period. The article considers three possible options for such development: 1) continued application of IFRS (EU) by the UK listed companies; 2) creation of a national mechanism for approval of IFRS, similar to the EU; 3) adoption of IFRS without any intervention by the British authorities. As a result, each of the possible development of IFRS and GAAP UK was observed with an estimation of advantages and disadvantages. The research methods based on the quantitative collection of primary data, positivism research philosophy, deductive research approach with elements of descriptive content analysis are considered as important contributions to the research methodology of the Brexit impact investigation. As a result, it was obtained that the British government will choose the path of approval of IFRS in the UK after Brexit similar to the Australian scenario. This study is a novelty that covers not only the current state of development of accounting, auditing, financial reporting in the transition period Brexit, but also reveals the forecasts and expectations for further changes after the post-Brexit period. However, the research of the accounting system in the UK after the post-Brexit period (after 2021) might be the subject of future studies.*

**Keywords:** *Brexit, IFRS, accounting system, local accounting, GAAP UK, audit, financial reporting, European Union.*

## Introduction

For the UK, the EU is the largest market for financial services, which are net exports to the British economy. As mentioned by Lehmann and Zetzsche (2016)<sup>1</sup>, “the UK’s withdrawal from the European Union will have and already has a dramatic impact on the political, legal and economic landscape, both in Britain and on the continent.” Indeed, after the UK’s exit from the EU in January 2020, the economic and political situation at

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<sup>1</sup> M., Lehmann, and D.A., Zetzsche, „Brexit and the Consequences for Commercial and Financial Relations between the EU and the UK”, 2016, *European Business Law Review*, pp. 999–102, <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2841333>.

the international level has changed, and therefore global business and the mechanism for applying IFRS have been changing. “The EU financial services framework repeatedly sees a victory of politics or economics over the law – that is, formal legal problems or structures are brushed aside when political necessities or economic exigencies so require” (Ringe, 2018)<sup>2</sup>. So, this can be seen as one of the economic consequences of the political influence on the accounting system, which is related to IFRS in whole or in part, depending on the status chosen for IFRS in each country. Thus, the purpose of this study is to investigate the effect of the Brexit on the further development of IFRS and GAAP UK in the post-Brexit period. There are three reasons to focus on this issue.

The first is that the United Kingdom is the second-largest economy in the EU and is also a member of a) the IASB of six professional accounting organizations headquartered in London, b) the European Economic Space (hereinafter – EES), c) the G20 group, d) the European Commission (until May 2019), e) the European Financial Reporting Advisory Group (EFRAG). Thus, the UK’s exit from the EU is going to change the status of international standards at both local and regional levels. What role will be assigned to IASB and the GAAP UK; whether the United Kingdom will remain part of EFRAG or completely reformat its own FRC in the post-Brexit period is discussed in this article.

Second, there is growing interest in the post-Brexit’ effects on different sides of British politics (Inglehart and Norris, 2016<sup>3</sup>; Trueblood, 2020<sup>4</sup>), economics (Arnorsson and Zoega, 2016<sup>5</sup>; Ringe, 2018<sup>6</sup>; Heald and Wright, 2019<sup>7</sup>; Howley and Waqas, 2020<sup>8</sup>), including accounting (Bockli et al.,

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<sup>2</sup> W., Ringe, „The Irrelevance of Brexit for the European Financial Market”, *European Business Organisation Law Review* 19, 2018, pp. 1–34.

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<sup>3</sup> R.F., Inglehart, and P., Norris, *Trump, Brexit, and the Rise of Populism: Economic Have-Nots and Cultural Backlash*. HKS Working Paper No. RWP16-026, 2016, <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2818659>.

<sup>4</sup> L., Trueblood, *Brexit and Two Roles for Referendums in the United Kingdom*. The Limits and Legitimacy of Referendums (OUP 2020),

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<sup>7</sup> D., Heald and I., Wright, „The UK’s Exit Charge from the EU: Insights from Modes of Accounting”, *Abacus*, Vol. 55, Issue 3, 2019, pp. 557-581,

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/abac.12166>.

2017<sup>9</sup>). The further development of accounting and financial reporting, auditing and taxation rules in the UK depends on whether the UK will remain in the EU single market. Although even in the case of a “hard” Brexit way, the UK can take the benefit from the EU’s third country ‘equivalence’ frameworks for financial services, but these are cumbersome and incomplete alternatives to passporting (Armour, 2017<sup>10</sup>). In the hard Brexit way, the British firms may be able to compete just as effectively from New York as from London. According to this, this article identifies three possible options for such a development in the British accounting and financial standardization system in the post-Brexit period.

Third, the lack of consistent results of prior studies have not been investigated in terms of the accounting system, and moreover, IFRS and GAAP UK. For example, the most prior studies were conducted within 2016 and 2017 after the first voting for Brexit. Among them it was only the study of Bockli et al. (2017)<sup>11</sup> where were mentioned about arising additional issues in the cross-border recognition of accounting standards and activity of auditors. It remained the opened topic about the current effect of the post-Brexit (after 2020) on the further development of IFRS and local accounting standards in the UK. Even though on the study of Heald and Wright (2019)<sup>12</sup> the effect of the post-Brexit on the further development of IFRS internationally and GAAP UK locally has never been investigated.

Therefore, the article considers three possible options for such development: 1) creation of a national mechanism for approval of IFRS, similar to the EU; 2) continued application of IFRS (EU) by the UK listed companies; 3) adoption of IFRS without any intervention by the British authorities. The probable advantages and disadvantages of each were as investigated. It will help to determine the direction of English law in the post-Brexit period and predict the further development of the British

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<sup>8</sup> P., Howley, and M., Waqas, *National Identity and Brexit*, Leeds University Business School Working Paper, 2020, Forthcoming, <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3464210>.

<sup>9</sup> P., Böckli, and P.L., Davies and E. Ferran and Ferrarini, G. and Garrido G., José M. and Hopt, K.J. and Opalski, A. and Pietrancosta, A. and Roth, M. and Skog, R.R. and Soltysinski, S. and Winter, J.W. and Winner, Ma. and Wymeersch, E. O., „The Consequences of Brexit for Companies and Company Law”, University of Cambridge Faculty of Law Research Paper No. 22, 2017, <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2926489>.

<sup>10</sup> J., Armour, *Brexit and Financial Services. Oxford Review of Economic Policy (Brexit Special Issue)*, 2017, Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=2892679>

<sup>11</sup> P., Böckli and P. L. Davies and Ferran, E. and Ferrarini, G. and Garrido G., José M. and Hopt, K. J. and Opalski, A. and Pietrancosta, A. and Roth, M. and Skog, R.R. and Soltysinski, S. and Winter, J. W. and Winner, Ma. and Wymeersch, E. O., *op.cit.*

<sup>12</sup> Heald, D. and Wright, I., 2019, *op.cit.*, pp. 557-581, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/abac.12166>.

accounting system after its completion. To achieve the goal, the study is based on the quantitative collection of primary data, positivism research philosophy, deductive research approach with elements of descriptive content analysis.

The results of this paper indicate that the new British Accounting and Financial Reporting Standards Board (ARGA), under the control of the British government, will strictly control current and future development of the IASB standards. The findings show the British government has chosen the path of approval of IFRS in the UK after the end of the post-Brexit period, which is similar to the Australian scenario. Overall, the results suggest that in the transition period, British and other listed companies in the UK will not experience significant differences with EU regulations. The reason is quite clear, as the United Kingdom, although not a member of the EU, remains subject to its legislation during this period.

This paper is organized as follows. The related literature and development of hypotheses are presented in Section 2. Section 3 describes the research methodology and samples. Section 4 provides and interprets the result of the main analysis of the Brexit effect on the further development of IFRS and local accounting standards in the UK. A concluding discussion is presented in Section 6.

### **Literature review and hypothesis development**

Among previous studies, Brexit issues have not been frequently published in scientific publications in both British and international journals, especially in the terms of accounting and financial reporting under IFRS or GAAP in the UK.

In particular, among the British publications it was found the opinion of Craig (Craig, 2016)<sup>13</sup> on the impossible implementation of Brexit, like the fair election of the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom. That is, the British did not believe in Brexit, and the Brexit process itself was seen by the British as a way to prolong the political battle, as Craig explains it, breaking the entire period before Britain's exit from the EU into six acts of Shakespeare's play.

However, after the 23 June 2016 referendum, where the British people have decided to leave the EU and the 29 March 2017 notification to the European Council of the UK intention to withdraw from the Union, these consequences were very quickly felt in all legal systems as in the UK and

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<sup>13</sup> P.P., Craig, 'Brexit: A Drama in Six Acts. *European Law Review*', Oxford Legal Studies Research Paper No. 45/2016, Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=2807975>.

the EU (Bockli et al., 2017)<sup>14</sup>, as well as trade relations with Asia (Wu, 2020)<sup>15</sup>. As a result, this has led to tensions between the two recognition systems of foreign companies, most of which with UK headquarters expected to be disqualified, including most of the alternative investment funds mainly based also in London (Bodellini, 2017)<sup>16</sup>.

Some scholars saw the reason for the complication of this situation in industry regulations, rather than the Companies Act (Bockli et al., 2017)<sup>17</sup>; others explained this as a deeper structural weakness in the use of referendums in the UK (Trueblood, 2020)<sup>18</sup>. For example, in the UK before Brexit, referendums were used “unplanned” and specifically when it was politically convenient. The expression Inglehart and Norris (2016)<sup>19</sup> that “the most widely-held view of mass support for populism - the economic insecurity perspective - emphasizes the consequences of profound changes transforming the workforce and society in post-industrial economies” is apt here. But to understand the reasons, in the social domain, indeed, a much longer time span is necessary to uncover the origins of the many factors explaining the Leave vote.

The publication by Arnorsson and Zoega (2016)<sup>20</sup> summarizes that Brexit was advocated in most parts of the UK, where GDP is low and most people have a low level of education, age over 65, and where is strong net immigration. That is, most Britons believe that approaching immigrants in the UK after joining the EU have had a negative impact on the British labor

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<sup>14</sup> Böckli, P. and Davies, P.L. and Ferran, E. and Ferrarini, G. and Garrido G., José M. and Hopt, K. J. and Opalski, A. and Pietrancosta, A. and Roth, M. and Skog, R.R. and Soltysinski, S. and Winter, J.W. and Winner, Ma. and Wymeersch, E. O., *op.cit.*

<sup>15</sup> C. Wu, „Brexit in the Eyes of East: How will it Reshape EU/UK Trade Relations with East Asia?“, *European Foreign Affairs Review*, 2020, Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=>

<sup>16</sup> M., Bodellini, „The impact of Brexit on the UK alternative investment fund industry“, *Law and Economics Yearly Review*, 2017, Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=>

<sup>17</sup> P., Böckli, and Davies, P. L. and Ferran, E. and Ferrarini, G. and Garrido G., José M. and Hopt, K. J. and Opalski, A. and Pietrancosta, A. and Roth, M. and Skog, R.R. and Soltysinski, S. and Winter, J. W. and Winner, Ma. and Wymeersch, E. O., *op.cit.*

<sup>18</sup> L., Trueblood, *Brexit and Two Roles for Referendums in the United Kingdom*, The Limits and Legitimacy of Referendums (OUP 2020), <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003073864-27>

<sup>19</sup> R. Inglehart, R. F. and P. Norris, *Trump, Brexit, and the Rise of Populism: Economic Have-Nots and Cultural Backlash*, 2016, HKS Working Paper No. RWP16-026, <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2818659>

<sup>20</sup> A. Arnorsson and G. Zoega, *On the Causes of Brexit. CESifo Working Paper Series No. 6056*, 2016, Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=2851396>

market (Alfano et al., 2016<sup>21</sup>; Cumming and Zahra, 2016<sup>22</sup>; Howley and Waqas, 2020<sup>23</sup>). Although this is not entirely justified in terms of literature. For example, Colantone and Stanig (2016)<sup>24</sup> rearranged the link between attitudes toward immigrants and voting for Brexit, however, their analysis of selected data from a British election survey showed a strong causal correlation between them. The researchers have been more convinced of the negative effects on the British economy of imports from China over the past three decades. Cumming and Zahra (2016)<sup>25</sup> described the negative effects of Brexit on international business and entrepreneurship in terms of barriers to trade and immigration associated with the uncertainty created by Brexit.

In addition, investors saw Brexit as a negative event for the country's economy and its own business in the future (Arnorsson and Zoega, 2016<sup>26</sup>). Also, the negative effect of Brexit on the UK economy was predicted by Driffield and Karoglou (2016)<sup>27</sup> in the context of the impact of global currency adjustments on domestic investment flows to the UK. In addition, despite zero inflation in the pre-Brexit period, the amount owed for Britain's exit from the EU was expected to hold back the flow of sterling to the UK for a long period of time. However, Wu (2020)<sup>28</sup> noted that the sense of competitive liberalization motivates the UK pursuit for trade opportunities with East Asia.

Also, the previous studies have noted that the EU will also have significant negative effects after Brexit. For example, (i) the EU has to prove its continuous relevance in the international economic relations that

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<sup>21</sup> M. Alfano and C. Dustmann and T., Frattini, 'Immigration and the UK: Reflections after Brexit'. Centro Studi Luca d'Agliano Development Studies Working Paper No. 402, 2016, <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2900373>.

<sup>22</sup> D.J. Cumming, and S.A., Zahra, 'International Business and Entrepreneurship Implications of Brexit'. British Journal of Management, Forthcoming, 2016, Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=2825271>.

<sup>23</sup> P. Howley, and M., Waqas, 'National Identity and Brexit', Leeds University Business School Working Paper, 2020, Forthcoming, <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3464210>.

<sup>24</sup> I. Colantone, and P., Stanig, *Global Competition and Brexit*, BAFFI CAREFIN Centre Research Paper No. 2016-2044, <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2870313>.

<sup>25</sup> D.J. Cumming, and S.A. Zahra, International Business and Entrepreneurship Implications of Brexit, *British Journal of Management*, Forthcoming, 2016, Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=2825271>.

<sup>26</sup> A. Arnorsson and G., Zoega, *On the Causes of Brexit*. CESifo Working Paper Series No. 6056, 2016, Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=2851396>.

<sup>27</sup> N., Driffield, and M., Karoglou, *Brexit and Foreign Investment in the UK*, 2016, <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2775954>

<sup>28</sup> C. Wu, *op.cit.*

the UK couldn't call as active and flexible trade relations (Wu, 2020)<sup>29</sup>; (ii) the EU will receive a budget cut as the UK, as one of the EU's largest economies, stops funding it. However, Nunez and Rinaldi (2016)<sup>30</sup> noted that the potential contribution that the UK will be required to make as a condition for gaining access to the internal market will smooth out Brexit's significant impact on the EU budget. Even if the UK stays out of the domestic market, tariff revenues will account for a significant share of the "net loss". That is, for the EU on both sides, Brexit is not expected to be a loser, but the UK will receive small financial savings from it (Nunez and Rinaldi, 2016<sup>31</sup>). Schaefer (2020)<sup>32</sup> also reaffirmed this view, adding that the EU's internal market is growing no less than the markets of other high-income economies, which for the UK as an EU member would have better prospects to expand trade with China and India without Brexit.

As shown in the AICPA's survey, the consequences of Brexit analysts predict a loss for both parties: • for the EU - the loss of a large regulator of the common market, the risk of a "domino" effect, which could cause the exit from the Union of other countries; • for the United Kingdom – a 1.5% reduction in GDP, a 10% depreciation against the euro, a reduction in trade, a slowdown in the economic growth of at least 0.5% per year for 15 years, a domestic split in the UK, Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland. Although the British themselves believe that EU membership has hindered the development of the country, giving billions of pounds to the European budget, "limiting" business, giving freedom to labor immigrants (AICPA, 2019)<sup>33</sup>.

Ringe (2018)<sup>34</sup> called in his study Brexit commonly painted as an almost Apocalypse-like scenario. In particular, the author predicted after Brexit a significant delay in financial integration in Europe and the threat of London's supremacy as a global financial center, which will impose significant costs on all market participants. However, the author's opinion was ambiguous in comparison with other researchers - he predicted that Brexit influence on financial services would be insignificant. He based this

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<sup>29</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>30</sup> J., Nunez-Ferrer, and D., Rinaldi, *The Impact of Brexit on the EU Budget: A Non-Catastrophic Event*. CEPS Policy Brief, No. 347, 2016, Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=2859407>.

<sup>31</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>32</sup> H-B. Schaefer, *The Problems of Brexit*, 2020, Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=>

<sup>33</sup> AICPA, *Business and Industry Economic Outlook Survey*, 2019, Available at <https://www.aicpa.org/content/dam/aicpa/interestareas/businessindustryandgovernment/newsandpublications/downloadabledocuments/1q-2019-eos-slides.pdf>

<sup>34</sup> W., Ringe, 'The Irrelevance of Brexit for the European Financial Market'. *European Business Organisation Law Review* 19, 2018, 1–34.

<https://doi.org/10.1007/s40804-018-0106-6>



optimism on the strong position of both parties (the UK and the EU), which are likely to agree on the basis of regulatory equivalence. “If an agreement is not achieved, private solutions by market actors are likely” - he noted (Ringe, 2018)<sup>35</sup>.

However, Bartels (2016)<sup>36</sup> saw that Britain's position after leaving the EU would not change at all within the WTO (Bartels, 2016)<sup>37</sup>. The scientist admits that such an advantage will be gained by the UK due to EU membership, because after the Brexit, WTO rights and responsibilities will remain in the UK like before Brexit. The author singled out a more complicated situation for tariff quotas and agricultural subsidies, for which the United Kingdom will have to develop a new schedule for changing or modifying certification. As the author concluded, the future situation will depend on the proper settlement of disputes after Brexit, and the author assured of its successful outcome in the strong position of Great Britain in public procurement by EU member countries.

Lehmann and Zetzsche (2016)<sup>38</sup> argued for the neutral position of Brexit influence on certain relations and business, carefully studied the consequences of Brexit in five areas: contract law, the law of non-contractual obligations, corporate law, financial law, and international litigation. Despite the lack of accounting in this list, still examined issues of English law, the status of companies in the EU-membership, the fate of European public companies headquartered in the UK, access of British banks to the EU market, the conditions of insurance companies after Brexit may be useful when studying the impact of Brexit on the country's accounting system, national tax system and conditions of application of IFRS or UK GAAP by European and British companies in the pre- and post-Brexit periods.

In addition, the literature review of previous publications allowed to reveal a link between Brexit and accounting only in small numbers. For example, in the pre-Brexit period Bockli et al. (2017)<sup>39</sup> noted that additional issues will arise for cross-border recognition of accounting standards and for the activity of auditors.

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<sup>35</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>36</sup> L. Bartels, *The UK's Status in the WTO after Brexit*, 2016, Available <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2841747>.

<sup>37</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>38</sup> M. Lehmann, and D.A. Zetzsche, „Brexit and the Consequences for Commercial and Financial Relations between the EU and the UK”, 2016, *European Business Law Review*, pp. 99–102, <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2841333>.

<sup>39</sup> P. Böckli, and Davies, P. L. and Ferran, E. and Ferrarini, G. and Garrido G., José M. and Hopt, K. J. and Opalski, A. and Pietrancosta, A. and Roth, M. and Skog, R.R. and Soltysinski, S. and Winter, J. W. and Winner, Ma. and Wymeersch, E. O., *op.cit.*

In the post-Brexit period, Held and Wright<sup>40</sup> in September 2019 presented their opinion that the existing amount of Brexit debt owed to the EU will affect not only the British financial reporting, statistics, budgeting, but also forecasting the country's fiscal stability. In general, the researchers noted that Brexit is a unique operation, unlike other withdrawals from states or the termination of commercial contracts that have taken place before (Heald and Wright, 2019<sup>41</sup>). However, they found the weakness and inconsistency of Britain's negotiating position with the EU after Brexit and the dominance of EU opinion in the budget calculations of the Multiannual Financial Base for 2014-2020, due to which the EU exists. Thus, scholars argue that this amount, which the UK will have to pay after leaving the EU, depends largely on the country's competitive prospects and contingent liabilities associated with the increasingly difficult financial situation of the EU.

To sum up, the literature review of the prior studies allows to state our research hypotheses. So, if the UK remains in the EU single market, which will give less risk to the British economy, then this argument lead to the following hypothesis:

**Hypothesis 1: The UK government will continue to apply IFRS (EU) for listed companies, and will continue to participate in EFRAG discussions and the existing mechanism for approving EU directives.**

Although even in the case of the “hard” Brexit scenario, the UK can take the benefit from the EU's third country ‘equivalence’ frameworks for financial services, but these are cumbersome and incomplete alternatives to passporting (Armour, 2017<sup>42</sup>). In the hard Brexit way, the British firms may be able to compete just as effectively from New York as from London. The survey of 844 US CFOs and CEOs on the impact of Brexit on US business, conducted in March 2019 by AICPA, showed a neutral opinion of 71% of company executives, while the opinion on the negative impact increased from 4% to 16% during the year (AICPA, 2019<sup>43</sup>). Only 34% of respondents were optimistic about the future of global economic conditions, which was twice less than last year's survey (71%).

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<sup>40</sup> D. Heald, and I. Wright, „The UK's Exit Charge from the EU: Insights from Modes of Accounting”, *Abacus*, Vol. 55, Issue 3, 2019, pp. 557-581, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/abac.12166>.

<sup>41</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>42</sup> J., Armour, „Brexit and Financial Services”, *Oxford Review of Economic Policy (Brexit Special Issue)*, 2017, Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=2892679>.

<sup>43</sup> AICPA, *Business and Industry Economic Outlook Survey*, 2017, Available at <https://www.aicpa.org/content/dam/aicpa/interestareas/businessindustryandgovernment/newsandpublications/downloadabledocuments/1q-2019-eos-slides.pdf>.

Besides, the survey showed that the level of faith in the improvement of the US economy also fell from 79% to 57%. At the same time, one of the main reasons for the decline of 43% was called global trade tensions (compared to 36% last year). Perhaps that is why the United States proposed to the United Kingdom in July 2020 to conclude a Free Trade Agreement without the participation of the EU. However, AICPA notes that “business leaders often overshadow the US economy” (AICPA, 2019<sup>44</sup>).

Thus, it could create a second way to develop a national accounting system in the UK after Brexit - the convergence of own GAAP with US GAAP or the departure from IFRS (IASB) towards the development of its own accounting system. These arguments lead to the following hypothesis, stated in alternative form:

**Hypothesis 2: The UK government will set up a national IFRS approval mechanism after the end of the transition period.**

The continued support of IFRS (IASB) by the UK, as a key EU member, has significantly increased the international importance of the IASB. Therefore, after Brexit, the question arises as to how Britain's strong voice in the international debate on financial reporting will be maintained. So, if the UK leaves the EU single market, the further development of accounting and financial reporting, auditing and taxation will depend on the government's focus on development IFRS (IASB). Hence, it states

**Hypothesis 3: The UK government will adopt current and future IFRS (IASB) without any intervention by the British authorities.**

**Research methodology**

To test the relevance of the three research hypotheses, the *deductive approach* was used in this study. This explained the reason of the absence in the paper of any research questions. As the deductive reasoning should be based on existing theory, the British law documents, the prior studies and surveys were included for researching this goal (Letter DBEIS of UK, 2020<sup>45</sup>). The highlighted research hypotheses (H1, H2, H3) have not been investigated in such a comprehensive manner. It helped to observe the large information about the Brexit impact on the various part of economics

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<sup>44</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>45</sup> Letter DBEIS of UK. Information of the transition period for auditors and firms. February 2020. Available at <https://www.frc.org.uk/getattachment/od9fcf2c-887d-438c-85e6-7d05ade895ab/AUDIT-IP-COMMUNICATION-2020-Final.pdf>.

(Arnorsson and Zoega, 2016<sup>46</sup>; Ringe, 2018<sup>47</sup>; Heald and Wright, 2019<sup>48</sup>; Howley and Waqas, 2020<sup>49</sup>), including accounting (Bockli et al., 2017<sup>50</sup>; Heald and Wright, 2019<sup>51</sup>), politics (Inglehart and Norris, 2016<sup>52</sup>; Trueblood, 2020<sup>53</sup>), to contribute to the current literature the explanations of existing problems of the UK in the post-Brexit period and to predict the possible ways of this impact on the accounting, financial reporting, taxation and audit systems in the UK after 2020. As a result, the generalizing from the general economic rules to the specific accounting and financial reporting rules, within the UK legislation, was made by the deduction.

As the research aim was to observe advantages and disadvantages of the Brexit impact on the GAAP UK, accounting, financial reporting and audit rules, the research design was *conclusive* with descriptive elements for *explanations of evidences*. The research strategy was *descriptive* because it aimed to examine the impact of the UK's exit from the EU on the further development of IFRS in the country and local accounting standards. It helped to provide a final and conclusive evidences to the research hypotheses (H1, H2, H3), built in Section 2, without influencing it. The chosen *descriptive research strategy* matched with the target paper to describe the current situation in the UK after Brexit, in particular, focused on the news in accounting, auditing and financial reporting regulations in the post-Brexit period and after it (2021), filled into the descriptive table.

According to the primary qualitative data for conducting the research process, the *qualitative method for analyzing data* was chosen. The qualitative research is especially effective for obtaining specific

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<sup>46</sup> A. Arnorsson and G., Zoega, *op.cit.*

<sup>47</sup> W. Ringe, „The Irrelevance of Brexit for the European Financial Market”. *European Business Organisation Law Review*, 19, 2018, pp. 1–34.

<https://doi.org/10.1007/s40804-018-0106-6>.

<sup>48</sup> D. Heald and I., Wright, „The UK's Exit Charge from the EU: Insights from Modes of Accounting”, 2019, *Abacus*, Vol. 55, Issue 3, pp. 557-581,

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/abac.12166>.

<sup>49</sup> P. Howley, and M., Waqas, „National Identity and Brexit”, 2020, Leeds University Business School Working Paper, Forthcoming, <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3464210>.

<sup>50</sup> P., Böckli and Davies, P. L. and Ferran, E. and Ferrarini, G. and Garrido G., José M. and Hopt, K.J. and Opalski, A. and Pietrancosta, A. and Roth, M. and Skog, R.R. and Soltysinski, S. and Winter, J. W. and Winner, Ma. and Wymeersch, E. O., *op.cit.*

<sup>51</sup> D. Heald and I., Wright, *op.cit.*, pp. 557-581, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/abac.12166>

<sup>52</sup> R.F. Inglehart, and P., Norris, *Trump, Brexit, and the Rise of Populism: Economic Have-Nots and Cultural Backlash*, 2016, HKS Working Paper No. RWP16-026, <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2818659>.

<sup>53</sup> L., Trueblood, *Brexit and Two Roles for Referendums in the United Kingdom*. 2020, The Limits and Legitimacy of Referendums (OUP 2020),

<https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003073864-27>.

information about the opinions of specific groups of scientists. For this, it was used as a *bibliometric analysis* and analysis of the normative letters of FRC (Letter DBEIS of UK, 2020<sup>54</sup>). As noted by Merigo et al. (2017)<sup>55</sup> bibliometrics is very useful for the organization of existing knowledge within the scientific discipline. The provided bibliometric analysis in this paper aims to do an objective review of the scientific literature found by the 'IFRS', 'GAAP UK' and 'Brexit' keywords. It helped to review several articles that studied the Brexit impact before 2020 and 2020 using in this paper the deductive research approaches with elements synthesis and classification. The *normative analysis* of Letters DBEIS of UK (2020)<sup>56</sup> was also required to be conducted to achieve the research goal. That is why it was used to understand the current situation in the UK most based on law rules. In this study, the *comparative analysis* of advantages and disadvantages of possible ways of the development of the future accounting system and standards in the UK was performed. It helped to group pluses and minuses for each possible way of the development and presented them in the self-developed comparative table.

## Results

It is known that there are three geographical areas of influence on accounting: British, American, and continental European (Seidler, 1967<sup>57</sup>). Accordingly, the three most influential organizations in the world that are responsible for the formation of IFRS are the IASB (104 countries), FASB (USA), and EFRAG (EU countries). Before leaving the EU, the United Kingdom was part of the IASB and EFRAG. It is clear that after Brexit the country will remain only part of only one international organization – the IASB. However, given the IASB's three-tier governance structure, the UK will also exit from the IFRS Foundation Monitoring Board, established in 2009 from the largest capital markets responsible for establishing the form and content of financial statements (IFRS, 2020<sup>58</sup>).

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<sup>54</sup> Letter DBEIS of UK. Information of the transition period for auditors and firms. February 2020. Available at <https://www.frc.org.uk/getattachment/od9fcf2c-887d-438c-85e6-7d05ade895ab/AUDIT-IP-COMMUNICATION-2020-Final.pdf>.

<sup>55</sup> J.M., Merigó and J.-B., Yang, „Accounting Research: A Bibliometric Analysis”. *Australian Accounting Review*, 27(1), 2017, pp.71–100, <https://doi.org/10.1111/auar.12109>.

<sup>56</sup> Letter DBEIS of UK. Information of the transition period for auditors and firms. February 2020. Available at <https://www.frc.org.uk/getattachment/od9fcf2c-887d-438c-85e6-7d05ade895ab/AUDIT-IP-COMMUNICATION-2020-Final.pdf>.

<sup>57</sup> L.J. Seidler, „International accounting – the ultimate theory course”, *Accounting Review*, 1967, Vol. 42, No. 4, pp. 775–81.

<sup>58</sup> IFRS Foundation Monitoring Board, 2020, Available at [https://www.ifrs.org/groups/ifrs-foundation-monitoring-board/\(17/03/2020\)](https://www.ifrs.org/groups/ifrs-foundation-monitoring-board/(17/03/2020)).

Therefore, given the UK's status as the main jurisdiction of IFRS and the global capital market, to consolidate its right to vote in the formation of IFRS at the level of the IASB after Brexit, it will have to: first, apply to participate in the monitoring council no longer as a member of the European Commission; secondly, to reformat the work of the UK Financial Reporting Council (FRC), which is responsible for setting accounting standards in the UK at the time of its exit from the EU.

As the FRC is part of the Accounting Standards Forum (ASAF), which aims to streamline relations between the IASB and the global community in Europe and the rest of the world, this simplifies the process of separating the country and establishing FRC cooperation with other key national setters of world standards.

Besides, the Institute of Certified Accountants of England and Wales (hereinafter - ICAEW), which was at the origins of the IASB, may also be involved in enhancing the macroeconomic role of the UK in the formation of IFRS in the post-Brexit period. ICAEW, as one of the persistent leaders in creating a single set of high-quality global accounting standards and their application around the world, regularly meets with representatives of the US SEC, EFRAG, IASB, and other international bodies interested in IFRS reporting. It also has offices in Belgium (Europe), China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Vietnam, Malaysia, Singapore, and the United Arab Emirates (Middle East, Africa, and South-East Asia) (Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales, n.d.<sup>59</sup>) and has about 147,000 certified public accountants from around the world.

“The need for strong national standards setters is greater than ever. The British financial reporting community must strive for sustainable global influence“ (The impact of Brexit, 2020<sup>60</sup>).

The next question is whether the UK needs to continue to participate in EFRAG and maintain its influence on the development of IFRS in the EU. After all, to maintain its importance in the formation of IFRS at the international level, it will have to adopt several internal changes in accounting and financial reporting legislation (including the Companies Act 2006), which before Brexit was governed by Regulation (EU) No 1606/2002 (Regulation EU No 1606/2002, n.d.<sup>61</sup>) and the Seventh Directive.

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<sup>59</sup> Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales. Available at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Institute\\_of\\_Chartered\\_Accountants\\_in\\_England\\_and\\_Wales](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Institute_of_Chartered_Accountants_in_England_and_Wales).

<sup>60</sup> The impact of Brexit on financial reporting. Available at <https://www.icaew.com/technical/economy/brexit/financial-reporting?fromSearch=1>

<sup>61</sup> Regulation EU No 1606/2002 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 July 2002 on the application of international accounting standards: Available at <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/en/ALL/?uri=CELEX%3A32002R1606>.

Therefore, the future status of IFRS in the UK after leaving the EU depends on the options chosen by the UK Government and the Financial Reporting Council (hereinafter - FRC) for cooperation with the IASB, EFRAG, or the creation of its mechanism for approving IFRS (see table 1).

**Table 1. Possible versions for changes in the British accounting standards after Brexit in terms of advantages and disadvantages**

| №               | <i>I version</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | <i>II version</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | <i>III version</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|-----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                 | <i>IFRS (EU)</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | <i>GAAP UK</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | <i>IFRS (IASB)</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Characteristics | Continue to apply IFRS by UK listed companies, Participate in EFRAG discussions, and the existing EU mechanism.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Establishment of a national standards approval mechanism.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Adoption of the current and future IASB standards without any intervention by the British authorities.                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Disadvantages   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Sensitivity to loss of power in the EU;</li> <li>✓ Slows down the decision-making process in the UK;</li> <li>✓ Forced to make decisions with which the UK does not agree;</li> <li>✓ Reducing the impact on the IASB;</li> <li>✓ The long-term mechanism for EU approval of a new standard and then it will be testing</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Significant time and resources associated with the establishment and operation of a separate national standards approval mechanism;</li> <li>✓ Duplication of costs and efforts similar to EU processes;</li> <li>Critical discrepancies with standards adopted by the EU (for British companies) and IASB standards (for British listed companies in the US)</li> </ul>                                                                                                             | The lack of a mechanism for rejecting the new standard reduces the impact on IASB decision-making                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Advantages      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Easy in legislative terms;</li> <li>+ Avoids the costs associated with the operation of a separate national standard approval mechanism</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Appropriateness of national standards in case of regression of IFRS or IASB errors;</li> <li>+ Fast and gradual process;</li> <li>+ A critical way to establish the legitimacy of IFRS;</li> <li>+ Freedom in determining the types of organizations and forms of reporting;</li> <li>+ Most private companies already use GAAP in the UK;</li> <li>+ Ability to change "harmful" requirements for financial statements;</li> <li>+ Simplification of the taxation system</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Easy in legislative terms;</li> <li>+ Avoids the costs associated with maintaining some existing standards approval mechanisms;</li> <li>+ Improving the UK's role as a key global partner in the mission of promoting comparative and high-quality international reporting</li> </ul> |

Source: own development.

Experience has shown that those countries that first amend the IASB's standards generally move to their full application, recognizing all the benefits of the transition, subject to full compliance with IFRS. Therefore, the UK, as a powerful financial center in the world, should not deviate from IASB standards (The impact of Brexit, 2020<sup>62</sup>).

ICAEW representatives also believe that the possibility to apply IFRS approved by the IASB should remain available in UK law for all companies, including subsidiaries. And the British Council (FRC) called for a full transition to IFRS: "We believe there is good reason to require all companies that raise money from the public to remain subject to strict IFRS reporting" (FRC, n.d.<sup>63</sup>).

This may be a propensity for the Canadian version of IFRS approval, but to properly analyze the path chosen by the UK for changes in the accounting and financial reporting system, it is necessary to examine the steps already taken during the transition period. After all, it is during this period that the UK government is launching the necessary statutory documents for the accounting and auditing sector, together with explanatory letters from the FRC (Letter DBEIS of UK, 2020<sup>64</sup>), which will enter into force after 31 December 2020.

As a result, the study of these documents helped to group the main provisions of the new British system of accounting, financial reporting, and auditing in the post-Brexit period and after its completion in the following table (see table 2).

**Table 2. Regulation of accounting, financial reporting, and auditing rules by the UK government in the post-Brexit period**

| <i>Types of companies</i>                  | <i>Adjustable period:</i>                                       |                                                                                              |
|--------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                            | <i>Transition<br/>(31.01.2020-31.12.2020) *</i>                 | <i>End of the transition period<br/>(since 01.01.2021) **</i>                                |
| - accounting and financial reporting rules |                                                                 |                                                                                              |
| British companies<br>(Companies Act 2006)  | international standards adopted by the EU                       | international standards adopted by the United Kingdom (UK GAAP) even for financial periods * |
|                                            | international standards adopted by the United Kingdom (UK GAAP) |                                                                                              |

<sup>62</sup> The impact of BREXIT on the application of IFRS in the UK Policy Pulse June 2018 compendium. Available at [https://assets.ey.com/content/dam/ey-sites/ey-com/en\\_uk/topics/brexit/compliance-and-regulation/ey-policy-pulse-june-2018-impact-of-brexit.pdf](https://assets.ey.com/content/dam/ey-sites/ey-com/en_uk/topics/brexit/compliance-and-regulation/ey-policy-pulse-june-2018-impact-of-brexit.pdf).

<sup>63</sup> Financial Reporting Council. Available at <https://www.frc.org.uk/>.

<sup>64</sup> Letter DBEIS of UK. Information of the transition period for auditors and firms. February 2020. Available at <https://www.frc.org.uk/getattachment/od9f2c-887d-438c-85e6-7d05ade895ab/AUDIT-IP-COMMUNICATION-2020-Final.pdf>.



| <i>Types of companies</i>                                            | <i>Adjustable period:</i>                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                      | <i>Transition<br/>(31.01.2020-31.12.2020) *</i>                                                                                                                     | <i>End of the transition period<br/>(since 01.01.2021) **</i>                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Public listed companies in the UK                                    | international standards adopted by the EU (including the Transparency Directive 2004/109/EU and the Outlook Directive 2013/50/EU, even new and amended EU standards | international standards adopted by the EU<br>international standards adopted by the United Kingdom (UK GAAP) with a requirement to declare the use of this option in the preparation of financial statements for the reporting period * |
| Public EES companies listed in the UK                                | international standards adopted by the EU (including the Transparency Directive 2004/109/ EU and the Outlook Directive 2013/50/EU) <sup>65</sup>                    | international standards adopted by the EU (including the Transparency Directive and the Prospects Directive) = UK GAAP                                                                                                                  |
| Listing companies in the EU (Regulation 1606/2002)                   | international standards adopted by the EU                                                                                                                           | international standards adopted by the EU or IFRS IASB + Additional requirements for internal purposes of a "third country" or EES country (to be specified by the government)                                                          |
| British (parent) companies with a presence in the EES (subsidiaries) | international standards adopted by the EU = UK GAAP                                                                                                                 | international standards adopted by the EU ≠ UK GAAP                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| EES (parent) companies present in the United Kingdom (subsidiaries)  | Exemption from preparation and submission of invoices + Preparation of a report on non-financial information and changes in accounting dates                        | Maintaining annual accounts and submitting to the UK Registration Chamber, for the financial period beginning after 31 December 2020                                                                                                    |
| - audit rules                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |

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<sup>65</sup> Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on the harmonization of transparency requirements concerning information about issuers whose securities are admitted to trading on a regulated market; Directive 2003/71/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council on prospectuses published in cases where securities are offered for sale private individuals or admitted to tender and Commission Directive 2007/14/EU laying down detailed rules for the implementation of certain provisions of Directive 2004/109/EU.

| <i>Types of companies</i>                                                                                | <i>Adjustable period:</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                                          | <i>Transition<br/>(31.01.2020-31.12.2020) *</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                   | <i>End of the transition period<br/>(since 01.01.2021) **</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Banks, building societies, insurers or issuers of shares or debt securities admitted to the UK market    | Disclosure and transparency rules approved by the British Financial Regulatory Authority (FCA) and other rules issued by the British PRA for the Audit Committee and the Audit Directive 2006/43 / EU (Directive 2006/43/EU, n.d. <sup>66</sup> ) | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. British companies are required to require the appointment of an audit firm registered in the UK.</li> <li>2. Professional auditors with qualifications in the EES must be registered in the United Kingdom.</li> <li>3. Most EES auditors qualified in Ireland do not have to be registered in the UK</li> </ol>                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Companies that are not members of the EES (including the United Kingdom), but are part of the EES market | Registration as a third country auditor is not required                                                                                                                                                                                           | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Registration as a third country auditor with the EES competent authority is rather necessary (negotiations are underway)</li> <li>2. Audit reports on EES companies must be signed by EES auditors.</li> </ol>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Enterprises throughout the EES (including subsidiaries) and Great Britain (including maternal)           | Unchanged for EES auditors in the UK + registration of individual EES auditors as statutory auditors of the United Kingdom + EES auditors for UK companies (parent companies) are included in the ban                                             | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Services that do not belong to the audit, by Art. 5 of the EU Audit Regulation are prohibited for all foreign companies in the UK (subsidiaries), including banks, insurance, etc.</li> <li>2. Auditors of British companies (parent) are included in the ban.</li> <li>3. EES auditors for UK companies (parent companies) are not included in the ban.</li> <li>4. The need to apply as a statutory auditor in each EES country in which the auditor intends to practice.</li> </ol> |

Notes: \* Financial years beginning before but ending before or after the transition period.

\*\* UK GAAP refers to new standards adopted after the transition period and approved by the Secretary of Department for Business, Energy, and Industry Strategy of the United Kingdom and the Board of Approval of the United Kingdom.

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<sup>66</sup> Directive 2006/43 / EU of the European Parliament and the Council on statutory audits of annual accounts and consolidated accounts, amending Council Directives 78/660 / EU and 83/349 / EU and repealing Council Directive 84/253 / EU. Available at [https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/994\\_844](https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/994_844).

Source: own development based on standards (Letter DBEIS of UK, 2020<sup>67</sup>).

In particular, the government plans to make international standards known as "adopted by the UK" (similar to EU IFRS), and the country will effectively become a "third country" for the EU. Besides, EU Regulation N° 2019/685 (Endorsement of IAS, n.d.) delegated the powers of the European Commission to approve and adopt IFRS to the Secretary of State of the United Kingdom with the subsequent delegation of these functions to a new independent standard-setting body - the UK Approval Council (UKEB) (UK endorsement of IFRSs post-EU-exit, 2019<sup>68</sup>).

Under the planned regulations, the new UKEB will be a subsidiary of FRC, including a full-time chairman, part-time board members, and 12-15 employees. And the FRC will be replaced by a new Body (ARGA), accountable to Parliament, with new leadership and stronger statutory powers. ARGA is expected to provide more effective oversight of the Big Four audit firms and to be relevant to the IASB's development of global accounting standards. "We are going to create a new alliance around the world," said J. Thompson, former chief executive of the UK's revenue and customs administration (HMRC) and future chairman of ARGA (Will ARGA restore trust in audit, n.d.<sup>69</sup>).

One of the most important differences between FRC and ARGA will be that the new regulator will have the right to investigate company executives, CFOs, and all audit committee chairpersons, regardless of their qualifications. Before that, the FRC regulated only the activities of those with accounting qualifications. "It is right that ARGA will gain a competency that improves management," said J. Bulton, ICAEW's Technical Strategy Manager. "Under the Companies Act, directors have some responsibilities, and they must be effective" (Will ARGA restore trust in audit, n.d.<sup>70</sup>).

The example of the history of the United States and Australia shows that the more aggressive the regulatory regime, the greater the likelihood

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<sup>67</sup> Letter DBEIS of UK. Information of the transition period for auditors and firms. February 2020. Available at <https://www.frc.org.uk/getattachment/od9fcf2c-887d-438c-85e6-7d05ade895ab/AUDIT-IP-COMMUNICATION-2020-Final.pdf>.

<sup>68</sup> UK endorsement of IFRSs post EU-exit. Available at <https://www.iasplus.com/en/news/2019/10/ifass-brexite-01/10/2019>.

<sup>69</sup> Will ARGA restore trust in audit? Available at <https://www.icaew.com/technical/audit-and-assurance/inquiry-into-audit/commentary-on-audit-reviews/will-arga-restore-trust-in-audit-06/09/2019>.

<sup>70</sup> Ibidem.

of civil lawsuits against directors (Kean, 2019<sup>71</sup>), and therefore the higher their responsibility in making management decisions. Therefore, each director, reviewing the financial statements, will need to examine in more detail the accounting issues disclosed in it.

In general, the findings of the study (see table 2) show that in the transition period, British and other listed companies in the UK will not experience significant differences with EU regulations. The reason is quite clear (see “first option” above), as the United Kingdom, although not a member of the EU, remains subject to its legislation during this period (The IAS and European Public Limited-Liability Company, 2019<sup>72</sup>). It confirms that the first hypothesis is realized at the beginning of the post-Brexit.

However, given this temporary equivalence in the accounting and auditing systems of the EU and the UK, the discussions on the Free Trade Agreement with the EU leave several issues unresolved for British companies, in particular during the audit. Indeed, after the end of the transition period (from 1 January 2021), many will be faced with the question of the quality of the statutory audit and the legal form of British audit reports prepared for businesses in the EU (Implications of Brexit, n.d.<sup>73</sup>). In addition, from a financial point of view, many companies will have to attract additional resources to develop an action plan, risk assessment, retraining of accountants, providing the information needed to make the right management decisions in the future.

Thus, even though business continuity and stability should take precedence over changes in UK law in the first years after leaving the EU, but the short-term prospect of correcting these European standards would still bring British companies the first advantage over Brexit. Therefore, reproducing UK national standards will provide a greater variety of financial disclosures and the tax relief for British companies in the post-Brexit period. The past practice of the EU and other jurisdictions of IFRS, which it can use as a member of the IASB and a former member of the EU, can play an important role in this.

As a result, the second hypothesis is confirmed observing the start of the GAAP UK development in the post-Brexit. The paper provides evidence that the UK government is launching the necessary statutory documents for

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<sup>71</sup> F. Kean, *Does ARGAs (the new UK accounting regulator) spell trouble for directors?*, 2019, Available at <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/does-arga-new-uk-accounting-regulator-spell-trouble-directors-kean/>.

<sup>72</sup> The International Accounting Standards and European Public Limited-Liability Company (Amendment etc.) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019. Available at <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukdsi/2019/978011179826/memorandum/contents>.

<sup>73</sup> Implications of Brexit on cooperation within the European audit profession. Accountancy Europe.

the accounting and auditing sector, together with explanatory letters from the FRC (Letter DBEIS of UK, 2020<sup>74</sup>), which will enter into force after 31 December 2020. The study of these documents helps to group the main provisions of the new British system of accounting, financial reporting, and auditing in the post-Brexit period and after its completion (see table 2). The findings show the government plans to make international standards known as “adopted by the UK” (similar to EU IFRS), and the country will effectively become a “third country” for the EU. Besides, EU Regulation N<sup>o</sup> 2019/685 (Endorsement of IAS, n.d.<sup>75</sup>); the new UKEB will be a subsidiary of FRC; and the FRC will be replaced by a new Body (ARGA), accountable to Parliament; ARGA is expected to provide more effective oversight of the Big Four audit firms and to be relevant to the IASB's development of global accounting standards. It is obtained that one of the most important differences between FRC and ARGA will be that the new regulator will have the right to investigate company executives, CFOs, and all audit committee chairpersons, regardless of their qualifications. It is concluded as the positive effects of Brexit.

At least, the third hypothesis is not predicted to be realized in the future even though the UK Government stated in the accompanying memorandum that “it is in the UK's interest to maintain convergence with IFRS after leaving the EU, given that IFRS are used worldwide by more than 140 jurisdictions, including 15 G20 countries” (Bouvier, 2020<sup>76</sup>). It is concluded as the positive effects of Brexit - the British government will choose the path of approval of IFRS in the UK after Brexit similar to the Australian scenario. This means that the new British Accounting and Financial Reporting Standards Board (ARGA), under the control of the British government, will strictly control current and future development of the IASB standards. Therefore, it excludes the first hypothesis in the future as the UK supports the political mood in Britain, which led to Brexit. However, this result is limited because the post-Brexit continues and new documents might be added by the British government.

## Conclusions

As a conclusion, the confirmed second hypothesis allows to state the status of IFRS in the UK after Brexit depends on the decisions of the new

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<sup>74</sup> Letter DBEIS of UK. Information of the transition period for auditors and firms. February 2020. Available at <https://www.frc.org.uk/getattachment/od9fcf2c-887d-438c-85e6-7d05ade895ab/AUDIT-IP-COMMUNICATION-2020-Final.pdf>.

<sup>75</sup> Endorsement of IAS. Available at <https://www.frc.org.uk/endorsement-of-ias>.

<sup>76</sup> S. Bouvier, *Accounting Matters: EU moves to review standards* / IPE magazine March 2020, Available at <https://www.ipe.com/analysis/analysis/accounting-matters-eu-moves-to-review-standards/10024380.article/>

Board (ARGA) for cooperation with the IASB and EFRAG. The observed slow transition from EU IFRS, approval of its own accounting standards mechanism and focus on future IFRS (IASB) shows that Brexit influenced sufficiently on the national (not only British) and regional accounting system, audit and financial reporting. How it will effect on the IFRS internationally might be the topic for further researches, particular, the harmonization with GAAP USA because agreed with Hantrais (2019)<sup>77</sup> in the social domain, a much longer time span is necessary to uncover the origins of the many factors explaining the Brexit vote. Moreover, to keep up with other jurisdictions this study recommends to the UK after Brexit

(1) to take place the process of developing or updating international standards in the UK in parallel with the IASB, without expecting final versions of IAS / IFRS. This will simultaneously support the work of the IASB and contribute to the development of its standards;

(2) given the UK's status as the main jurisdiction of IFRS and the global capital market, to consolidate its right to vote in the formation of IFRS at the level of the IASB after Brexit, the British government should apply to participate in the monitoring council no longer as a member of the European Commission;

(3) the participation FRC in the Accounting Standards Forum (ASAF) should simplify the process of separating the country and establishing FRC cooperation with other key national setters of world standards;

(4) the Institute of Certified Accountants of England and Wales (hereinafter - ICAEW), which was at the origins of the IASB, should also be involved in enhancing the macroeconomic role of the UK in the formation of IFRS in the post-Brexit period.

As the main contribution of this research is that the task of the British government after Brexit - to harmonize national sovereignty with IFRS, taking into account the requirements of the EU - is being successfully implemented in the post-Brexit period. The research of the accounting system in the UK after the end of post-Brexit period might be the subject of future studies in the context of effect on IFRS internationally and the UK GAAP locally or regionally (within the EU).

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<sup>77</sup> L. Hantrais, *Brexit and UK social policy*. In *What Brexit means for EU and UK social policy*, Bristol: Bristol University Press, 2019, pp.60-82. doi:10.2307/j.ctvbqs48t.8

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# INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION IN THE CONTEXT OF MIGRATION AS A FORM OF SOCIAL ACCOMMODATION AND INTEGRATION

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**Abstract:** *Nowadays, society assumes interactions and relationships between cultures, between members of different peoples or states. Intercultural communication is the basis of creating such connections and contacts, especially in the context of migration. The present research identifies the Romanians level of cultural adaptation and their ability in taking on new communication paradigms in the migration process, but it also notices the existence of some obstacles/barriers and Romanian migrants` attempt to exceed them with a view to integration into the new country. We will start with conceptual identifications and specialists` opinions in the field. The main part of the study is built on research realized as an investigation based on a questionnaire addressed to the Romanians abroad. This research lays on observing the perceptiveness of strangers over Romanians, on identifying prejudices and discrimination, the difficulties in adapting to the new economic, social, and cultural environment. As well, it lays on establishing the methods of accepting and tolerating intercultural differences.*

**Keywords:** *Intercultural Communication, Migration, Prejudice, Stereotype, Discrimination, Language, Integration.*

## Introduction

The current community is a society of globalization, of human interaction and creation of social connections not only inside one country but especially outside the home country. All these liaisons have on their basis intercultural communication most of the time. Trans-nationality pictures the unity and the communication between groups or individuals

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who came from different cultures, by which is sought the awareness, an acceptance and a tolerance for differences.

Intercultural bonds are usual facts of contemporary society<sup>1</sup> due to the process of migration. This phenomenon, under its various shapes, is underlying the formation of a cross-cultural interaction next to communication. Considering this characteristic, the present research observes the Romanians` level of cultural adaptation, the level of acquisition of the communication paradigms from a new culture, but also the impact of some obstacles regarding the integration. All of these are presented from the perspective of individuals abroad, of the migrant population. Our study is part of wider research. But we will stop our attention on the importance of intercultural communication (under its various forms) in the process of migration. For the beginning, we will fix a few etymological delimitations supporting further analysis. Then follows the incursion in the actual research starting from illustrating the methodology, the purpose, and the assumptions from which we have started and getting to the presentation of the results achieved. The end lays in reviewing and talking about results in order to establish liaisons with the current stage of studying the phenomenon and intercultural communication`s impact within it.

### **Etymological delimitations**

Our document calls into question several essential terms in the area of interculturality: *intercultural communication, language, migration, discrimination, and stereotype*. Thus, *communication* (the first intercultural contact is established through communication) stays on the basis of every human interaction: “The contact is intercultural only when individuals being part of different cultures are standing face to face with each other. [...] Intercultural contact becomes functional only through communication.”<sup>2</sup> Communication could be defined in many ways, most of them highlighting the interaction with others.<sup>3</sup> In interculturality, this

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<sup>1</sup> The intercultural concept assumes a series of connotations of which we can remember: “Who says intercultural, necessarily says interaction, exchange, opening, mutuality, and objective solidarity starting from the plenary meaning of inter prefix”, Pierre Dasen, Christiane Perregaux, Micheline Ray, *Educație interculturală: experiențe, politici, strategii/Intercultural education: experiences, politics, strategies*, Jassy, Polirom Publishing House, p.166.

<sup>2</sup> Florentina Alexandru, “Concepte generale ale comunicării interculturale-cultură și limbă”/“General concepts of intercultural communication – culture and language”, in *Euromentor Journal*, 2011, p.34. Available at

<http://euromentor.ucdc.ro/en/vol2nr1martie2011/eur-ro/>.

<sup>3</sup> Septimiu Chelcea, following the ideas of Franck E.X.Dance, underlines the existence of 15 definitions which are considered to be valid by most researchers. Of these,

interrelation might work as a reflection by revealing the experiences of communication actors. In this manner, strong features of our mother tongue and our own culture are revealed, features that are often “unconscious” and derived from interaction with “another”. Comparing a language and a foreign culture with a mirror suggests here the authenticity of the intercultural act. At the crossroad of cultures, there are new horizons and information by which are formed special relations and thoughts, all of them leading to enrichment on all levels. The intersection of cultures does not mean only an outright opposition of them but also it is based on exchanges of ideas and perspectives. Communication’s actors have different features, and they can be identified apart from each other according to the elements they share: language, religion, history, world and life conception, ideology.

Regarding *intercultural communication*, it could be easily explained as “interaction between individuals belonging to different cultures”<sup>4</sup> as we previously explained. But it assumes much more because it “occurs whenever a person from one culture sends a message to be processed by a person from a different culture (...) and it can help bridge cultural differences, mitigate problems, and assist in achieving more harmonious, productive relations.”<sup>5</sup> Any person is born in a certain culture, but individuals can change their belonging to a group, for example, or their belonging to the native culture, and also they may be adopted by other culture without giving up on their own identity. Concerning the means that it is using, the intercultural communication relies on *language* (as any other communication type). Language is used in all its forms: verbal (written/spoken), nonverbal, paraverbal, mixed. In a situation of

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we want to remind (by selection) the ones that harmonize with the purpose of our study: “an oral exchange of thoughts or ideas; a process by which we understand others and also try to be understood by them; an interaction (even biological); a process that happens from the need to reduce uncertainty, to act effectively and to protect or enforce the ego; a process of transmission of information, ideas, emotions or skills by using symbols (words, images, figures, diagrams, etc); a transfer, exchange, transmission or sharing; a process that makes common to many what is the monopoly of one or some; a process by which a source sends a message to a receiver with the intention to influence its subsequent behaviors; a mechanism through which power is exercised.” Septimiu Chelcea, Loredana Ivan, Adina Chelcea, *Comunicarea nonverbală: gesturile și postura (Nonverbal Communication: gestures and posture)*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Bucharest, Comunicare.ro Publishing House, 2008, p. 15.

<sup>4</sup> Silvia Popescu, *Comunicare interculturală. Paradigmă pentru managementul diversității/Intercultural Communication. A paradigm for diversity management*, Jassy, European Institute Publishing House, 2013, p.14.

<sup>5</sup> Larry A. Samovar, Richard E. Porter, Edwin R. MacDaniel, “Using Intercultural Communication: The Building Blocks”, in *Intercultural Communication. A reader*, Boston, Thomson Wardworth, 2010, pp.4-8.

interculturality, verbal communication supposes the existence of a common language, understood by the two speakers. That proves the major importance of learning a foreign language that could simplify the interrelationships. Besides, nonverbal communication plays an extremely important role in this area – starting from gestures, mimicry, movement, body position and ending with artifacts, timing, proxemics, etc. On this point we could mention, for example, space and time, two of the concepts which are considered key elements on the intercultural communication field through spatial and temporal re(thinking) by Edward T. Hall (the father of intercultural communication, as Andra Șerbănescu names him in her analysis of cultures and interculturality)<sup>6</sup>. Thereby, among language, communication and culture it is created a well-defined relation, each of these factors playing a role in contouring the interculturality with the aid of which the particularities of a nation could be defined, understood, and valued.

Another essential notion for our study is represented by *migration*. The phenomenon of migration has always existed and it continues to occur nowadays in a faster and more sophisticated form. The *migration* term received a large number of definitions as “the displacement of an individual or of a group of individuals from one geographical unit to another, across an administrative or political border, individuals that want to settle down in a place, other than their native place.”<sup>7</sup> The causes of the migration movement<sup>8</sup> are multiple and complicated and differ from territory to territory and from person to person. Migration could be classified as external migration (outside the administrative and political borders of a state) and internal migration (between the borders of the same state) according to the position of the territory in which individuals migrate in relation to their place of origin. The migration process evolved in complexity: now people decide to leave voluntarily their origin place (for economic reasons – the main cause, for family reasons or personal and professional development) or involuntarily (for political reasons – wars, for religious reasons, persecutions or environmental reasons like natural

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<sup>6</sup> Andra Șerbănescu, *Cum gândesc și cum vorbesc ceilalți. Prin labirintul culturilor/How others think and talk. Through the labyrinth of cultures*, Jassy, Polirom Publishing House, 2007, p.199.

<sup>7</sup> Monica Roman, “Factorii demografici și migrația: interacțiuni și tendințe în România și în Europa” /“Demographic factors and migration: interactions and trends in Romania and Europe”), on *Reconnect*, 2011, p.88. Available at

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/227490472\\_Factorii\\_demografici\\_si\\_migrația\\_interacțiuni\\_si\\_tendințe\\_in\\_România\\_si\\_in\\_Europa](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/227490472_Factorii_demografici_si_migrația_interacțiuni_si_tendințe_in_România_si_in_Europa).

<sup>8</sup> For more information about migration causes go to Rosemary Vargas-Lundius et al., *International migration, remittance and rural development*, 2008, pp. 8-9. Available at <http://www.fao.org/3/a-ak405e.pdf>.

disasters, destruction of the territory). In the interest of identifying and explaining the effects and the causes of migration, its implications on culture and the role of social media influencing the migration process, many sociological theories have appeared. Such theories fix common points, research directions, and society analysis, also the analysis of human interactions through communication.<sup>9</sup> Adaptation/integration in the host country is not ignored either. It is talked about a different phase of migration in which a person who arrives into an established country observes the new social, economic and cultural environment where he/ she will live for a certain period and where he/she will be forced to overcome obstacles by successfully integrating into the newly discovered surroundings.

As regards Romania, after 1989, it knows various waves of migration.<sup>10</sup> According to statistics, the report between emigration and immigration stands in favor of leaving the country. The expert studies notice that economic reasons remain the main cause of migration over the years. Between 2008 and 2018, Romania registered an important percent of both temporary and permanent emigrants.<sup>11</sup> The repercussions of Romanians' migration abroad are generally of an economic or family nature. Specialists identified several redressing solutions of the negative effects caused by emigration including the return migration phenomenon or immigration. Return migration refers to a returning process of individuals in their native country (when the host one is facing an economic crisis, natural disasters) and temporary or permanent immigration encourages the development of certain *destination regions* depending on the population's pull factors.

Within the process of migration when creating and maintaining relationships are discussed, we cannot leave out the difficulties interfering and producing obstacles. Each person comprehends and conveys

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<sup>9</sup> Ecaterina Zubenschi identifies these theories: *The migration process phases theory* (underlines the existence of three fundamental moments in migration), *The theory of migrant networks* (underlines the importance in facilitating the integration of some human networks, of some groups of individuals-migrants that introduce newcomers in the host-society), *Everett S. Lee's Pattern* (based on Push-Pull Theory – determinants of migration and elements of attraction to certain regions), *Dual market theory or labor market segmentation* (started from the needs of the workforce), on *Teorii sociologice ale migrației (Sociological theories of migration)*, Csei Working Paper Series, 2018, pp.45-53. Available at [https://csei.ase.md/wp/files/issue10/WP\\_ISSUE\\_10\\_ZUBE.pdf](https://csei.ase.md/wp/files/issue10/WP_ISSUE_10_ZUBE.pdf).

<sup>10</sup> These migration waves were identified by Remus Gabriel Anghel et al., "International Migration, Return Migration and their Effects: A Comprehensive Review on the Romanian Case", on *IZA Institute of Labor Economics*, 2017, pp. 6-7. Available at <http://migrationcenter.ro/wp/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Anghel-Remus-et.-al.-2017>.

<sup>11</sup> Statistics are available at <http://statistici.insse.ro:8077/tempo-online/#/pages/tables/insse-table>.

particular information and significations in the way it was taught in the culture in which it grew up and interactions between individuals of different peoples are not without interpretation. Now appear the so-called *barriers*<sup>12</sup> which are represented by *prejudice*, *stereotypes*, *clichés*, *discrimination* (all passive forms of the ethnocentrism – it involves the idea of an own culture: all it comes with is normal, beyond reproach, natural and the specificity of another culture is rejected and considered wrong or inappropriate), but also by *bias*.<sup>13</sup> Prejudices are negative attitudes to a person or a group, attitudes that came from wrong and unfair generalizations. Besides barriers in intercultural communication, some prejudices act like psychological barriers fixed in time. Stereotypes – “observation alternatives” in psychological language – are generally negative learned attitudes that arise spontaneously and describe certain situations without taking account of their uniqueness; this kind of situation will lead to wrong generalizations too. Most of the time, these barriers originate in the existence of a: “marginal thinking”<sup>14</sup> that no longer accepts mediation and it is created as a result of a low life experience (we can even say the lack/absence of intercultural contacts), but also it is created as a result of “artificial” influences that determine a particular conception and attitude. Regarding discrimination, it comes from highlighting the differences between individuals, groups or communities and always to the disadvantage of some. Among the most common phenomena shall be counted discrimination based on social status, sex, religion, race, sexual orientation, ethnicity or nationality<sup>15</sup>. In

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<sup>12</sup> Regarding this part and for more information see Silvia Popescu, cited work, pp.145-226.

<sup>13</sup> From the American volume *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Intercultural* we found out that: “There is conscious and unconscious bias, and both can be a barrier to social inclusion.”, Janet M. Bennet, Kelli McLoud-Schingen, “Prejudice, Bias, Discrimination”, in *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Intercultural*, SAGE Publication, Inc., Thousand Oaks, 2015, p.4.

<sup>14</sup> “The circuits by which we are talking to ourselves, to others and to the world, in more vague or more concrete forms, are indicative of a fragilisation of human existence (...); then, the impoverishment of experience, the subject being stripped of his experiential faculties, the artificial production of experiences, as well as the artificial production of events are all affecting above all the human capacity of mediation”. Raluca Stanciu, Anca-Elena David, “Marginal Thinking Knowledge and Communication in the Postmodern Era”, in *Postmodern Openings*, nr.11(2), 2020, p.265. Available at <https://doi.org/10.18662/po/11.2/173> .

<sup>15</sup> All these discriminations can be flattened by various methods, supported by the European Union, among which we could mention: “interfaith dialogue as a means for intercultural dialogue, (...) promoting diversity and intercity exchange, (...) new dimensions for European culture, a new way of thinking about Europe, (...) images of diversity, a meeting of culture, etc.” Gabriel Hasmatuchi, *The Intercultural*

intercultural communication, these "barriers" can be overcome by identifying differences and acceptance, which will lead to unity: "Therefore, the unity is harder to be found, as it requires an additional effort to know, being hidden beyond the ethnographic show of the differences in language, beliefs, patterns, lifestyles and behaviors".<sup>16</sup>

### **Intercultural communication on the migration process**

**The purpose and objectives** of the study were various: identifying the reasons that led to migration; capture the impact of foreign culture on Romanians; identifying their difficulties in adaptation; figuring out the perception of foreigners about Romanians; analyzing the Romanians degree of exposure and resistance to discrimination or racism. The current research focuses on those that are directly bounded by the importance of intercultural communication in the adaptation of migrants to habits, conceptions and ideologies in the country hosting them.

**The research method** proposed is the questionnaire-based investigation.<sup>17</sup> Our questionnaire is addressed to Romanians settled abroad for a certain period and it consists of three sections: the first section contains identification questions, the second one is addressed to Romanians that are still living abroad and the third section contains questions for Romanians that returned to Romania after a period of migration.

This questionnaire was based on a sample of 63 people identified on the basis of sex, age, religion, occupation and the country they live in variables. The respondents were mostly women (65,1%) – showing their opening in expressing their opinions – and mainly of the respondents represent people under 40 years old (73%). After the establishment of the geographical criterion that is the country they live in at the moment of

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*Communication in European Union: A few significant aspects*, paper presented at *Intercultural competence Conference*, 2010, p.2. Available at

<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/311589252>.

<sup>16</sup> Grigore Georgiu, "Cultural differences in Global Age", *Cogito. Multidisciplinary Research Journal*, vol.VI, no.4, December, 2014, p.20. Available at

<http://cogito.ucdc.ro/vol-vi-no-4-dec-2014.pdf>.

<sup>17</sup> The investigative tool is the questionnaire. Septimiu Chelcea defines research questionnaire as "a technique and, suitable, an investigative tool consisting of an assembly of written questions and, eventually, images, charts psychological and logical ordered that cause answers, that will be registered in writing, from questioned individuals by administrating this questionnaire by operators or self-administration." Septimiu Chelcea, *Metodologia cercetării sociologice. Metode cantitative și calitative /The methodology of sociological research. Quantitative and qualitative methods*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Bucharest, Economic Publishing House, 2004, p.212.



completing the questionnaire, 61,9% of them live abroad and just 48% returned home. The first class is the area of interest outlining this direct and ongoing interaction with “other” and the process of resiliency in front of obstacles and the new social environment.

Thus, the section representing individuals that have left Romania and that still live abroad, composed of 17 questions, had multiple directions: determining the causes and effects of migration on individuals, their adapting way to the new cultures, the response to discriminatory situations and the verification of the presumption that Romanians are seen on a negative note by most of the people in other states.

### **Results of analysis, discussions**

The first question refers to the country in which immigrants live at the current time. According to their answers, on the top of the countries chosen by Romanians remain Germany, Italy and Spain (with a cumulative percent of almost 43). Therefore, the previous statistics performed by sociologists<sup>18</sup> that place these countries on the top are confirmed. Further, are created those networks of migrants that ensure an easier integration, they facilitate the accommodation to new cultures as identified in the aforementioned theories. The next points focused on the period of migration and its causes. It was observed that the majority population is gone for more than 5 years especially for economic and family reasons. The replies were in accord with our assumption and with other prior studies that supported all of these reasons as an influencing factor on the decision to migrate. The next questions are debated the degree of satisfaction (financial, educational). Most of the respondents – almost 50% - put themselves into the most satisfying area, meaning the achievement of the objectives for which they left was accomplished. In this manner, we can emphasize that Romanians managed to accept a new culture easily enough and their integration succeeded in the level of abroad compatriots` satisfaction.

The subsequent questions are connected with our study`s area of interest: intercultural communication and its contribution to the process of migration. Proceeding from the earlier theoretical aspects, the first upon which we focused on was the language and its importance concerning the learning of a foreign tongue. Romanians across borders understood that it is essential to know the other`s language in order to be able to handle, to create liaisons, and to gain the trust of foreigners. “Idiomatic” language proficiency, the one Eugen Coșeriu used to talk about<sup>19</sup>, becomes a priority

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<sup>18</sup> For more information see Remus Gabriel Anghel et al., *cited work*, pp.6-7.

<sup>19</sup> Eugeniu Coșeriu, *Sprachkompetenz. Grundzuge des Sprechens*, Tübingen, pp.3-14, apud. Ioana Crețu, *Introducere în științele comunicării/Introduction into*

in a totally new cultural and mostly unknown space. The high percentage of interviewees who learned a foreign language easily shows that they have adapted rapidly from this point of view, the language being considered a strong factor in the integration process and influencing both personal and professional development. In this way, we can sustain the affirmation according to which: “The communication is the true agent of the sociocultural process since it is the means by which a person influences another who is also influenced by that person. *It makes interculturality possible.*”<sup>20</sup>

Since adaptation and communication paradigms are the basis of social integration, we tried to determine Romanians` level of cultural adaptation and acquisition of communication paradigms from the new culture. For this purpose, as a result of questions that were aimed at creating an image of Romanians` abroad difficulties, we determined that integration was gradual, like an evolving and progressive process that followed its natural course (38,5% sustain this and classifies the level of difficulty of the integration on the third position which is located in the middle of the scale). Considering the cultural, religious, ideological differences, getting used to the new environment was easy too if we take account of the answers received (79% went for a very easy/easy option). Additionally, the respondents considered that nationality was not a crucial factor in their relationship with others or in creating connections (over a half of respondents claimed that: 31% of them supported the lowest degree of influence, followed by 28, 2% that have chosen a low degree).

However, prejudice, racism or discrimination has often marked the reporting of others to Romanians abroad. Thus appear some inconsistencies compared to the prior answers regarding the observation of the perception of others against Romanians and the created stereotypes around them, which we will discuss next. Answering the question: *Have you been exposed to prejudices by the members of the community only because you are part of another culture?*, most of them (over 45%) said that they were in a situation like that at least once. This fact leads to confirmation of the assumption related to discrimination and prejudices to a large extent. The vigorous response that really shows that Romanians are facing prejudices in various situations was given to a lesser extent of just 12,8% demonstrating that many foreign communities are not influenced by nationality or origin from another culture - or the respondents did not feel those barriers in their accommodation. The answer is also strengthened by 41% of Romanians who claim they were not subjected to

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*communication sciences*), Sibiu, “Lucian Blaga” University of Sibiu Publishing House, 2009, pp.70-79.

<sup>20</sup> Silvia Popescu, cited work, p.62.

prejudices by the members of new hosting countries. Regarding the thought of “victim” of discrimination, respondents argued they did not feel that sensation in the receiving countries. On this question, about 72% of them answered that they were never in situations in which foreigners discriminated against them (in a lower percentage, of 25,6%, Romanians related they have experienced some situations like those). These answers are in contrast with the previous responses in which many of the respondents affirmed they were discriminated against at least once, a fact that reveals a difficulty in accepting discrimination based on nationality.

Another interesting circumstance we would like to mention is related to the perception that foreigners have of Romanians according to respondents. And now, it is proved that the perspective is different – both positive and negative. Strangers call Romanians “thieves, social assisted, beggars, not serious and uneducated”<sup>21</sup>. Moreover, we noticed again discrepancies in respondents` answers, but this can mean that Romanians were not directly discriminated against, they just met people that were. In the opposite situation, we have the communities that name Romanians “serious, good workers, hard-working people, decent people”<sup>22</sup>. Those surveyed explained that opinions are different from one community to another. The ideas and conceptions diverge perhaps as a result of existing intercultural connections in certain territories. In this respect, we have a statement like: “Educated people catalog Romanians as good or bad individuals as in any other country. There are many perspectives. Depends on the community where you live. Romanians can be seen as good workers, serious, smart, but also as thieves, unserious or uneducated; I met both racist and welcoming people, friendly persons who want to know more about my country and even wishing to learn the Romanian language”<sup>23</sup>. As shown in these examples the balance in interactions come

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<sup>21</sup> In this sense, we gathered several representative opinions of the respondents in the way they were identified: “Generally, foreigners think (bad) about Romanians that they are thieves”; “Thieves, social assisted persons, cleaners, people who accept anything and betray their compatriots easily”. “And, of course, that we are seen like Gypsies”. “Now, they think we beg outside the stores”. “Romanians are seen as beggars and thieves.” “Gypsies who came to beg.”; “Uneducated people, thieves, rude.”; “They do not have an excellent opinion about Romanians. Generally, they think badly.”

<sup>22</sup> A few examples of affirmations from people abroad: “The majority of Romanians are categorized as good workers and hard-working people.”; “We are fighting and hard-working people. The majority of us are well seen.”

<sup>23</sup> All these examples, such as “The racist ones always nitpick, speak ill and try to be in the center of the attention every moment. The other people, the majority, because not many of them are racist or I did not meet many, are open-mind, friendly and give you a hand when you need” or “After all they learned, every person thinks in its way” are extracted from the answers at the question *Generally, what is strangers perception on Romanians? Please explain in a few words.*

especially from accepting and understanding the differences. Those are ones of the most important steps in creating a true intercultural communication: "The awareness of the differences among cultures and their acceptance are processes that gained momentum as contacts and influences among peoples from areas having different cultural values and practices grew wider and wider."<sup>24</sup> The exclusions, restrictions, and all the perspectives that could have a negative effect<sup>25</sup> will have the same feedback and result not just on a person, but on the whole community.

Following the replies to the questionnaire, we identified a set of methods through which prejudices and stereotypes were overcome: discussion/explanation sustained by arguments against preconceptions about our nationality, then actions proving Romanians' virtues, a treatment regardless of the charges followed by the patience in demonstrating personal abilities in front of the strangers with the purpose of changing their opinions. In this situation, we are talking about an acceptance and understanding of differences, but also about a transfer of ideas, mentalities, habits. The so-called "third culture" is born, mentioned as a result of the mixture of different cultures. About this, Dumitru Borțun and Corina Matei state: „Although relying on different, sometimes opposed, perceptions and behaviours, the individuals belonging to two different cultures create, through their interaction, a single framework for this interaction. As a result of the conjunction of the two cultures, a third culture comes into being, wider than the former ones and taken over by the both sides (the individuals belonging to these sides)”.<sup>26</sup> Respondents are sure that those perceptions changed from negative to positive after foreign individuals knew them better, and they established connections. Although the general perception of foreigners on Romanians is a negative one, they change their attitude and behavior to the subjects in a positive way even in a percent of 100% after knowing them better and after they interacted for a while. Also, another interesting point to mention is the desire of Romanians to return to the future in their country. Most of them (44%) answered affirmatively underlining their desire to return at some point to their own culture (with the mention that these answers were received a few months after the beginning of the pandemic in Europe). The percentage remaining was equally divided (28%) between the undecided and those that no longer see any advantage in the return migration process.

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<sup>24</sup> Grigore Georgiu, cited work, p.20.

<sup>25</sup> For more examples, to be seen Silvia Popescu, cited work, pp.145-227.

<sup>26</sup> Dumitru Borțun, Corina Matei, „Comprehension, Otherness and the Third Culture”, *Cogito. Multidisciplinary Research Journal*, Bucharest, vol.IX, no.2, June, 2017, p.50. Available at <http://cogito.ucdc.ro/cogito-june2017.pdf>.

## Conclusions

In conclusion, the current research led us to identify a constant of the last years regarding the migration (causes, positive effects – for the hosting country and negative effects for the native country). Approaching this phenomenon from the perspective of the level acquisition of communication paradigms and the degree of socio-cultural adaptation, we observed that Romanians managed to easily integrate themselves in foreign communities. We identified specific temporary obstacles such as language, prejudices Romanians are subjected to or the perception of foreigners on Romanian communities in their country.

Regarding nationality, Romanian migrants confirmed one of the hypotheses through their answers, the one according to which being a Romanian in a foreign country is tough because they are subjected to prejudice and discrimination. Certainly, there are exceptions – foreign communities that consider Romanians friendly, diligent, sociable people. The answers on the question concerning foreigners' conceptions shaped a majority of negative opinions, a fact that is in antithesis with the previous answers related to prejudices and discrimination, therefore a slight discrepancy and inequality in supporting their affirmation on this subject. Thereby, we concluded that Romanians seem to not accept easily enough the fact that nationality is the one which leads most of the time to unpleasant moments and situations in the intercultural process.

After considering the results of the questionnaire, we can observe that when prejudices, stereotypes, bias, and discrimination act together they become unbreakable barriers. With growth and evolution of the individual over the years, through social belonging (family, crowd, educational and professional environment), through influence, learning or common thinking, these prejudices and stereotypes are created, which are directed to members of other ethnic, socio-cultural or religious groups. Migration emphasizes those problems. Intercultural communication would be a solution to relieving the phenomenon in double-sense: the migrants adapt in the new society and most backward, through understanding and acceptance by the foster community.

Each culture is different, having its specificity as well as individuals that share it. As we could see, intercultural communication plays an extremely important role in the process of migration. It leads to adaptation in new spaces, different cultures, traditions, customs, mentality, way of life and behavior and it assumes knowledge and acquisition of paradigms from the new culture with the end of social integration.

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# ANDROCENTRISM AND MISOGYNY: DEBUNKING MYTHS REGARDING THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE BIAFRAN WAR ECONOMY, 1967-1970

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**Abstract:** *This study examines women's role in Nigeria's fratricidal war that ended in 1970 by debunking several myths on the subject matter. With the war's end, scholars have been unable to put in proper perspective the role of women in that conflict; instead, the generality of people prefer to live in denial by consigning the role of women to obscurity and oblivion. Male-dominated narratives of bravery and invincibility depict a shut-down mentality against the womenfolk whose wartime activities count for nothing. This seeming social exclusion and marginalization of femininity are very pronounced. Historical and oral evidence abound but remains mostly unacknowledged on successful women traders in times of conflict. Several women gave a good account of themselves during the war it would have been a measure of fairness in the civil war narratives if a few of these women had received the slightest mention. The above is a glaring lacuna and thus a significant challenge and concern for this study. The study used mainly oral sources interlaced with secondary materials and based on historical narrative style in giving relevance to women's role in the war. It however came with the consequences of a moral dilemma.*

**Keywords:** *Androcentrism, Gender, Misogyny, Ahia Attackie, Yakambaya, Marginalization*

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## Introduction

The Nigerian civil war which pitched former Eastern Nigeria against the rest of the country lasted for 30 months between July 1967 and January 1970. It was the the 'most bizarre' and indeed most' destructive war in black Africa' with incredible genocidal content.<sup>1</sup> There have been severe contestations on the actual cause(s) of the war. Nigeria's political problems and difficulties emanated mainly from the care-free manner<sup>2</sup> in which Colonial Britain took over, administered, and abandoned the government and people of Nigeria<sup>3</sup>. Instead of welding the heterogeneous people together, the British 'identified with and sponsored reactionary communal interests in the country'; preying on their communal sentiments and animosities.<sup>4</sup> The coup and counter-coup that occurred between 1966 and 1967 did not come as a surprise but the war where men and women played vital roles with the women unacknowledged in the war narratives decades after the war is the focus of this present study. Fifty years since the war ended, an ideological emphasis on men, including issues affecting them in apparent dislike of or contempt for the women has dominated historical scholarship in Nigeria. This seeming prejudice against women has ensured that over two dozen works on the war ignored the historic duty of women in that war. Feminine attempts to cover this gap in historical scholarship have yielded little result<sup>5</sup>, including the fictional rendition by Chimamanda Adichie<sup>6</sup> over a decade ago.

Reflections on the contributions of Mrs Mgborie Joseph of Ozuitem are vital to our assertion of women marginalisation in the narratives of the

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<sup>1</sup> Victor Ukaogo, 'The Rise of Individualism and the Growing Irrelevance of the Igbo in the Nigerian Project', in Raphael Njoku and Chima Korieh (eds), *The Igbo in the Age of Globalization*, New-Jersey: December, Goldline and Jacobs Publishing, 2016, p.43. Also see Okocha, E. (2000). *Blood on the Niger: The First Black on Black Genocide, The Untold Story of the Asaba Massacre in the Nigerian Civil War*, p.65. See also Korieh, C. (2012) (ed), *Ghosts of Biafra: War, Genocide, and Memory of the Nigeria-Biafra War*, New-York: Cambria Press, p. 22. And Achebe, C. (2012). *There Was a Country: Personal Account of Biafra*, New York: Penguin Books, p. 54.

<sup>2</sup> Victor Ukaogo, *The Biography of Major-General J.T.U Aguiyi Ironsi*, B.A project submitted to the Department of History, University of Lagos, 1991, p.36.

<sup>3</sup> Bernard Odogwu (1981), *No place to Hide (Crises and Conflicts within Biafra)*, 4<sup>th</sup> Dimension Publishers, Enugu, 1985, p. 20. Also see, Adewale Ademoyega, *Why We Struck*, Evans, Brothers (Nig.) Published Ltd., Ibadan, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup> Nnoli Okwudibia, *Ethnic Politics in Nigeria*, Fourth Dimension Publishers, Enugu, 1977, p. 30.

<sup>5</sup> Egodi N. Uchendu, "Women in Anioma During the civil war" in *Women and Conflict in the Nigerian Civil War*, Eritrea, Africa World Press, 2007. Also see Chuku. G., 'The Changing Role of Women in Igbo Economy, 1929-1985', (Unpublished doctoral dissertation), University of Nigeria, Nsukka, 1995.

<sup>6</sup> Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, *Half of a Yellow Sun*, Alfred A. Knopf inc. 2007.

Nigeria-Biafra war. Mrs Mgborie Joseph was born in Ujari, in Arochukwu Local Government Area of Abia state. She was married by an Ozuitem public servant resident in Opobo, in present-day Rivers State. She was imbued with a strong character and showed the same in her home. Traits and attributes of Mrs Mgborie Joseph's firmness and ability to confront androcentric and chauvinistic manifestations of the society were evident years before the outbreak of the war. By the information provided by Ohia<sup>7</sup>, Mrs Mgborie Joseph's refusal to bow in the face of manifest masculine domination and marginalisation came to the fore when Ote Mmeta (her husband's brother) visited the house in the husband's absence to demand for his brother's car to use as a matter of right. She stoutly refused to surrender the car keys but instead insisted that he (*Ote Mmeta*) leaves the house until the return of the brother. *Ote Mmeta* reported the 'insult' to his brothers in the village. They, in turn, summoned the 'offending' couple home to explain why disciplinary measures should not be taken against the woman. On October 14 1963, the couple braved the summons and reported in the village. It was in the historic gathering at the '*Agbala*' or '*Olobo*' (village square) that Mrs Mgborie Joseph made this observation:

I stand before the elders of Amangwu to tell you that I owe no obligation to my husband's brother or any of his siblings. They are without manner and dignity to understand and appreciate that my husband's property is also mine. I can only share his property at the discretion of my husband and in whose absence; the responsibility becomes mine to execute.<sup>8</sup>

This response was taken as an affront because even in developed Europe, Victorian values promoted the essence of women to be seen but not heard.<sup>9</sup> This line of thinking is considered barbaric and 'anti-women as it originally belonged to the British political machinery'<sup>10</sup> and probably counted as one of the legacies of colonial education in Nigeria. The elders, at the behest of the husband Mr Joseph, freed the wife but not until they had received one (1) he-goat, ten (10) tubers of yam and two (2) bottles of

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<sup>7</sup> S. Ohia, 72 years (Personal communication), March 10, Amangwu Ozuitem (Bende L.G.A). 2020.

<sup>8</sup> Mgborie Joseph.

<sup>9</sup> T. Okonkwo., 74 years (Personal communication). January 27, Olokoru, (Umuahia North L.G.A). 2020.

<sup>10</sup> T. Okonkwo., 74 years (Personal communication). January 27, Olokoru, (Umuahia North L.G.A). 2020.

whisky and fourteen (14) pieces of native kola nut with alligator pepper as sanctions against the 'unruly' behaviour of Mrs Mgborie Joseph. The husband paid the fine on behalf of the wife. It was not a surprise therefore that at the commencement of the civil war, Mrs Mgborie Joseph would undertake masculine ventures in support of her family and community.

Joseph Okorie voluntarily joined the Biafran army along with his young American trained geologist/petroleum engineer cousin, Isaiah Ogwuru.<sup>11</sup> While Joseph Okorie, probably on account of his position in the civil service entered into the army as a major, the young Isaiah fresh from an American university was recruited as a Captain and deployed to the R&D department of the Biafran Army. Mrs Mgborie Joseph was distraught at the husband's voluntary enlistment into the army for apparent reasons. If for nothing, there is a large family to look after. However, her brooding only lasted for a while for like several other women; self-consolation was the best option. Very importantly:

There was not much they did other than gather their children around and stay on in intense anxiety. They knew that not all the men that went to the war would come back alive. There was no orderly manner of notifying families of a dead soldier. They instead depended on the stories of others coming back from the war front on a routine visit or discharged for reasons of ill-health. Such unverified news led to some people being declared dead (and their funerals held) who later came back alive and some being reported as being alive who had long died.<sup>12</sup>

Mrs Mgborie Joseph kept her younger children with her grown-up children and embarked on trade escapades that provided for her immediate family and was sufficient to sell to other members of the community. And before long, she made money, incredible money and fame. She took part in two common types of trade, namely internal trade within the confines of territorial Biafra and the external business involving trade across the war fronts of Nigeria and Biafra. It is the external variant of the deal that was called 'ahia attackie'. This variant was more dangerous but yielded more profit for the participants. Mrs Mgborie Joseph was more

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<sup>11</sup> S. Ohia, 72 years (Personal communication), March 10, 2020, Amangwu Ozuitem (Bende L.G.A).

<sup>12</sup> A.H. Sievers, J.O. Ahazuem and S. Emezue, *A Social History of the Nigerian Civil War: Perspectives from Below*, Enugu: Jemezie Associates, 1997, p. 139.

deeply involved in the external trade and made much of her money doing so. She was only involved in the internal variant of the business when the danger associated with the external option of trade seems impossible and very difficult. In the domestic trade, she had marked trade routes, especially the four (4) market days evidenced in Afor-Bende, Eke-Uzuakoli, Nkwo-Ozuiem and Orié-Imenyi. Further away from these known market days, she alternated with fairly more distant markets in Ariam Usaka, Ndioru and Ahia-ama.<sup>13</sup> The significant difficulty associated with internal trade was the transportation of goods, but there was too, the danger of avoiding military zones, bases and blockades.

For no reason immediately discernible, Mrs Mgborie Joseph buried her profits near a stream that crisscrossed the famous '*Ibelle river*'<sup>14</sup> that Omenuko, Pita Nwana's fairy character in the epic novel 'Omenuko' had traversed. Her husband returned after the war and rejoined the family but was surprised at the affluence of his wife. Mrs Joseph became the sole source of rehabilitation and transformation for not only the husband but for about seven (7) known beneficiaries across the Ozuiem-Bende and Arochukwu axis after the war. She set up small businesses for them from the proceeds of her trade. Other persons depended and benefitted from her generosity for immediate survival in the aftermath of the war.

**Table 1: Beneficiaries of Mrs Mgborie Joseph including the husband**

| S/N | Names            | Business Initiative      | Ties/Link           | Remark                                               |
|-----|------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|------------------------------------------------------|
|     |                  |                          |                     |                                                      |
|     |                  |                          |                     |                                                      |
| 1.  | Joseph Okorie    | Printed Cotton Fabrics & | Husband             | Expanded to have seven more outlets, 15 apprentices  |
| 2.  | Chibuzor Emelike | Drugs                    | Husband's ex-Driver | Grown to have two more outlets, with two apprentices |
| 3.  | Ugwa Nkereobi    | Bicycle spare parts      | Wartime route guide | Self-helped himself to higher education              |
| 4.  | Mrs Dorcas       | Wollen Fabrics           | Wartime             | Opened one extra                                     |

<sup>13</sup> S. Ohia, 72 years (Personal communication), March 10, Amangwu Ozuiem (Bende L.G.A). 2020.

<sup>14</sup> S. Ohia, 72 years (Personal communication), March 10, Amangwu Ozuiem (Bende L.G.A). 2020.

|    |                      |                            |                  |                                                  |
|----|----------------------|----------------------------|------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
|    | Ujah                 |                            | apprentice       | outlet with one apprentice.                      |
| 5. | Nzerendu Chimaobim   | Carpenter's Tools          | Husband's nephew | Expanded his carpentry shop                      |
| 6. | Mathias Nkemakolam   | Enamel & Chinaware         | Junior brother   | Developed with an extra outlet                   |
| 7. | Mrs Ogechi Nnamdi    | Fancy goods                | Elder sister     | Grown with two more outlets and four apprentices |
| 8. | Mrs Nkasiobi Okereke | Grain foods (Rice & Beans) | Husband's niece  | Left the business to join her husband            |

**Source:** compiled from the narratives from three sources (Ohia, 2019, Onwusoro, 2019 & Ujah, 2020)

From the preceding discussion, the example of Mrs Mgborie Joseph is in apparent contrast to:

The Victorian thinking that men should provide for the home, protect women from the harsh labour of the industrial era, and that women should bear the duty of keeping the home safe for the men who would always escape the vicissitudes of public and working life.<sup>15</sup>

Mrs Mgborie Joseph of Ozuitem cannot be alone in this manifest magnanimous behaviour of brotherhood and display of bravery and respect for womanhood. In several other climes, women did marvellously well beyond the dictates of culture or the expectations of royalty. And despite the achievements of these women in the mould of Mrs Mgborie, Mrs Margareth Nwogu and Mrs Ijeoma Okoli<sup>16</sup>, the war narratives of bravery within the context of Nigeria were grossly omitted and ignored by male-dominated narrators of the war. It is this disdain, contempt for, or ingrained prejudice against women that are on the same page with marginalising femininity which is central in this study.

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<sup>15</sup> E.B. Ikpe, "The Historical Legacy of Gender Inequality in Nigeria" in Solomon O. Akinboye ed Paradox of Gender Equality in Nigerian Politics: Essays in Honour of Dr. (Mrs.) Veronica Adeleke, Lagos, Concept Publications, 2004, p. 30.

<sup>16</sup> G. Chuku, 'The Changing Role of Women in Igbo Economy, 1929-1985', (Unpublished doctoral dissertation), University of Nigeria, Nsukka, 1995.

## **Eclectic Theories: Moral Development Theory and Theory of Psychosexual Development**

From antiquity, a myth exists that war is from immemorial time 'a male institution'; one with little appeal for the female gender.<sup>17</sup> Observed reports and credible research outcomes have shown that men provoke wars and regularly support the use of force in settlement of disputes; conversely, women and children remain the victims of such conflicts. Whereas the research initiative of Gilligan<sup>18</sup> yielded the model or theory of moral development,<sup>19</sup> effort birthed the theory of psychosexual development, both of which suggests that 'women's concerns and moral reasoning are defined in terms of interpersonal relationships, while men's morality is abstract and legalistic'. Using Gilligan's theory on women's attitude or involvement in war provides an insight that war appeals to men traditionally unlike women. It is so if such war relies on legalism and 'abstract principles'. Such abstract principles include but not limited to the justification of war on account of the violation, truncation and abridgement of rights and treaties. All the preceding discussion is in the myth that war is a male institution and holds no appeal for women. Male-gendered literature has supported this myth even in a civilized society<sup>20</sup> as evidenced in the Victorian values and perceptions underscored elsewhere in this study. It is the reliance and belief in the myth of women disinterestedness and aloofness in war as provided in several writings that provides a possible explanation for the continued neglect of women perspectives on war and thus its exclusion in the historical narratives and essays on warfare.

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<sup>17</sup> O. Zur, A. Morrison, A. Morrison, & E.Z aretsky, 1985, Men, Women and War: Gender Differences in Attitudes towards War, Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Western Psychological Association (San Jose, CA, April 18-21). See also Melissa Johnson & Michael D. Newcomb. 1992. Gender, War, and Peace: Rethinking What We Know, *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, Vol.32, No 4,

<https://doi.org/10.1177/0022167892324007>

<sup>18</sup> C. Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard, University Press. 1982.

<sup>19</sup> N. Chodorow, *The Reproduction of Mothering*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press. 1978.

<sup>20</sup> D.D. Droba, A Scale of Militarism-Pacifism. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 1931, 22, 96-111. Also see Greenstein, F., *Sex-related Differences in Childhood*. *Journal of Politics*, 1961, 23, 353-371. See too Lewis, R.A., *A contemporary religious enigma: Churches and war*, *Journal of Political and Military Sociology*, 1975, 3. Again see Porterfield, A.L., *Opinions about war*. *Social and Societal Resources*, 1937, 22, 252-264. And finally see Putney, S., & Middleton, R., *Some factors associated with student acceptance or rejection of war*. *American Sociological Review*, 1962, 27, 655-677.

## **Method**

The study applied historical analysis with a unique utilization of primary and secondary sources. There is an evident disproportionate use of primary sources and the secondary alternative. There is a higher slant in the use of oral sources as contained in solicited information from persons directly involved in the war on the one hand and individuals who were participant observers in the conflict with no gender preference on the other. The demography of the respondents would reveal the accommodation of varied sources with no particular biases and nuances. It is important to note that the choice of these respondents depended on the positions held and the roles they played during and the aftermath of the civil war. It is essential because each of the respondents volunteered the needed information for the study relating to the flagrant disregard of feminine activities/roles in the narratives of the conflict. The study spanned an interview period of two years between 2018 and 2020. It involved select interviewees/respondents in three (3) war-ravaged communities in Bende and one community in Umuahia North Local Government Areas of Abia State. The selection and choice of the towns were influenced because of the war-impact on the cities. There is the factor of the involvement of notable indigenes in the war and the willingness of individuals (despite the locally associated stigma) to provide information. For instance, the choice of Ozuitem was because the community was the home of one of the youngest and most trained (American-trained) scientists involved in the technological feats of Biafra. Again, one of the most accomplished female cross-border traders in the war was an indigene of Ozuitem. The same or similar consideration featured for the remaining communities. Across the three towns, there were forty-three (43) respondents comprising of seventeen men (17) and twenty-six (26) women. Direct and specific questions were asked to the respective informants and these questions revolved around the core issues of localised civil-military relations, involvement and roles in the war, local perceptions of war activities and cultural/traditional outcomes emanating from the war. The study only cited individuals with detailed information; especially those bearing relevance to the subject matter of the research.

## **Discussion of Findings**

On account of the findings, it is evident that women played significant roles in the war that is yet to be adequately acknowledged and documented. The results also reveal that the associated trauma and social exclusion of the *yakambaya* phenomenon arising either from the war itself or *ahia-attackie* provided a new and fresh vista to deepen the social and traditional ostracization of women in conflict situations without

recourse to 'native and cultural forgiveness'. The findings further revealed that a painful dilemma of a sort is prevalent for women after the war as they found themselves wound-up in between two male-dominated environments that have little or no consideration for women on account of culture and traditions of the land. The lacuna arising from the shutting out of women involvement in the historical narratives of the war bears eloquent testimony and thus the imperative for the *de-masculinisation* of historical scholarship in Nigeria. A gendered society such as Igboland filled with patriarchal sentiments and inclinations appear almost correctly as an inhibition to the long-sought visibility of the womenfolk.

### **Testimonies as Evidence: Womenfolk and appraisal of War Concepts in Biafra War**

Certain concepts popularized during the war in the Bende-Ozuiem axis of the Nigeria-Biafra serve as critical testimonies of the incredible but neglected role the female gender played in the Nigerian conflict. These concepts not only amplified the largely avoided truth of the womenfolk in the war but clearly indicated nullity of gender roles in human endeavor.

#### **a. Yakambaya**

The Nigeria-Biafra war traumatised diverse populations in Igbo land and with particular reference to Ozuiem ancient kingdom in the old Bende province of the former eastern region; it came with manifest social and economic outcomes. The destruction and pillaging of homesteads, farms, domestic/household commercial gardens and above all the forceful but inevitable relocation of families from comfortable homes to thick bushes with dangerous animals and reptiles as co-occupants. Men voluntarily joined the army just as others were taken in by force. Families suffered and one attractive option for the womenfolk was to cohabit with soldiers of the victorious Nigerian army as mistresses or wives. Many willingly took this option while others were forcefully inherited as 'spoils of war' by members of the victorious army. In characterising these women (voluntary and involuntary partners/wives of an occupying army) as individuals, a generic name of '*yakambaya*' was given to them somewhat derisively and in the most derogatory manner. They were taken as black sheep of families and were accordingly ostracised and stigmatised. It became a moral burden of a sort for a woman to flee from her matrimonial home into the arms of strangers. '*Yakambaya*' was not only for married women as young girls also found cause to elope with Nigerian soldiers and became 'married' to them to produce children as well. All such women have embarked on '*yakambaya*' mission.



## **b. Ahia Attakie**

'*Ahia attakie*' is a trade initiative ostensibly carried out by privileged women that had the 'connections' to move across war fronts at will without stress and inhibition. Such 'connections' were only available to women with victorious army protection; meaning that most of the trade involvement here was by the so-called '*yakambaya*' women. Put differently, '*ahia attackie*' was the engagement in trading activities in areas of active military participation. And within this context, traders and goods crossed frontlines to carry out their business. Many have reasoned and thus argued that given the circumstances and terrain of war, weighty and bulky foods such as rice and beans would be difficult to feature in the trade.<sup>21</sup> However, the very enterprising among the traders that knew the core and rudiments of their chosen enterprise often have soldiers attached to them either as escorts or guides necessarily needed to ensure security. *Ahia attackie* was not an all-women affair to the exclusion of men. Still, Sievers, Ahazuem and Emezue<sup>22</sup> have provided sufficient evidence that some men were involved in it also. They were, however, emphatic that; women formed the massive fulcrum of the traders.

Whereas the word '*ahia*' simply means market (trading), '*attackie*' is an Igbo corruption of the word attack (war in the context used in this paper). Put together, '*ahia-attackie*' means trade transaction conducted under the threat of war or possible attack. It was a risky enterprise and performed mainly at night for obvious reasons of protection. The women under protection ventures into the believed 'enemy' line/territory and procure goods/food that were scarce in war-torn Biafra. The meals are sold at exorbitant prices to the war-weary people to make incredible gains. In between, they provided in some cases for their relatives either free or at reduced prices. At the very worst, they gain from both sides and would seem to be hard workers; indeed more enterprising than others. Generally, hunger was a significant challenge, but the Lagos government used genocide and starvation as strategic war policies<sup>23</sup> to weaken the secessionists. It was this policy that prompted women to devise strategies to combat food shortages in their homes.

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<sup>21</sup> Ujah, Solomon 76 years (Personal communication), January 27 Ndiuche Umuobasiukwu (Bende L.G.A). 2020.

<sup>22</sup> S. Emezue, 'Women and the War', in Axel Harnet- Sievers, Jones, O Ahazuem and Sydney Emezue (Eds), *A Social History of the Nigerian civil War: Perspectives From Below*, Enugu: Jemezie Associates. 1997.

<sup>23</sup> C. Achebe, *There Was a Country: Personal Account of Biafra*, New York: Penguin Books. See also Scott, T. (2012, October, 9). There Was a Country by Chinua Achebe: review, London Telegraph.

## **Women and war: Taking Over from the Men**

As mainstream historians, casual writers and commentators continue in their conspiratorial silence and commitment on sidelining the critical role played by the women during the Nigerian civil war; it has become a calling of sort for contemporary scholars through meticulous research to unearth the hitherto ignored parts of these women. A typical Igbo community is patriarchal as the man is everything, largely dictatorial and sees little or no relevance of the opinion of the woman. In such ideal Igbo home:

The husband was the breadwinner of the family. It was his duty to provide food, shelter, clothing, protection and other things the wife and children needed. He decided on any case that arose in his family, and his judgement was final. He agreed on whom the children married, especially the daughters even against their wish. He played a leading role and set good examples for his children, especially the sons, to emulate. The more efficient a man was able to play these roles, the higher was his respect in his family and his community. Thus, the people saw the fulfilment of these roles as what made men 'real' men.<sup>24</sup>

In the early days of the war, enlistment into the Biafran army was voluntary<sup>25</sup> but in the latter days, a measure of compulsion was a preferred option. However, given the nationalist fervour that accompanied the secession, forceful enlistment was not prevalent as several non-disabled men and young boys voluntarily submitted themselves for recruitment. Giving the account of women's role in a neighboring community of Olokororo near Ozuitem, a scholar wrote:

Before the Nigerian civil war, it was unusual....for a married woman to take significant decisions in the family. The

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<sup>24</sup> Anne Nnenna Ezeogueri-Oyewole, *The Role of Olokororo Women In The Nigerian Civil War, 1967-1970*, Asian Journal of Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities Vol. 4, No. 2, 2016.

<sup>25</sup> S. Ohia, 72 years (Personal communication), March 10, 2020, Amangwu Ozuitem (Bende L.G.A).

husband remained the head of the family while the wife acted as a helpmate whose opinion was not sought before the husband took individual decisions. She remained obedient to the husband always.<sup>26</sup>

And before long, this became routine across the length and breadth of Igbo land especially in the war-ravaged areas of the present-day Imo and Abia states of Nigeria. Changes in the traditional roles of the man and the woman were also evident in several other parts of Igboland. Accordingly:

With the outbreak of the war came a change of traditional roles. As their husbands were conscripted into or voluntarily joined the Biafran army, the women were left to take significant decisions and assume "male responsibilities" in their families. Some eventually became both mothers and heads of their families and made decisions in their homes. Major decisions like giving out their daughters in marriages were taken by them and any available male members of the family. A wedding could and did take place with or without the consent of the bride's father.<sup>27</sup>

What appeared as a redeeming option for the man in the case of marriage of the daughter is that 'any of the male relatives (of the father) together with her mother could and did give her out in marriage'.<sup>28</sup> The transition from mothers to breadwinners was very quick as the challenges of family responsibilities; it has been argued, encouraged the women to take certain actions to ensure the survival of their households. Recent studies have shown that women were also involved in 'the militia,

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<sup>26</sup> Anne Nnenna, Ezeogueri-Oyewole The Role Of Olokoro Women In The Nigerian Civil War, 1967-1970, *Asian Journal of Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities* Vol. 4, No. 2, 2016.

<sup>27</sup> Emerah Obiageri, "Ukpo Women During the Nigerian Civil War", B.A. Thesis submitted to the Department of History, University of Nigeria, Nsukka. 2003.

<sup>28</sup> Emerah Obiageri, "Ukpo Women During the Nigerian Civil War", B.A. Thesis submitted to the Department of History, University of Nigeria, Nsukka. 2003.

cooperative organisations and community development as well as in the operations of the Red Cross'.<sup>29</sup> It has been argued that without the war, the ingenuity and doggedness of the Biafra women would not have manifested so clearly. Voluntary enlistment and forced conscription in the Ozuitem area almost took away all young and middle-aged men in the area. And just as trans-Atlantic slave trade made the South West Africa desolate, so did the war to able-bodied Ozuitem men at the time. This, in a local discussion<sup>30</sup> was agreed to be responsible for the large number of women that absconded with Nigerian soldiers from this area. In consequence, there was many children that grew up without parental love on account of strained or non-existent ties between parents.<sup>31</sup> On how he was recruited into the Biafra Army, Retired Captain Sunday Ohia said he was returning from the stream when at the *Olobo* (village square), he was stopped by stern-looking soldiers and asked to join up with others already undergoing preliminary documentation<sup>32</sup>. 'I never entered my family home again until after the war'. He said a military truck was on hand to transport all of them to the training ground. Engineer Isaiah Ogwuru, a trained American geologist and petroleum engineer from Ozuitem became a Captain in the Biafran Army through voluntary submission to conscription on account of his patriotic zeal to serve his new country.<sup>33</sup> He became a member of the dreaded Biafra team of Engineers that made earth-shaking discoveries in military science and technology. Captain Tony Okonkwo who made the acquaintance of Late General Sani Abacha, Nigeria's former head of state at Ihiala in present-day Anambra state volunteered that he joined the Biafra Army as a young boy returning from an errand for the grandmother. In his recollections, he told me that:

older men in the war repeatedly lamented about their families, especially their wives and tender children. Indeed, one particular recruit who I still remember very well as James was fond of dreaming dreams about his newly

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<sup>29</sup> G. Chuku, 'The Changing Role of Women in Igbo Economy, 1929-1985', (Unpublished doctoral dissertation), University of Nigeria, Nsukka, 1995. Also see Chuku, G. (2002), 'Biafran Women under Fire: Strategies in Organising Local and Trans-border Trade during the Nigerian Civil War'. In Eghosa Osaghae, Ebere Onwudiwe and Rotimi Zuberu (Eds), *The Nigerian Civil War and its Aftermath*, Ibadan John Archer Publishers.

<sup>30</sup> Ufere Ojoemelam, (Personal communication). February Ndiemenu Ozuitem (Bende L.G.A). 2020.

<sup>31</sup> Mmachere, Ariba, 65 years (Personal Communication). November 12<sup>th</sup>, Ndiwo-Itumbauzo (Bende L.G.A). 2019.

<sup>32</sup> S. Ohia, 72 years (Personal communication), March 10, Amangwu Ozuitem (Bende L.G.A). 2020.

<sup>33</sup> I. Ogwuru, 75 years (Personal communication). March 15 Ndiemenu Ozuitem (but resident at Louis Solomon Close, Victoria Island, Lagos. 2018.

married wife before the outbreak of the war that when he learnt that his love had absconded with a soldier, he merely sighed and later that day, he became reckless in the war front and got killed in the process. Even our commander knew he killed himself by unusually exposing himself from the protective bunkers the soldiers use...<sup>34</sup>

Consequently, there is no gainsaying that military conscriptions directly promoted the reversal of roles between men and women as evidenced in women involvement in trade and several other vocations like farming. It also played a significant role in expanding the horizons of the 'yakambaya' phenomenon with its accompanying consequences.<sup>35</sup>

### **Women and Ahia Attaakie (a,b)**

Long-distance trade across borders and war fronts between Nigeria and Biafra developed rapidly in the war years with the womenfolk in control. It was essentially a survival response by the women to take care of the home front in the absence of their husbands. The trade constitutes the smuggling of highly essential goods from Nigeria into Biafra through the land corridor. It is fraught with enormous risk for the participants and seen generally as illicit trade, culprits of which are expected to face damning consequences. Survival of families depended on it, but the enormous risk was not enough deterrent to discourage participation. It is therefore in its consequence of the extreme risk and the illicit nature that it derives the name *ahia attaakie*. It is instructive to note that this thriving trade, lifesaving as it would seem, actually increased the misery of the civilian poor. This was because in reality, the goods bought from the 'black markets' were essentially relief materials sent in by donor agencies from the concerned world for distribution to war-ravaged victims of the conflict. But unscrupulous military and civilians, spirit the relief materials away to sell to these women. Even roadblocks into the hinterland only intercepted a handful of the sold items which in turn do not get anywhere near the intended end-users.

It was indeed a vicious circle of corruption, misery and poverty. Expectedly, such trade relations between supposedly bitter enemies

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<sup>34</sup> T. Okonkwo., 74 years (Personal communication). January 27, Olokoru, (Umuahia North L.G.A). 2020.

<sup>35</sup> G. Chuku, 'From Petty Traders to International Merchants: A Historical Account of the Role of Three Igbo Women of Nigeria in Trade and Commerce, 1886-1970' *African Economic History*, (27). 1999.

remained very costly, and only the very brave could make it, taking the entire risk to journey far to borders with bullets flying around. This was a significant disincentive, but the women still did it. Captain Tony Okonkwo recalled most vividly his knowledge about this trade at Ihiala:

This trade is for the big girls and heavy ladies who had cash and influence, especially within and amongst the Nigerian soldiers. They will always have their way because they have made money, connections and established thriving eating and relaxation houses in town. They may likely be the first group of women that compromised their marriages to climb the social ladder in this time of crisis...<sup>36</sup>

On his part, Captain Kalu Onwusoro, who presently limps on because of war injuries, said that the trade created super-rich women who assiduously acted as middle women by taking the risk to procure the goods and journey into the interior to sell at twice or thrice the original price. Thus, relief materials and supplies were flown to the Uli airstrip axis near Biafra towns like Orlu, Ihiala, Nnewi, Ikeduru, Otuocha and Ogbaru from where these women profiteers' journey into Biafra hinterland for brisk business. Iyam Aloomo (a nickname), reputed in the view of Captain Sunday Ohia (who lost an eye in the war), to be a society woman held court in Umuahia and Ozuitem as receiver of essential goods from where too, she made money which she combines effectively with being in regular contact with the prominent Nigerian soldiers<sup>37</sup> when Umuahia, the second Biafra capital fell to enemy forces. The whole essence of the trans-border trade is survival, but it attained most ridiculous disrepute when in the opinion of Captain Kalu Onwusoro, his father's second wife:

Decided to abandon her children while the husband was away in battle on the pretext of going to the market (border trade) only to stay back with Hausa (Nigerian) soldiers who after all escapades married her, a marriage that produced three children. It hastened my father's death when, in 1989, over thirty years later; she resurfaced with three adult and semi-

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<sup>36</sup> T. Okonkwo., 74 years (Personal communication). January 27, Olokoru, (Umuahia North L.G.A). 2020.

<sup>37</sup> T. Okonkwo., 74 years (Personal communication). January 27, Olokoru, (Umuahia North L.G.A). 2020.

adult children, claiming that they belonged to my father.<sup>38</sup>

The psychological trauma and pain did much havoc on the father, and two months later, 'he quietly slept off and never woke up again'.

*Ahia attaakie* was not an easy affair. It was a high-risk business that came with a price. First, participants must be ready for nocturnal travels conducted in strict secrecy when most soldiers on both sides would usually be resting or be engaged in one form of relaxation or the other. They will within this period sneak across the army locations and bases to centres of commerce. The traders may also utilise safe corridors either discovered by them or leaked to them by collaborating army officers who do so for several incidental reasons. Just as soldiers on both sides act as informants to the traders, the traders themselves are somewhat recruited into the intelligence orbit and network of the two opposing sides. In this direction, the women traders supply information on the movement and location of troops to whichever side that requires it. For the traders moving from Biafra into Nigeria, the information on Biafra troops' location and movement becomes a condition for safe passage into Nigeria. From the above, it is easy to see that these women contributed to the war effort of both armies. As trade relations at this time led to the rise and emergence of double agents for espionage on both sides, the Biafra side viewed this with great disgust often attached with far-reaching penalties. The '*Sabo*' (saboteurs) phenomenon, it has been significantly argued reduced the war potentials of Biafra especially given the difficulties faced by the Military High Command in terms of arms procurement, training and recruitment of soldiers. Although some information released by the traders turned out to be false or misleading, much of the information given by them assisted the recipients in the war. Most times when the information provided turned out to be incorrect; it was generally taken as a deliberate ploy of the giver(s) to side with the opponents, a punishment of which could be very severe.

One strategy that encouraged the trans-border trade was the deliberate method of capturing the emotional sensibilities of the Nigerian and Biafra soldiers for safe passage as well as the enhancement of their trade effort through connections favourable to trade. In the *Eke Uzuakoli* market axis, a group of women formed a band of fun-seekers that entertained the Nigerian soldiers after the fall of Umuahia. These women had dispensed of their husbands, abandoned their homes and felt free to

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<sup>38</sup> K., Onwusoro, 70 years (Personal Communication), March 10, Olokoro Junction (Umuahia North L.G.A). 2020.

mingle with the soldiers at their free will. It may be the suffering associated with the war that led to the rise of immorality amongst the women. Still, the unethical mannerisms of the women demonstrated the nasty side of the battle fought with starvation and hunger as a punitive strategy to elicit surrender.

Apart from the women who compromised themselves in the context of trade that led to several contrived marriages, prostitution by young girls and older women for survival also flourished. The idea remained that the women both singly or collectively invade the army barracks and suggestively encourage the soldiers to come and have fun. The sex epidemic that thrived came forth with varying diseases. Sexually transmitted infections increased especially the one called 'Bonny Special'<sup>39</sup>referred to by the *Biafra Times* to have the little virus in the same family as trachoma which is responsible for blindness.<sup>40</sup> The challenges associated with sexual diseases in military circles especially with the influx of war-weary girls and relief-seeking women into barracks and camps were confirmed by all the ex-combatants and participant-soldiers<sup>41</sup> spoken to this researcher. It created on its post-war medical drawbacks in several villages and communities in Igboland.

### **Neglected Social Consequences of 'Ahia Attaakie' and 'Yakambaya'**<sup>(c)</sup>

The ingenuity of the Biafran women and their instinct for survival is well noted. The willingness with which most of the women accepted the reversal of roles in the home on account of the war is all too visible to be appreciated. The singularity of the purpose to assist in the home front was well articulated by Gloria Chuku, who with examples said:

Some women gave their husbands and sons money after the war. Mrs Ijeoma Okoli was an example of such women. She made good money from the trans-border trade. At the end of the war, she bought a small van for her only son which he turned into commercial transport. Another example of women who made it out of their participation in the trans-border trade was Mrs Margaret Nwogu...the, wife of the traditional ruler of Umunna town near Orlu. She also supplied foodstuffs to the military. She

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<sup>39</sup> *Biafra Times*, (March 3, 1968), A Monthly Newsmagazine, (1).

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

<sup>41</sup> See all the interviewees namely Ojoemelam, Ohia, Ujah, Onwusoro & Okonkwo)



had about 40,000 Biafra pounds in cash at the end of the war.<sup>42</sup>

The innovation and skill with which women persevered in the course of the war were instructive. They did everything to stay afloat the situation. It is true that some of the women capitalised on the situation, identified opportunities and made fortunes. Still, it is also valid to posit that much more number became victims and circumstantial prisoners of the war.

In analysing the reasons leading women who engaged in *ahia attaakie* to compromise themselves through elopement or 'marry' the individuals whose hospitality they had savoured over time (*yakambaya*), three scenarios are identifiable. One, some of them were compelled by the circumstances and exigencies of the war and thus decided to leave their homes, husbands and children and follow the invading *Hausa* and *Yoruba* soldiers to form a new alliance of marriage or what looks like it. Two, some others did the same thing purely on account of their desire to enjoy a good life which Nigerian soldiers afforded them at the time. And three, a few cultivated such unethical union purely on greed and out of their acquisitive drive to make it in life by whatever means. At a time during the war, *Madam Jennie* informed, there was a mad rush by:

Biafran girls and women preferred to marry Nigerian soldiers. It was more like an epidemic for every girl or woman that had tasted the generosity of these soldiers to want more of it and possibly stay put. In my kindred alone, four of us below 25years went with them...although we have more regrets than we can ever manage in our lives now. <sup>43</sup>

The actual consummation of the union in most cases resulted in the birth of children. Consequences abound on the women involved and the children they had out of their first marriage. It remained instructive that some of the weddings achieved a measure of stability. In contrast, others constituted embarrassment to the women and their children who were neither accepted by their birth fathers nor the real husbands of their mothers. The emotional torture to the women, their families and the

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<sup>42</sup> G., Chuku, 'From Petty Traders to International Merchants: A Historical Account of the Role of Three Igbo Women of Nigeria in Trade and Commerce, 1886-1970' *African Economic History*, (27). 1999.

<sup>43</sup> Madam Jennie, 78 years (Personal communication). March 10, Amagbo-Ozuiem ((Bende L.G.A). 2020.

children became benumbing stigmas that alienated them in their respective communities. Some of the soldiers were wise enough to rush to the towns of their 'new wives' to perform traditional wine carrying ceremony to have measured legal cover to a contrived marriage. The rollcall of who is who in the military in Nigeria owe their friendships to the war. For instance, Nigeria's first military 'President', General Ibrahim Babangida married in the heat as well as the Nigeria's first fourth Republic President General Olusegun Obasanjo. Others includes but not restricted to the likes of Major-General Musa Bamaïyi, Col. Burba Marwa and Lt. General Oladipo Diya who as high-ranking army officers before retirement occupied enviable positions in Nigeria's political space.

While some marriages survived, several others were not that lucky because they fizzled out and crashed at the of the war. The 'prodigal wives' otherwise referred to in the most derogatory way as '*agarachaa must come back*' (runaway woman must come home) returned home to their real husbands where they were derided and scorned at in their communities. Their children in psychological pain assumed new status of 'bats' that are neither birds nor mammals having been rejected by the two sides. In the Ozuitem area of Bende in Abia State where the term '*yakambaya*' had the same meaning as '*agarachaa must come back*', psychological trauma experienced by the 'prodigal wives' are worth recalling.

Madam Manasseh well into her late 70s was the first to tell her story. She was the third wife of the husband who had enough money to marry and maintain five wives. By the time the war broke out, she has had three children for the relatively rich and comfortable husband but even in her comfort, she decided to follow the Nigerian soldiers when Ozuitem fell into the hands of the federal forces. In her opinion, she just wanted to 'feel and experience' what she has been hearing. The pangs of war were there, but the husband was a high-level official in the erstwhile regional government and so was fairly well off in managing the family at the time. Pressed to talk further, she said:

It was a grave error on my part. I now have three extra children from the war which my husband and his people have refused to accept for any reason. Worse still, the three-I had before the war is as good as not having parents at all. In school, they were jeered and scorned at ceaselessly. At the moment, the eldest has disowned me because I brought shame upon him being, in his opinion 'a woman

without morals'. I wept all night, and in the morning, he walked away till now. I am finished.<sup>44</sup>

While most of the women that transited from trade to *yakambaya* were largely hard-pressed by the war conditions, Manasseh's situation was not that bad to compel her to desert her home. Her plight was worsened when at the end of the war, the relations of her war husband in Kano flatly rejected her perhaps on account of her refusal to be guided by the Islamic tenets of Muslims. Truth be told, Manasseh refused to comport herself within the prevailing law of the land. Her psychedelic lifestyle was enough to engender her expulsion from Kano along with her kids that were also rejected. She traced her way back home only to be jeered and scorned at by the husband's relatives, thus prompting her to further move to her parents' home where she presently stays. But the parents were not happy but merely took her in on account of parental compassion.

Madam Uchenwa<sup>45</sup> recounted her war ordeal amidst sobs of regret. Squatting on a small kitchen stool in a rather small and compact room off the popular Ngwa Road, in Aba, she recounted the circumstances that pushed her out of her home. Just newly married with a child, her husband was conscripted into the Biafra Army without notice. She had nothing to fall back on. She began to hawk smuggled goods, proceeds of which helped her to look after herself and her only child. But with time, she felt she could follow the already experienced women to participate in the trans-border trade. She did and never came back until after the war ended when her live-in-lover felt the union was only for the period of the war as he merely 'wanted to help her and the child'. But she had two additional children from that momentary period of 'help' and was pushed out. Retracing her steps back to the village, she discovered that the husband had remarried six months after the war and declined to have her again under the same roof. The relations of the husband forcefully took away the son from her and sternly warned her never to come back nor look for the boy. The other two children from her *yakambaya* years were left with her but thoughts of the first son who she has not seen ever since remained one deep sore that may never heal. Indeed:

I grieve daily. I have neither father nor mother and the relations of my parents that I felt could help me talk to my husband, and his

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<sup>44</sup> Madam Manasseh, 79 years (Personal communication). May 14, Elugwumba Ozuitem ((Bende L.G.A). 2020.

<sup>45</sup> Madam Uchenwa, 78 years (Personal communication). May 20, Ndiagho Ozuitem (but resident at Ngwa Road, Aba). 2019.

relations kept their distance, saying I was a huge disgrace to the family. Even my very blood relations disowned me. Look at where I have lived since 1973 with my two remaining children that have no idea who or where their father is. They have all grown up and living on their own, but the pain cannot just go. I really messed my life and I have begged my God and children to forgive me. Ooh my God!!<sup>46</sup>

And for Madam Agodi, the story of anguish and rejection is all the same with the narrations above. For her, the social stigma was so devastating that the two daughters she had for her husband before her misadventure with Nigerian soldiers got married without their real father who firmly 'rejected to have contact with me or my children whatsoever'. It caused much pain to my two daughters and brought much misery to them, even in their marital homes. In deep sorrow, she further recounts the anguish of the daughters:

Because we lied that the father of my daughters was late, the truth of which came out somehow later, my in-laws speak spitefully to them. At every opportunity of misunderstanding, they are reminded of their questionable parentage, which explains their quarrelsome disposition. My daughters were children without identity until they too ran away with some men.<sup>47</sup>

The social outcome and consequences of the war have remained till date, but the war revealed certain positive aspects also. For one, it showed the grim determination of women to survive, help the family, especially in the absence of the breadwinners. The *yakambaya* scourge may have endured, but the war more than anything, proved the resilient character of Biafran women. Several women under adverse situations of conflict indeed compromised their marital vows, but many others too contributed to the war effort of Biafra adopting several methods. For the women that made enough money through the trans-border trade, they helped to boost the local economy by establishing small scale businesses for their husbands,

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<sup>46</sup> Madam Uchenwa, 78 years (Personal communication). May 20, Ndiagho Ozuitem (but resident at Ngwa Road, Aba). 2019.

<sup>47</sup> Madam Agodi, 77 years (Personal (Personal communication). May 21<sup>th</sup>, Amamba-Uzuakoli (Bende L.G.A), 2019.

sons and relations. Indeed, women made remarkable contributions to the survival of disease-ravaged Biafra by surmounting severe conditions of war to maintain market networks and distributive systems for products and goods smuggled into the enclave.

### ***'Yakambaya'* and the Moral Dilemma (d)**

Although some women became victims of the war being unable to overcome the moral and ethical dimensions of the war, some others saw and captured opportunities provided by the war and thus became wealthy in the process. While several women who had absconded with the Nigerian soldiers traced their way home having failed to retain the hearts of their men, a debate gradually evolved on the status of these women. It must be remembered that almost all the women in this category suffered rejection from their original husbands and relations. The children born in such circumstantial marriages also suffered the same psychological shock with their mothers. In the debate, many argued that the returnee women lack the moral and ethical justification to return after 'running' away from their matrimonial home without provocation. Yet others were obliged to opine that the women have come home have shown reasonable remorse of wrongdoing and thus should be forgiven. This would seem necessarily so in the case of those women that already had offspring from their first marriage. The dilemma, however, is in the case of a returnee woman is taken back, what happens to the children she had from the war marriage especially given the unwritten Igbo code of not keeping someone else's child? Pa Offor Ogwuru averred that:

if the woman returns the war children to their father and comes back the way she left, the possibility of her re-absorption into the family is brighter. However, in the absence of the above, I cannot train children, I never fathered, and my family will never allow that to happen.<sup>48</sup>

In the Ozuitem area of Abia State, out of fourteen identified women that showed up after the war in the homes of their husbands, only two were lucky to reunite with their husbands. While one came home with two children from the war marriage, the second had none but only reunited with the four children she abandoned in the heat of the war. Whereas the first woman with the two children swelled the home to seven children with

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<sup>48</sup> Offor Ogwuru., 80 years (Personal communication). January 15, Amangwu-Ozuitem (Bende L.G.A). 2020.

resentment written all over the faces of the older children, the second woman that reunited with her children never had the luxury of respect from these children. Pa Ogwuru was emphatic that the community viewed such attitudinal deviance with resentment because it merely showed that 'a woman that is supposed to be the better half of the man as espoused by Christian teachings have chosen the path to odium, being impatient to bear the difficulties associated with the marriage institution'.

### **Conclusion**

There is no doubt that Biafran women surprised even their husbands with the swiftness with which they assumed family responsibilities on account of the war. They demonstrated immense organisational expertise to keep the home front in place. They were able to look after the children, especially while *kwashiorkor* and other sundry ailments took a toll on the population. They were able to do this by devising strategies of survival. The trans-border trade option as a survival strategy was beneficial, but it threw up unwarranted male-female relations that destroyed family happiness, cohesion and marital bonds. The study has argued that women were as important in the war as the men. They played different roles that were unfortunately ignored and forgotten by the male-dominated history-writing class who probably will not want to willingly incorporate feminine wartime roles in the teaching pedagogy of the subject of history in Nigeria. Happily, a new dawn is emerging, and the consciousness is on the increase for a defeat to attitudes towards androcentrism and inclinations sympathetic to misogyny.

### **Notes**

a. This section dwelt on my communication with Captains Kalu Onwusoro (*A.K.A Air Raid*), Sunday Ohia, Tony Okonkwo and Ogbonnaya Nkemjika. They assisted hundreds of women in either crossing the border at the height of the trade during the war, especially at the Orlu-Ihiala-Nnewi axis or helped them circumvent roadblocks.

b. This section is based on my discussion with a repentant woman whose involvement with Nigerian and Biafran soldiers during and after the war left much regret on her. She gave information to both sides and had male friends on both sides, two of whom married her on two different occasions. I will simply call her '*Madam Jennie*'.

c. This section is based on my communication with three women I will simply identify with made-up names – Manasseh, Uchenwa and Agodi concerning the war and their experiences. These are not their real names and bear no semblance to their names in any form.

d. This section is based on my communication with Chief Offor Ogwuru, 80years at his residence, Amangwu Ogboko Ozuitem, January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2020

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Madam Manasseh, 79 years (Personal communication). May 14, 2020, Elugwumba Ozuitem ((Bende L.G.A).

Madam Jennie, 78 years (Personal communication). March 10, 2020, Amagbo-Ozuitem ((Bende L.G.A).

Ogwuru, O., 80 years (Personal communication). January 15, 2020, Amangwu-Ozuitem (Bende L.G.A).

Ogwuru, I., 75 years (Personal communication). March 15 2018, Ndiemenu Ozuitem (but resident at Louis Solomon Close, Victoria Island, Lagos).

Ohia, S, 72 years (Personal communication), March 10, 2020, Amangwu Ozuitem (Bende L.G.A).

Solomon Ujah, 76yrs (Personal communication), January 27 2020, Ndiuche Umuobasiukwu (Bende L.G.A).

Uchenwa Florence, 79 years (Personal communication), January 27 2020, Amamba Uzuakoli (Bende L.G.A).

Onwusoro, K., 70 years (Personal Communication), March 10, 2020, Olokororo Junction (Umuahia North L.G. A).

Biafra: Proclamation of the Republic of Biafra. (1967). *International Legal Materials*, 6(4), 665-680. Retrieved May 24, 2020, from [www.jstor.org/stable/20690240](http://www.jstor.org/stable/20690240)

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## **Appendix 1: Select sample Questions Answered by the Respondents**

1. How do the Ozuitem-Bende Igbo extraction conceptualise marriage, divorce and divorce?
2. What traditional laws, rules and sanctions exist as a check to marital infidelity in your community?
3. How did young men and women perceive those laws and sanctions?
4. How did those laws and rules evolve; were they instituted primarily against the women or for general social control?
5. How do societies across Ozuitem and its environs see women that eloped with or got married to invading soldiers?
6. In which ways did children brought back from *yakambaya* affect cultural demography of the communities?
7. Are there religious or moral challenges associated with *yakambaya* phenomenon?
8. In way(s) can the stigma and social exclusion in gendered war narratives of Biafra?

# DOES EMPLOYEE COMMITMENT MATTER IN INSTITUTIONAL STRATEGIES AND PERFORMANCE OF MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTIONS IN NIGERIA

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**Abstract:** This study argued that Institutional strategies (IS)-(Agility, Flexibility, Alliance, and Planning) are identified approaches used by management development institutions (MDIs) in Nigeria to navigate the diverse setting towards achieving outstanding performance but queried the effect of employees' commitment. The multi-stage sampling technique was used to select 398 staff. Stratified sampling technique was used to select the relevant MDIs across the entire MDIs in Nigeria. Data were collected using a validated questionnaire. Inferential (regression) analyses was conducted to determine the moderating effect of employees' commitment on the relationship between IS and performance of MDIs. Findings revealed that employees' commitment had no significant moderating effect on the relationship between IS and performance of selected MDIs in Nigeria, ( $Adj.R^2 = .141$ ,  $F_{(4,339)} = 1.650$   $p > .05$ ). The study recommended the integration of IS in the operations of the selected MDIs in Nigeria to ensure improved performance and achieve the institutions' predetermined goals.

**Keywords:** Institutional strategies, Management development institutions, Performance, employees' commitment,

## Introduction

The relationship between employee commitment and performance has been widely studied by Khyzer, Bin, Ahmed, and Wasim,<sup>1</sup>; Peace, and Mohammed,<sup>2</sup> though mostly at the individual level and generally in cross-sectional studies, but the debate on the performance of employees has remained inconclusive. This is the same in the organizational level studies,

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<sup>1</sup> M. Khyzer; B. Dost; A. Zulfiqar; S. Noman, & W.A. Shaheen. Impact of employee commitment on organizational performance. *Arabian Journal of Business and Management Review*, 1(3), 2011, 34-51.

<sup>2</sup> I. Peace, & A.M. Mohammed, Effect of employee commitment on organizational performance in Coca Cola Nigeria limited Maiduguri, Borno State. *Researchgate*, 19(3), 2014, 33-41.

Zehir, Sehitogl, and Erdogan<sup>3</sup>, Zafar and Pinar <sup>4</sup>, Management Development Institutions (MDIs) success has attracted global attention due to the degree of unprecedented change and intense competition in capacity building and the increasingly volatile and complex working climate Singh, Oberoi & Ahuja,<sup>5</sup> Rhema and Saeed<sup>6</sup>. Which gave rise to the questions as follows: do firms with committed workers get more productive? Researchers have predicted that the relationship between employee attitudes and organizational performance is complex, and it is too simplistic to conclude that attitudes to satisfaction lead to improved organizational results – some do and some do not, and some employee attitudes are obviously the product of the culture of organizations Peace & Mohammed<sup>7</sup>

According to the Administrative Staff College of Nigeria (ASCON Annual Report<sup>8</sup>) MDIs are government-based agencies in Nigeria saddled with the burden of building adequate human resources to boost national economic growth. Public sector organizations, according to Ricardo and Rozaine<sup>9</sup>, are generally large hierarchical bureaucracies, preferred stability, and steadiness that enhance high loyalty to any sort of alteration in the performance of their duties. Public service sector output is affected by bureaucratic structure, red tape, inefficiency, lack of flexibility and inadequate transparency (Ostraff,<sup>10</sup>; Siddique,<sup>11</sup>).

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<sup>3</sup> C. Zehir; Y. Sehitoglu, & E. Erdogan, The effect of leadership and supervisory commitment to organizational performance 8<sup>th</sup> International strategic management conference. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences Published By Elsevier Ltd*, 58, 2012, 207 – 216.

<sup>4</sup> A.A. Zafer, & A. Pinar, The effect of organisational culture and innovativeness on business performance in healthcare industry. 8th International strategic management conference. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences Published By Elsevier Ltd*, 58, 2012, 683 – 692.

<sup>5</sup> D. Singh; J. Oberoi, & I. Ahuja, An empirical investigation of dynamic capabilities in managing strategic flexibility in manufacturing organizations. *Management Decision*, 51(7), 2013, 1442-1461.

<sup>6</sup> K.U. Rehman, & Z., Saeed, Impact of dynamic capabilities on firm performance: Moderating effect of organizational competencies. *Sukkur IBA Journal of Management and Business*, 2(2), 2015, 18-40.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid

<sup>8</sup> Administrative Staff College of Nigeria (ASCON), (2010). Annual report.

<sup>9</sup> B. Ricardo, & A.H. Rozaine, Corporate entrepreneurship among the public sector organizations in Labuan. *Faculty of Economics and Business, Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (Unimas) Working Paper Series No. 1110*, 2011.

<sup>10</sup> F. Ostraff, Change management in Government. *Harvard Business Review*, 2006, 141-147.

<sup>11</sup> N.A. Siddiquee, Public management reform in Malaysia: Recent initiatives and experiences. *International Journal of Public Sector Management*, 19(4), 2006, 339-358.

According to Zampetakis and Moustakis,<sup>12</sup> changing public bureaucracies can be daunting due to vested interest and leadership contradictions that lead to difficulties in the implementation of effective systems in public agencies, and more so, consumers become more demanding for comprehensive services from the same organization. This will mean a modern and distinct definition of improved service. Javad, Alireza, and Yaghoob<sup>13</sup> stressed that conventional organizations are no longer able to meet the growing needs of the business world today. Thus, it will require organizations that can adapt rapidly to changes in the environment and also have the necessary capacity to incorporate improvements, creativity and quality improvement within the institutional strategies to survive the demands of the business world. Ojokuku and Adegbite<sup>14</sup> claimed that among MDI's mandates is the preparation and growth of public servants, but the technological progress that occurs every day makes the skills and methods of today inadequate for the activities of tomorrow.

Therefore, aggressive steps to align people with processes and create a viable structure from which to effectively and satisfactorily deliver desired rates of service in cost-effective ways are needed. Conceptualizing MDI performance as to achieve the desired outcome was hindered by the fact that most organizations failed to concentrate adequate attention on building adequate capacity among their workforce thereby inhibiting performance rate. Another factor which could affect MDI's operational strategies and efficiency is the degree of commitment of employees. Commitment is an important component for the success of training institutions; while various attempts to create individual commitment to the public institution have often been ineffective, and the institutional commitment to drive performance has often been inefficient and this ability has been underused. Inability to produce sufficient internal revenue (IGR) and retain existing structure and prolong anomalies in the operating system has resulted in institutional identity failure and thus non-recognition,<sup>15</sup> (Arslan & Cevher)

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<sup>12</sup> L.A. Zampetakis, & V., Moustakis, Entrepreneurial behaviour in the Greek public sector. *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behaviour and Research*, 13(1), 2007, 9-38.

<sup>13</sup> Y.M. Javad; K. Alireza, & M. Yaghoob, Organizational entrepreneurship and its impact on the performance of governmental organizations in the city of Mashhad. The 6th Indonesia International Conference on Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Small Business. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 169, 2015, 75 – 87.

<sup>14</sup> R.M. Ojokuku, & T.A. Adegbite, The impact of capacity building and manpower development on staff performance in selected organisations in Nigeria. *International Journal of Economics, Commerce and Management United Kingdom*, 5(6), 2014, 23-38.

<sup>15</sup> E.T. Arslan, & E. Cevher, Intrapreneurship enabling organizations to drive innovation, *Brunel Business School – Doctoral Symposium*. Turkey, 2013.

Vijay and Michael<sup>16</sup>; Lo, Ramayah, and Min,<sup>17</sup> have identified that for more than four decades, large numbers of studies have been conducted to examine the idea of commitment, although less or less attention has been paid to the mechanisms by which commitment evolves.

Riyaz and Shabnam<sup>18</sup> argued that there is reason to believe that workers today can find the idea of commitment less important than it once was. The unwritten loyalty contract between workers and employers that existed 30 years ago has been severely weakened, and the notion of workers sticking with a single company for most of their careers has become increasingly obsolete, causing under-performance of employees and high turnover of labor. Javad, Alireza, and Yaghoob<sup>19</sup> claimed that government units are bureaucratic and that their conservative nature has limited the discretionary work effort (DWE) power and weakened MDI efficiency due to a lack of employee commitment. It was also realized that the form of structures, the prevailing culture of bureaucracy, and conventional practices impede the DWE that employees in government and public training institutions would show,<sup>20</sup> (Sadler). Likewise, it has a detrimental effect on the criteria of the governing bodies for performance standards<sup>21</sup>, (Ekpudu, Aigbepue, Stephen & Olabisi). Could it be inferred then that employee engagement may have an impact on the relationship between institutional strategies and the performance of selected MDIs in Nigeria? From the introduction, other sections would include reviewing the literature, the methodology, analyzing the data, presenting and explaining the findings and ending with recommendations.

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<sup>16</sup> I. Vijay, & B. Micheal, The Indian legal profession in the age of globalization. *Procedia Economics and Research*. 39(1). 2012, 6-27.

<sup>17</sup> M. Lo; T. Ramayah, & H.W. Min, Leadership styles and Organizational Commitment: A test on Malaysia manufacturing industry. *African Journal of Marketing Management*, 1(6), 2009, 133-156.

<sup>18</sup> A.R. Riyaz, & Z. Shabnam, Affective commitment: An empirical study of executive and non-executive bank employees. *Global Journal of Management and Business Research Interdisciplinary Volume 13(7)*, 2013, 1.0

<sup>19</sup> Ibid

<sup>20</sup> Sadler- Smith, "Organizational learning style and competences: A comparative investigation of relationship and transactionally orientated small UK manufacturing firms", *European Journal of Marketing*, 34(5/6), 2000, 625-642,

<https://doi.org/10.1108/03090560010321965>

<sup>21</sup> J.E., Ekpudu; S., Aigbepue, & J.O., Olabisi, Appraisal of strategic alliances and corporate effectiveness. *An International Multidisciplinary Journal, Ethiopia*, 7(1), 2013, 155-164.

## Literature review

### Institutional strategies (is)

Chris and Mia<sup>22</sup> conceptualized institutional strategy as a holistic collection of strategies and activities designed to exploit and form socio-political and cultural structures to sustain or improve the competitive position of an entity. Institutional strategy at its simplest is a mechanism that integrates a series of actions that form the strategic vision or help execute the strategy of a company. Or put it another way, it drives new and expected approaches. The main consequence of the idea of strategic strategies, therefore, is that companies compete not only in terms of their ability to enable and leverage their existing resources but also in terms of their ability to refresh and expand them,<sup>23</sup> (Micheal, Simon & Jill). According to Oliver<sup>24</sup>, Javad, Alireza, and Yaghoob<sup>25</sup>, the idea of considering institutional strategies was born out of the inefficiency in performance of government institutions, presence of bureaucracy and the attitude of people and governments about the nature of government institutions on the premise of applying only one strategy. A deliberate institutional strategy will entail a firm working actively to carry out institutional frameworks that support its own strategic role. The evolving institutional strategy will therefore entail a pattern of organizational behavior that affects or impacts institutional structures while being related to some other intentions. Of example, this may be the case where a software firm reacts to specific consumer needs by creating a series of popular products that establish de facto market standards over time<sup>26</sup> Maja. It is obvious that the use or adoption of performance improvement approaches was initially only widespread among larger firms and multinationals before the rate of error threats, costly errors and even economic failure now forced the organizations of today to take strategic management seriously in order to keep their firms competitive leading to performance differences among firms in an increasingly volatile

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<sup>22</sup> M. Chris, & R. Mia, Institutional strategies in emerging markets. *The Academy of Management Annals*, 9(1), 2015, 291–335.

<sup>23</sup> H. Micheal; P. Simon, & R. Jill, (2011). Policy making in the real world evidence and analysis. Retrieved 22<sup>nd</sup> February, 2017 from <http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/my-civil-service/networks/professional/policy-profession/policy-skills-framework.aspx>

<sup>24</sup> C.P. Oliver, Critical aspects in the strategic management theory. 8<sup>th</sup> International strategic management conference. *Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 58, 2012, 98–107.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid

<sup>26</sup> S. Maja, Compilation of operational and strategic agility for ensuring the highest efficiency of company operations. *Economics and Management*, 7(2), 2015, 20-25.

environment<sup>27</sup>, (Madagamage, Warnakulasooriya & Wickramasuriya). This study categorized institutional strategies as strategic agility (SA), strategic flexibility (SF), strategic alliance (SAL), and strategic planning (SP). The various strategies can be viewed as the integrated form of activities with specified actions directed towards the achievement of the organizational goals and objectives.

### **Performance of MDIs**

Aremu and Oyinloye<sup>28</sup> described organizational performance as measuring actual outputs or outcomes against their intended outputs (expected). However, institutional success means different things for different organizations. An institution can use several parameters to measure its performance. Many MDIs are non-profit, however, and can use any of the following metrics to measure their performance: number of staff, number of subscribers, number of market-driven services, physical growth (liaison office), quality of their services, patronage level, and financial sustainability among other parameters. Because improving an institution's productivity is necessary for its survival in the competitive environment, the aim of all productivity-related efforts is to bring about lasting improvements in management development institutions' performance,<sup>29</sup> (Richard).

James, Grace, Patrick and Oluwatobilola<sup>30</sup> interpret the concept of performance as the idea of a organization focused on the mutual association of productive assets as human, physical, and capital resources for the purpose of attaining defined objectives and generating value. Organizations should then assess their performance using financial metrics that include earnings, return on assets, return on investment and revenue, and non-financial indicators that concentrate on issues related to customer satisfaction and referral levels, delivery time, waiting time, and turnover of employees. Performance is something that all institutions aim

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<sup>27</sup> G.T. Madagamage, B.N.F., Warnakulasooriya1, & H.V.A., Wickramasuriya, Factors influencing motivation to transfer training: An empirical study of a government sector training program in Sri Lanka. *Tropical Agricultural Research*, 26(1), 2014, 12 – 25.

<sup>28</sup> M.A. Aremu, & O.O., Oyinloye, Relationship between strategic management and firms' performance in Nigerian banking industry. *Kuwait Chapter of Arabian Journal of Business and Management review* 14(3), 2014.

<sup>29</sup> F. Richard, Strategic planning and the Nigeria University system innovation project discussion paper. *Nigeria University System Innovation Project* (NUSIP), 2000.

<sup>30</sup> U.M. James, G.O. Akinola, P. Ologbenla, & O.K. Aladeraji, Strategic management and firm performance: A study of selected manufacturing companies in Nigeria. *European Journal of Business and Management*, 7(2), 2015, 12-32.



for, irrespective of their size, according to Muya and Wesonga<sup>31</sup>, because institutions want to get large, and smaller institutions want to get bigger. Consequently, institutions will expand at least a bit each year to meet the increased training needs that arise over time. Nonetheless, he added that performance is a wider measure that the service delivery should involve profitability, quality and continuity. The researchers have found that different institutions often mean different things to institutional performance. One institution may use parameters to measure its performance. If profitability is the primary objective of any organization, these organizations should assess their performance in terms of net profits, sales, and other financial achievements. Nonetheless, most government-led for-profit training institutions that use one of the following metrics to measure their performance: number of employees, number of trained participants, number of market-driven programs, geographic growth, quality of their training programs, increased market share, financial sustainability among other parameters.

Ultimately, an institution's quality and efficiency can be determined by how well an organization performs with respect to the goals it has set for itself<sup>32</sup> Richard. Performance metrics can discuss the type or level of program of activities performed and services provided by a program (outputs) and/or the outcomes of those services. Any task, initiative, feature or policy that has an identifiable intent or set of objectives can be a program. For the purposes of this review, program is referred to as the method by which these MDIs conduct training.

### **Employees Commitment (EC)**

In the literature, the idea of commitment was well known as a critical tool for developing a relationship, gaining client patronage, satisfaction, and frequency of potential patronage. Rai and Medha<sup>33</sup> have described commitment in service customer relationship as a significant or explicit commitment to the continuity of relationships between exchange partners. Akintayo<sup>34</sup> and Tumwesigye<sup>35</sup> indicated that one of the reasons why

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<sup>31</sup> J.N. Muya, & J.N. Wesonga, The impact of organisational culture on performance of educational institutions. *International Journal of Business and Social Science*, 3(8), 2012, 12-25.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid

<sup>33</sup> A.K. Rai, & S. Medha, The antecedent of customer loyalty: An empirical investigation in life insurance context. *Journal of Competitiveness*, 5(2), 2013, 139-163.

<sup>34</sup> D.I. Akintayo, Work-family role conflict and organizational commitment among industrial workers in Nigeria. *Journal of Psychology and Counselling*, 2(1), 2010, 1-8.

<sup>35</sup> G. Tumwesigye, The relationship between perceived organizational support and turnover intentions in a developing country: The mediating role of organizational commitment. *African Journal of Business Management*, 4(6), 2010, 942-952.

research on commitment has attracted attention is that companies rely on committed workers to build and retain competitive advantage and achieve superior performance. Employee commitment is a psychological state where an employee intends to continue a relationship with his existing employer. It is an enduring disposition or desire for a particular firm and represents the extent to which individuals as members of an organization are emotionally connected to such an organization, sustained by continuous desire. Eyre<sup>36</sup> writing on the three component model of commitment developed by Meyer and Natali in 1991 explains that employees' commitment to an organization is a psychological state, which affects how people feel about the organization they deal with. The three components are affection for the job (affective commitment), fear of loss (continuance commitment), and a sense of obligation to stay (normative commitment). Affective commitment is when employees have strong emotional attachment to their organization and the work they do. It describes the tendency and propensity to identify with the firms goals, values and the feelings to remain with the organization. Riyaz and Shabnam<sup>37</sup>; Varsha and Monika<sup>38</sup> also described three dimensional model of commitment which are; Affective, Continuance and Normative. The researchers said Affective Commitment is based on how much individual 'want' to remain in the organization. Continuance Commitment refers to an awareness of the costs associated with leaving the organization. Normative Commitment reflects a feeling of obligation to continue employment as such feel that they ought to remain with the organization.

### **Institutional strategies, performance of MDIS and employee commitment**

Previous strategic studies have stressed the importance and need to recognize environmental factors in institutions when developing and implementing institutional strategies<sup>39</sup> (Acemoglu, Johnson & Robinson. Based on a study of academic research papers and survey, Varsha and Monika<sup>40</sup> studied employee commitment and its effect on sustained productivity in Indian auto-component industry. The primary data was gathered through questionnaires. The secondary data was used to classify

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<sup>36</sup> E. Eyre, *The Three Commonest Model of Commitment* www. Mindtools.com, 2015.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid

<sup>38</sup> D. Varsha, & B. Monika, A Study about Employee Commitment and its impact on Sustained Productivity in Self-Renewal. *International Journal of Human Resources Studies*. 2(2), 2012, 20-29.

<sup>39</sup> D. Acemoglu; S. Johnson, & J.A. Robinson, Colonial origins of comparative development: An empirical investigation. *American Economic Review*, 2010, 91.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid

Indian auto component industry's commitment related problems. The three levels of commitments were taken as independent variables, and the dependent variable maintained performance. Findings: The study findings suggested that the commitment of the employees (Affective, Normative, Continuous) is strongly linked to sustained performance in the Auto Component industry. Research results show that there is a positive interaction between the organization's three levels of commitments- affective, ongoing, and normative commitment, and sustained performance. Tests have also shown that there is a strong degree of association between the three independent variables and the dependent variable's sustained performance. In Jo, Marcel and Jose's<sup>41</sup> research, promoting employee skills in the education sector by means of interview survey process, suggested that in order to achieve commitment, i.e. win people over to function in a particular direction, it is important to be transparent about expectations and goals, but at the same time about organizational requirements and boundaries that determine the space in which one can operate.

### **Methodology**

This study adopted the correlational survey research design. This was used because it helps to determine the degree or level of relationship or association that exists between the variables under consideration. The adoption of this design is consistent with the studies of Johnson,<sup>42</sup> Isaac<sup>43</sup>: Aremu, and Oyinloye<sup>44</sup>: and Muogbo,<sup>45</sup>. The population of this study as at the time of this research was one thousand, three hundred and forty four (1,344) comprising the faculty staff and administrative staff in the various units in the five selected Management Development Institutions (MDIs) in Nigeria. The five MDIs are: Administrative Staff College of Nigeria (ASCON), Centre for Management Development (CMD), Agricultural and Rural Management Training Institute (ARMTI), and Public Service Staff Development Center (PSSDC) and Public Service Institute of Nigeria (PSIN). The selection was based on their long standing in terms of training

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<sup>41</sup> Jo, B. V. K., Marcel & J., Jose, (2013) Fostering intrapreneurial competencies of employees in the education sector. *International Journal of Training and Development*, 17 (3), 1360-3736 doi: 10.1111/ijtd.12010.

<sup>42</sup> S.L. Johnson, Research and statistics: A question of time, Cross-sectional versus longitudinal study designs. *Pediatrics in Review*, 31, 2010, 250-252.

<sup>43</sup> Isaac, Algorithms and computation: 25<sup>th</sup> *International Symposium, Jeonju, Korea 15 – 17 December proceedings*. 2014.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid

<sup>45</sup> U.S. Muogbo, The impact of strategic management on organisational growth and development: A study of selected manufacturing firms in Anambra State. *IOSR Journal of Business and Management*, 7(1), 2013, 24-32.

and performance since their time of establishment, they are also involved in training the lower, middle and senior level officers of both public and private sector as against the non selected MDIs.

The Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) table for sample size determination was used in this study with a significant level of 5% and an error of 30% to arrive at a sample of 398 selected from the five MDIs. The simple random sampling method was adopted so as to ensure that all the potential respondents get equal chance of being selected<sup>46;47</sup> Asika; Molliegeorgious. The adapted questionnaire was informed from different studies (Mahiah, Suhaimi, & Ibrahim,<sup>48</sup> Hyytinen, Outi, Salminen, & Katja,<sup>49</sup>; Ugochukwu, & Madu,<sup>50</sup>; Wael, & Methaq<sup>51</sup>; Oyedijo,<sup>52</sup>; Madagamage, Warnakulasooriya<sup>1</sup>, & Wickramasuriya,<sup>53</sup> ensuring the constructs with sections on institutional strategies, employees commitment and performance of MDIs following the modified six-point Likert scale type from Very high (coded 6) to Very low (coded 1) as response.

To ascertain the validity of the instrument, it was subjected to content, construct and face validity. The construct determined by using confirmatory factor analysis, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) > 0.5, from the analysis average variance explained for all the variables are greater than 0.5, hence the construct validity of all variable involved in the study were therefore ascertained and the Cronbach's Alpha value is 0.7 or 70% and above. Since the values range from 0.711 to 0.952 as established by Nunnaly (1978) the instrument is therefore considered reliable for either adoption or adaption. Therefore, the operationalization of variables

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<sup>46</sup> N., Asika, *Research methodology in the behavioural sciences (Revised edition)*. Lagos: Longman Nigeria Plc. 2009.

<sup>47</sup> Molliegeorgious, Correlational research methods and techniques. Retrieved 13<sup>th</sup> November, 2017 from <https://getrevising.co.uk>, 2015.

<sup>48</sup> S., Mahiah, Suhaimi, & A., Ibrahim, Measuring the level of customer satisfaction among employees of human resource division. *Advances in Globa Business Research*, 3 (1), 2006, 1549-9332.

<sup>49</sup> O. Hyytinen, & K., Salminen, Psychological ownership and entrepreneurial drive at the Jyväskylä City Catering Unit. *University of Jyvaskyla, School of Business and Economics*, 2007.

<sup>50</sup> O.M., Ugochukwu, *The impact of compensation practices on intrapreneurial behaviour*. Johannesburg University of Jyvaskyla, *School of Business and Economics*, 2011.

<sup>51</sup> S.I. Wael-Mohamad, & K.A. Methaq-Taher, Examining the impact of strategic learning on strategic agility. *Journal of Management and Strategy*, 4(2), 2013, 56-67.

<sup>52</sup> A. Oyedijo, Strategic agility and competitive performance in the Nigerian telecommunication industry: An empirical investigation. *American International Journal of Contemporary Research*, 2(3), 2012, 23-47.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid

alongside the dependent, moderator and independent variables and the data was analysed using hierarchical regression analysis.

X = Independent Variable

Y = Dependent Variable

Z = Moderating variable

Where:

X = Institutional Strategies (IS)

Y = Performance (P)

Z = Employee commitment (EC)

Where:

X = (x<sub>1</sub>, x<sub>2</sub>, x<sub>3</sub>, x<sub>4</sub>,)

x<sub>1</sub> = Strategic Agility (SA)

x<sub>2</sub> = Strategic Flexibility (SF)

x<sub>3</sub> = Strategic Alliance (SAL)

x<sub>4</sub> = Strategic Planning (SP)

Y = Level of patronage (LOP)

Y = f(X, Z). ..... Functional Equation

P = f(IS, EC)

IS = (SA, SF, SAL, SP)

Therefore;  $P = \beta_0 + \beta_1 IS + \beta_2 EC + \beta_3 IS*EC + e$  :...Model of the study

### Where:

P: Performance

IS: Institutional Strategies

SA: Strategic Agility

SF: Strategic Flexibility

SAL: Strategic Alliance

SP: Strategic Planning

EC: Employee commitment

IS\*EC = Interaction between Institutional Strategies and Employee commitment

$\beta_0$  = constant of the equation or constant term

$\beta_1 - \beta_3$  = Parameters to be estimated

e = error or stochastic term

Institutional strategies (SA, SF, SAL, and SP) concepts relates to explain the stimulating of MDIs performance with employees commitment seen as moderating the relationship. Hence the assumption as ( $\beta_0 + \beta_1 IS + \beta_2 EC + \beta_3 IS*EC + e$ ). The apriori expectation is that, it is expected that employee commitment will have a significant moderating effect on the relationship between institutional strategies and performance of MDIs.

Therefore, if the results indicate a  $p < 0.05$ ; and  $\beta_1 \neq 0$  (where  $\beta_1$  represents  $\beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3$ ); the hypothesis would be rejected.

Ethical consideration was ensured as the researcher made a concerted effort to ensure that confidentiality was maintained, by disallowing respondent's name to be written. All information provided was considered sensitive, classified and used only for the purpose of the research study. Data were not exposed to persons not involved in the research process, while also ensured the avoidance of plagiarism. Participation in this research was voluntary and research participants had the right to withdraw at any time of their choice.

### **Data analysis, results and discussions**

The objective of this study was to determine the moderating effect of employee commitment on the relationship between institutional strategies and performance of MDIs in Nigeria. By combining responses under strongly agree, agree and partially agree, 307 respondents representing 87.7% agreed that they would continue to work for their organization because they felt obliged, as Bentein, Stinglhamber and Vanderberghe<sup>54</sup> also observed in there study. The hypothesis was tested using hierarchical multiple regression analysis. The results of the analysis are presented in Tables below.

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<sup>54</sup> K., Bentein; F., Stinglhamber, & C., Vandenberghe, Organization, supervisor, and workgroup-directed commitments and citizenship behaviours: A comparison of models. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, 11(3), 2010, 341-362.

**Moderating effect of employee commitment on the relationship between institutional strategies and performance of MDIs**

| <b>(a) Model Summary</b>                                                                                                                                                           |                   |          |                   |                            |                   |          |     |     |               |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|-------------------|----------|-----|-----|---------------|
| Model                                                                                                                                                                              | R                 | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate | Change Statistics |          |     |     |               |
|                                                                                                                                                                                    |                   |          |                   |                            | R Square Change   | F Change | df1 | df2 | Sig. F Change |
| 1                                                                                                                                                                                  | .358 <sup>a</sup> | .128     | .118              | 21.58641                   | .128              | 12.465   | 4   | 339 | .000          |
| 2                                                                                                                                                                                  | .389 <sup>b</sup> | .152     | .139              | 21.32723                   | .023              | 9.290    | 1   | 338 | .002          |
| 3                                                                                                                                                                                  | .395 <sup>c</sup> | .156     | .141              | 21.30675                   | .004              | 1.650    | 1   | 337 | .200          |
| <b>a. Predictors: (Constant), Strategic Plan, Strategic Agility, Strategic Alliance, Strategic Flexibility</b>                                                                     |                   |          |                   |                            |                   |          |     |     |               |
| <b>b. Predictors: (Constant), Strategic Plan, Strategic Agility, Strategic Alliance, Strategic Flexibility, Employee Commitment</b>                                                |                   |          |                   |                            |                   |          |     |     |               |
| <b>c. Predictors: (Constant), Strategic Plan, Strategic Agility, Strategic Alliance, Strategic Flexibility, Employee Commitment, Employee Commitment* Institutional Strategies</b> |                   |          |                   |                            |                   |          |     |     |               |

| <b>(b) ANOVA<sup>a</sup></b>                                                                                                                                                       |            |                |     |             |        |                    |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|----------------|-----|-------------|--------|--------------------|
| Model                                                                                                                                                                              |            | Sum of Squares | Df  | Mean Square | F      | Sig.               |
| 1                                                                                                                                                                                  | Regression | 23233.661      | 4   | 5808.415    | 12.465 | 0.000 <sup>b</sup> |
|                                                                                                                                                                                    | Residual   | 157964.897     | 339 | 465.973     |        |                    |
|                                                                                                                                                                                    | Total      | 181198.558     | 343 |             |        |                    |
| 2                                                                                                                                                                                  | Regression | 27459.007      | 5   | 5491.801    | 12.074 | 0.000 <sup>c</sup> |
|                                                                                                                                                                                    | Residual   | 153739.551     | 338 | 454.851     |        |                    |
|                                                                                                                                                                                    | Total      | 181198.558     | 343 |             |        |                    |
| 3                                                                                                                                                                                  | Regression | 28208.064      | 6   | 4701.344    | 10.356 | 0.000 <sup>d</sup> |
|                                                                                                                                                                                    | Residual   | 152990.494     | 337 | 453.978     |        |                    |
|                                                                                                                                                                                    | Total      | 181198.558     | 343 |             |        |                    |
| <b>a. Dependent Variable: Performance</b>                                                                                                                                          |            |                |     |             |        |                    |
| <b>b. Predictors: (Constant), Strategic Plan, Strategic Agility, Strategic Alliance, Strategic Flexibility</b>                                                                     |            |                |     |             |        |                    |
| <b>c. Predictors: (Constant), Strategic Plan, Strategic Agility, Strategic Alliance, Strategic Flexibility, Employee Commitment</b>                                                |            |                |     |             |        |                    |
| <b>d. Predictors: (Constant), Strategic Plan, Strategic Agility, Strategic Alliance, Strategic Flexibility, Employee Commitment, Employee Commitment* Institutional Strategies</b> |            |                |     |             |        |                    |

| (c) Coefficients <sup>a</sup>      |                                              | Unstandardized Coefficients |            | Standardized Coefficients |  | T      | Sig.  |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|--|--------|-------|
|                                    |                                              | B                           | Std. Error | Beta                      |  |        |       |
| 1                                  | (Constant)                                   | 38.016                      | 9.631      |                           |  | 3.947  | 0.000 |
|                                    | Strategic Agility                            | 0.315                       | 0.258      | 0.076                     |  | 1.224  | 0.222 |
|                                    | Strategic Flexibility                        | 0.740                       | 0.318      | 0.164                     |  | 2.330  | 0.020 |
|                                    | Strategic Alliance                           | 0.473                       | 0.306      | 0.104                     |  | 1.545  | 0.123 |
|                                    | Strategic Plan                               | 0.637                       | 0.296      | 0.119                     |  | 2.153  | 0.032 |
| 2                                  | (Constant)                                   | 27.093                      | 10.167     |                           |  | 2.665  | 0.008 |
|                                    | Strategic Agility                            | 0.273                       | 0.255      | 0.066                     |  | 1.072  | 0.285 |
|                                    | Strategic Flexibility                        | 0.569                       | 0.319      | 0.126                     |  | 1.785  | 0.075 |
|                                    | Strategic Alliance                           | 0.348                       | 0.305      | 0.076                     |  | 1.142  | 0.254 |
|                                    | Strategic Plan                               | 0.513                       | 0.295      | 0.096                     |  | 1.739  | 0.083 |
| 3                                  | Employee Commitment                          | 0.981                       | 0.322      | 0.171                     |  | 3.048  | 0.002 |
|                                    | (Constant)                                   | -33.529                     | 48.275     |                           |  | -695   | 0.488 |
|                                    | Strategic Agility                            | 0.208                       | 0.260      | 0.051                     |  | .802   | 0.423 |
|                                    | Strategic Flexibility                        | 0.538                       | 0.319      | 0.120                     |  | 1.685  | 0.093 |
|                                    | Strategic Alliance                           | 0.378                       | 0.306      | 0.083                     |  | 1.236  | 0.217 |
| a. Dependent Variable: Performance | Strategic Plan                               | 0.517                       | 0.295      | 0.097                     |  | 1.754  | 0.080 |
|                                    | Employee Commitment                          | 3.489                       | 1.979      | 0.609                     |  | 1.763  | 0.079 |
|                                    | Employee Commitment*Institutional Strategies | 0-.022                      | 0.017      | -0.438                    |  | -1.285 | 0.200 |

**Source: Author's computation: Field Survey Results, 2017**



To test the moderating effect of the employee commitment on the relationship between institutional strategies and performance of MDIs, three regressions model were used as recommended by<sup>1</sup> Mugenda, & Mugenda. In the first model, institutional strategies were regressed on performance. In the second model, employee commitment was regressed on performance. However, in the third model, institutional strategies, employee commitment, and the interaction of institutional strategies and employee commitment were regressed on performance.

The summary of the moderating effect employee commitment on the relationship between institutional strategies and performance of MDIs show that the correlation coefficient (R) of institutional strategies is 0.358, when the parameter of employee commitment is added it increases to 0.389, with addition of the parameter of the interaction of institutional strategies and employee commitment it further increased to 0.395. This reveals that the correlation between institutional strategies, employee commitment and performance of MDIs is weak. The results further indicate that there are different variations in performance of MDIs accounted by institutional strategies and employee commitment. The coefficient of determination,  $R^2 = 0.156$  explains that 15.6% of the variations of performance of MDIs have been explained by the variables of institutional strategies, employee commitment and the interaction of institutional strategies and employee commitment. 84.4% of the variations are explained by other factors, which are not part of this study. The conclusion is that the regression model for the institutional strategies does not have a good fit. When parameter of employee commitment is added, the change of the coefficient of determination ( $\Delta R^2$ ) increased by 2.3%. With a further addition of the parameter of the interaction of institutional strategies and employee commitment the percentage of variability accounted for reduction to 0.004 ( $\Delta R^2$ ).

The regression equation explaining the result of the analysis is expressed as follows;

$$P = \beta_0 + \beta_1 IS + \beta_2 EC + \beta_3 ISEC + e: \dots\dots\dots$$

$$\text{Performance} = -33.529 + 0.051SA + 0.120SF + 0.083SAL + 0.097SP + 0.0609EC - 0.438E C^*IS \dots\dots\dots \text{Equation}$$

The corresponding F-ratio for the model, institutional strategies F-ratio is 12.465. When the parameter of employee commitment is added, the change in F-ratio is 12.074, with a further addition of the parameter of the interaction of institutional strategies and employee commitment the

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<sup>1</sup> O.M. Mugenda, & A.G. Mugenda, *Research methodology (2<sup>nd</sup> edn)*. Research Methods; Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches. Nairobi Acts Press, 2008.

change in F- ratio is 1.650. The corresponding p-value for the model, institutional strategies is significant ( $p < 0.05$ ). When the parameter of employee commitment is added model two is also significant ( $p < 0.05$ ), with a further addition of the interaction of institutional strategies and employee commitment Model 3 is not significant ( $p > 0.05$ ). Moreover, change in coefficient of determination and regression model fit ( $Adj.R^2 = .141$ ,  $F_{(4,339)} = 1.650$   $p > .05$ ) reveals that there is no significant moderating effect of employee commitment on the relationship between institutional strategies and performance of MDIs. Therefore, the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) which states that there is no significant moderating effect of employee commitment on the relationship between institutional strategies and performance of MDIs cannot be rejected.

### **Discussion**

This study tested the moderating effect of employee commitment on the relationship between IS and performance of the selected MDIs in Nigeria. The result reveals that there is no significant moderating effect of employee commitment on the relationship between institutional strategies and performance of MDIs.

Although employee commitment characterized by (affective, continuance and normative) has significant effect on IS. But in the interaction between IS and performance of the selected MDIs, employee commitment does not have any significant moderating effect. This may be because, the practice of IS particularly the aspect of strategic planning and strategic alliance which can be directly applied to operations in responds to environmental dynamics are beyond the control of employees when compared to strategic agility and strategic flexibility that are supportive functions which need employees to enhance the reactions and speed for improved performance of the selected MDIs in Nigeria. This finding substantiates the finding of Ergülen<sup>2</sup> who demonstrated in his study that organizational climate was significantly related to individuals' organizational attachment, organizational identification and organizational commitment. The commitment drive in employees can be disoriented and damaged if there are any inconsistencies, sporadic enthusiasm or lack of commitment of the top management. Managerial commitment appears to be the key for addressing the challenges which require a high degree of institutional propensity.

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<sup>2</sup> G.K. Ergülen, Influence of leader member exchange quality on organizational attachment around the organizational climate perspective in family-owned business. Unpublished Master Thesis, Marmara University, Social Sciences Institute, Department of Organizational Behavior, Istanbul, 2011.

Considering the work of Peace, and Mohammed<sup>3</sup>, it was established that the relationship between employee commitment and performance has been widely studied though mostly at the individual level and commonly in cross sectional studies, yet the debate about workers' performance remained inconclusive, which now gave rise to the questions as: do firms with committed workers more productive? Researchers have predicted that the relationship between employee attitudes or commitment and vis-a-vis performance is complex. According to Bentein, Stinglhamber and Vanderberghe<sup>4</sup>, employees who are rewarded by their organizations for greater achievement tend to be more committed to the organization; compared to the employees who are under the influence of their superior that can win their loyalty than the organization. Even though there are different types of commitment, commitment to superior is the most influential.

Previous studies on strategy have emphasized the relevance and the need to consider institutions environmental factors particularly employee commitment in the adoption and implementation of institutional strategies<sup>5</sup> (Acemoglu, Johnson & Robinson. Varsha and Monika<sup>6</sup> studied employee commitment and its impact on sustained productivity in Indian auto-component industry based on a review of academic research papers and survey. The primary data were collected through questionnaires. The secondary data were used for identifying the commitment related problems of Indian auto component industry. The three commitments levels were taken as independent variables and sustained productivity as the dependent variable. Findings: The results of the study indicate that the employees' commitments (affective, normative, and continuous) are significantly related to sustained productivity in Auto component industry.

Although the result on this study shows that employee commitment is insignificant on the relationship between institutional strategies and performance of selected MDIs in Nigeria, but this is at variance with the finding of Khyzer, Zulfiqar, Noman, and Wasim<sup>7</sup> that researched on impact of employee commitment on organizational performance and concluded that there is a moderate level of interdependence between organizational performance and employee commitment. Employees' commitment deals with the extent to which the people responsible for the attainment of the organizational goal can go in ensuring that they stay true to duty in terms

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid

<sup>4</sup> Ibid

<sup>5</sup> Ibid

<sup>6</sup> Ibid

<sup>7</sup> Ibid

of commitment and participation. Similarly, the work of Jo, Marcel and Jose<sup>8</sup>, on fostering employees competencies in the education sector, it was suggested that in order to build commitment, that is; win people over to work in a particular direction, it is necessary to be clear about plans and ambitions but at the same time about organizational conditions and boundaries that demarcate the space in which one can operate. Even though the result obtained in this analysis was not significant, this does not mean it is not important, yet there is need for improvement. Based on the finding of this study and the opinion of other researchers, it is therefore the researcher's opinion that institutional performance can be enhanced by involving employees in decision making that will ultimately increase their commitment in the organization. Also, it is however for the analysis of this study alone that the moderating effect of employees' commitment is insignificant. When management are committed to all that they do in the organization it will engender good followership in the employees so they also become committed to organizational tasks that could bring about improved performance.

### **Conclusion and recommendations**

This study examined the moderating effect of employee commitment on the relationship between institutional strategies and performance of selected MDIs in Nigeria. The results showed that there is no significant moderating effect on the relationship between institutional strategies and performance of the selected MDIs in Nigeria. However, this does not reduce the relevance; it is though for this analysis study alone its insignificant. It is pertinent to reiterate the fact that the ability to enhance IS is predicted on an institution deliberate effort to increase its operation and thereby achieve predetermined goals. This study, therefore, concluded that the practice of institutional strategies affects the operational performance of the selected MDIs in Nigeria positively and significantly.

Based on the findings of the study, it would be recommended that mmanagers or top executives should ensure that they give in their best in terms of commitment. For the performance level in MDIs to be enhanced, there should be a high level of commitment in the affairs and activities of the various institutions. Although the result in this study is insignificant, yet the management should not relax and believe that employees will do the job needed, rather they should be proactive in ensuring that they themselves lead by example because this will help employees to flow with trend of actions that are expected from them.

The findings of this study could also have been affected by the environment in which the study was conducted, therefore, limit the

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid

generalization in other environment. Hence, this study suggests for further studies be conducted to examine the role of strategic flexibility and institutional performance

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# **INDUSTRY 4.0 VERSUS AGRICULTURE. DEVELOPMENT PERSPECTIVES OF AGRICULTURE IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA BY ASSIMILATING DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES**

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***Abstract:** For the Moldovan economy, the agriculture in current conditions is one of the priority sectors that contribute to the strategic development of the country in such areas as improving food security, increasing the number of territories with agricultural specialization in a difficult socio-economic situation and ensuring a high standard of living for the rural population. Digital technologies contribute to the achievement of these objectives by adapting agriculture to external conditions associated with geopolitical and macroeconomic changes. The underlying problems currently facing the agricultural sector are the unfavourable climatic conditions of recent years, lack of labour, caused by mass migration, but also the need for innovation and a reliable scientific approach to improving production in plants and animal husbandry.*

*This research aims to study the concept of Industry 4.0 in Agriculture through the existing national and international experience in digital technologies. The authors analyze the state of the Moldovan agro industrial sector to determine the technical, human and financial potential for implementing digital technologies as solutions for streamlining the management of agricultural enterprises to ensure sustainable development of the national economy. Another*

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*purpose of the study is to identify promising areas of agricultural development based on digital technologies, and to evaluate the possible effect of their implementation on the production cycle and increasing the quality and competitiveness of domestic farm products.*

**Keywords:** *Industry 4.0, digital agriculture, informational technologies, digital platforms.*

## **Introduction**

The primary trend in the modern development of the international community has become the implementation and development of information and communication technologies (ICT) in all fields of activity: financial, economic, educational, entertainment, marketing, and other areas.

The term Agriculture 4.0, along with Industry 4.0, is increasingly addressed in the Sustainable Development Strategies and Growth Policies of many countries in the world. Sustainable development in agriculture through digitization involves the development of new management models based on information technologies to ensure increased productivity on farms, soil conservation and biodiversity minimizing the negative impact on the environment, providing a stable level of production and profit.

Agriculture, in the current conditions of socio-economic development of the country, is a priority area to ensure food security and welfare of the population. Moldovan agriculture has a differentiated potential for the growth and regional specialization due to different climatic, socio-economic and technological conditions.

Ecological losses, water scarcity, arable land degradation, growing energy needs, and the emergence of new diseases and pests are putting considerable pressure on the economy, and it is increasingly difficult for farms to carry out profitable activities and meets the needs of the market in agricultural products.

Digital technologies are the future of agriculture, and attempts to ignore them are hampering the development of this sector.

The Internet of Things, robotics, artificial intelligence and large volumes of data are applied by farmers around the world and contribute significantly to streamlining agricultural processes.

Technological innovation in the latest research in the field is considered a solution for agro-industrial countries. Agricultural technologies, based on IT products, automation and robotics, widely used will catalyze the increase of productivity and profitability of farming activities. Research in the field considers digital technology - a realistic way to meet current challenges.

The digitalization of agriculture improves working conditions for farmers, reduces the negative impact of agriculture on the environment, but also ensures a much higher profitability of agricultural holdings.

In a short time, digital agriculture will take the place of the traditional one, producers understanding that by investing in technology - they can achieve efficient results, such as saving seedlings fertilizers, herbicides, pesticides and fuels.

This research aims to study the concept of Agriculture 4.0 analyze the state of the agricultural sector in the Republic of Moldova to determine the technical, human and financial potential for implementing digital technologies as solutions for streamlining the management of agricultural enterprises to ensure sustainable development of the national economy.

The paper is also a study of existing national and international experience in the application of digital technologies in the agricultural sector.

### **The degree of the problem investigation**

Digital technologies are a new direction to increase the efficiency of the agro-industrial complex and the sustainable development of the agricultural sector. Contemporary researchers highlight several trends for implementing modern technologies and approaches in agriculture.

Some researchers, Vasiliev A., Briuhanov A.<sup>1</sup>, Greve M., Boincean B.<sup>2</sup>, Neverova O., Peciura E., examine the development of the agricultural sector by applying green technologies, the creation of processing enterprises on the principles of "green economy". These authors highlight the accessibility of technologies and innovations in agriculture in the context of regional development; also the need for financial and human resources for IT changes, and their efficiency for economic growth.

The complex approach to economic, financial and environmental efficiency is supported by researchers Lebedeva O., Gafiyatov I.<sup>3</sup>. The authors are concerned about business results and increased productivity, noting that overloading the soil with bio-additives and fertilizers should not affect the environment and product quality for consumers.

An important issue for digital innovations and technologies is the management efficiency at the regional level. In this order of ideas, we

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<sup>1</sup> A., Vasiliev; A., Briuhanov, *Evaluation of the effectiveness of the best available technologies for intensive animal husbandry // Technologies and technical means of mechanization of crop production and animal husbandry*. 2016. No. 86. p. 31-142.

<sup>2</sup> B., Boincean, *Ensuring the sustainable development of the agricultural sector in the Republic of Moldova through ecological modernization*. NooSfera, no 10-11. 2014, pp. 91-103.

<sup>3</sup> O.I., Lebedeva; I.Z., Gafiyatov, *Organization of effective land use in the framework of the "green economy" // Problems of the modern economy*. 2015. No. 1 (53).

mention the research conducted by Gunkova A., Krylatykh E., Tryachtsin M.<sup>4</sup>. Quality management parameters are associated with professional competence and knowledge of product characteristics; the rationality of the introduction of technologies; the assessment of the consequences of changes in the production cycle in terms of impact on labour productivity; the profitability of basic processes and cost reduction.

Belokrylova E., Waage M., Sergienko O.<sup>5</sup> reflect regulatory aspects of environmental control and compliance with production standards in their work. In this case, the competitiveness of products and the possibility of exporting to the world market are assessed based on meeting the requirements of international law, introducing environmental management in agricultural and agricultural enterprises.

Researches in this field cover three main areas. The first is the application of new technologies in agriculture in developing countries, as well as territories with a difficult socio-economic situation, but favourable climatic conditions for the production of products from the industries concerned. There are specific business factors, government support and rapid growth rates<sup>6</sup>.

Other scientific publications analyze the role of digital technologies in the development of the agro-industrial complex and agriculture in terms of job automation and increase labour productivity, marketing opportunities for production efficiency and optimization of resource potential<sup>7</sup>.

The third group of works is related to the identification of the possibilities of using digital technologies according to the level and scale of the business, the types of property, including for small farms, which form the basis of the local agricultural economy of developed and developing countries.

## **Methods and materials applied**

Research materials and methods include the analysis of the existing regulatory framework in the Republic of Moldova in the field of ICT development in the country's economy, compared to the normative

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<sup>4</sup> A.G. Gunkova; Yu.A. Kholopov, *Improving the environmental and economic indicators of the enterprise based on the implementation of the best available technologies* // Bulletin of Volgograd State University. Ser. 3, Economics. Ecology. 2017. No. 9. pp. 23-32.

<sup>5</sup> O.I. Sergienko, *Food security: the transition to technological standardization of environmental impacts based on the use of the best available technologies (BAT)* // Problems of the modern economy. 2011. No. 4 (40). pp. 95-102.

<sup>6</sup> U. Deichmann; A. Goyal, & D. Mishra, *Will Digital Technologies Transform Agriculture in Developing Countries?*, *Agricultural Economics*, 47(S1), 2016, 21-33.

<sup>7</sup> IDEAGRO (2015), *The Era of Digital Agriculture*. Available at:

<http://www.ideagro.es/index.php/noticias/89-the-era-of-digital-agriculture>.

framework and international best practices for ICT implementation in the agri-food sector and research conducted in this field by domestic and foreign scientists.

Systemic and situational approaches contribute to assessing the dynamics of agricultural sector development as part of the country's economy, following factors that have a situational impact in the current period: trends in developing management and control in the agricultural sector, introducing innovations that positively affect socio-economic indicators. Development and the environment, increasing employment and farm incomes, financing mechanisms and fiscal incentives.

The modelling of socio-economic processes makes it possible to analyze the effects that arise from the rational use of digital technologies: improving the quality of working conditions and the attractiveness of the agricultural industry for investment and innovation while ensuring high quality and competitiveness of domestic products on the international market.

For the evaluation of the human, technical and financial potential of agriculture for the implementation of information technologies, statistical methods of analysis were applied based on data provided by the National Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Moldova, as well as surveys conducted by authors on farms to determine their readiness for the agriculture digitization.

### **Results obtained and discussions**

The interest in the issues of introduction and evaluation of the efficiency of innovative technologies in agriculture and the agro-industrial complex is associated with the increase of financial and production results, with new opportunities to implement accelerated import substitution models. Traditional and modern technologies ensure high results, contribute to updating reserves to increase production volumes and labour productivity. The introduction of changes in agricultural production and management technologies must be accessible and meet a set of criteria (see Fig. 1).

The technical criterion of accessibility means that the technology complies with the norms and standards of industrial safety for people and the environment, that there are no conflicts with the equipment used in the production process.

Economic feasibility is determined by several significant criteria: reducing costs, increasing profit margins and increasing the profitability of the main production areas.

Environmental accessibility is associated with the possibility of rational ecological management, reducing the concentration of harmful substances in the soil.

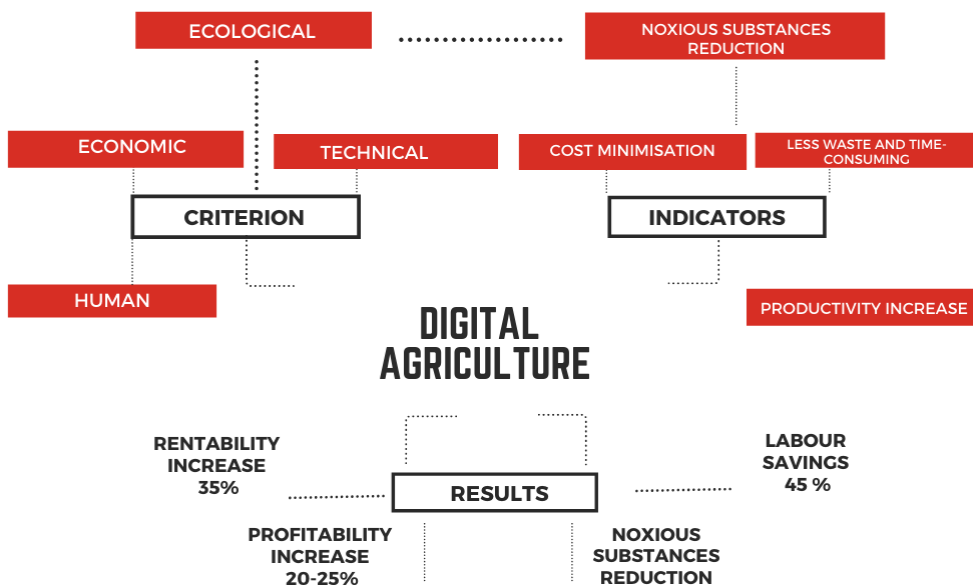
The human criterion is the ability of staff to use technology in the production and management process, in the presence of high qualifications, in employee training, continuity of technical education, academia and continuing education. It is also necessary to talk about creating working conditions that meet safety and hygiene standards, making working with the new technology convenient, harmless and economical in terms of working time and productivity.

Traditional agricultural production methods are still relevant today, which allows for a constant increase in results (economic, agricultural machinery, productive plant varieties, efficient fertilizers, rational agro technology techniques). However, the potential of previous achievements has already been exhausted, therefore, in agriculture; the pace of application of digital technologies and innovations is steadily increasing based on approaches to regional and national economic development programs promoted by the relevant international financial institutions (FAO, UNICEF, and UN).

In international practice, the perception of the need for radical modernization of the agri-food sector dates back to the first decade of the 21st century, being determined by the rapid growth of the planet's population and the need to provide vital resources, including land and food.

Given the limited amount of land resources, the problem of food security of the population cannot be solved by the unlimited increase of arable land, but by increasing the efficiency of agricultural production. In the current period of economic development, the possibility of increasing the efficiency of resource use in agriculture is associated, primarily with the need to develop precision agricultural systems and streamline operational management in response to changing natural conditions, the market and other requirements.

The concept of precision agriculture involves the use of ICT as a critical element, which increases the speed of processing large amounts of data and exchanging information.



**Figure 1. Criteria for access to information technologies in agriculture**

*Source: developed by the authors*

Currently, the world community has already implemented many projects in this area. For example, under the auspices of the UN, the *e-Agriculture Community of Practice (CAE)* was created, which already has over 13,000 members from 170 countries and territories, the latter being representatives of government organizations and departments, specialists in the field of ICT, researchers, farmers, students, politicians, business people, development specialists, and others<sup>8</sup>. Within this community, a digital platform is organized, which allows farmers, farmers, decision-makers and other stakeholders to interact with each other and gain access to information on the sustainable development of agriculture through ICT.

Another example is the online guide, developed by the World Bank, *ICT in Agriculture Sourcebook* designed to disseminate the practices of digitalization of agriculture and the development of agribusiness. This resource is a practical, interactive guide, and contains information on current trends in the event of IT technologies, recommendations on

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<sup>8</sup> Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in Agriculture. A Report to the G20 Agricultural Deputies (2017). Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations Rome, 2017. – p. 57. Available at: <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i7961e.pdf>



adopting some measures for the implementation and use of appropriate software products and evaluating their effectiveness<sup>9</sup>.

The creation of cloud technologies and digital platforms has played a significant role in the development of ICT, which has made it possible to ensure extended access to databases and decision support programs (DSP), many of which are provided free of charge<sup>10</sup>.

Today, in global practice, they have become ubiquitous, being called technological platforms - Technological Platforms (TP). The international community presents the following directions as the central concept of TP:

- Selection of strategic research directions;
- Analysis of the market potential of technologies;
- Consideration of the views of all stakeholders: state, industry, scientific community, regulators, users and consumers;
- Mobilization of public and private sources of financing for development innovative economy and society as a whole.

An example of such projects is the European cloud platform *FOODIE*<sup>11</sup>, which not only provides farmers with access to the necessary information, but also searches for and integrates useful data for the agro-industry from various sources (e.g. *The European INSPIRE geoportal*<sup>12</sup>). This portal can be used to access data such as climate, land, ecological, aquatic maps, satellite images of the area, information on real-time weather conditions and climate change forecasts, statistical indicators of agri-food activity, sampling data, data on the biodiversity of territorial agricultural systems and crop productivity, recommended types of fertilizers, including prescribed rules and terms of application.

Other examples of technology platforms aimed at developing and solving problems in the field of biotechnology, agriculture, fisheries and food products refer to the platforms: "*Industrial Biotechnology*", "*Plants for the Future*", "*Global Animal Health*", "*Farm Animal Breeding*", "*Forestry*", "*Food for Life*", "*European Biofuels*"<sup>13</sup>.

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<sup>9</sup> Ibidem

<sup>10</sup> WSIS Stocktaking Success Stories, International Telecommunication Union World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) WSIS Stocktaking Process. Published in Switzerland Geneva, 2018. – 80 p.

<sup>11</sup> T. Řezník; V. Lukas; K. Charvat; S. Horakova, & M. Kepka, *Foodie data models for precision agriculture*. Conference Paper, August 2016. 195 p.

<sup>12</sup> EG / EuroSDR Workshop «Use of INSPIRE Data: Past experiences and scenarios for the future» (2018). INSPIRE Knowledge Base. Available at: <https://inspire.ec.europa.eu/events/egeurocdr-workshop-useinspire-data-past-experiences-and-scenarios-future>

<sup>13</sup> European Technology Platforms. (2019). Available at:

[http://www.bio-economy.ru/tekhnologicheskie\\_platformy/evropeyskie\\_tp/](http://www.bio-economy.ru/tekhnologicheskie_platformy/evropeyskie_tp/)

National platforms for digital agriculture include "Agroportal for farmers" (Georgia), *Agricultural Information Centre* (Moldova)<sup>14</sup>, *eRKG application* (Slovenia), *Integrated administration and control systems - IACS* (Hungary, Romania), *Agricultural information system - AIS* (Turkey)<sup>15</sup>. The Russian Federation, Belarus and Kazakhstan have created a common legislative framework and platform for the digitization of agriculture in the Eurasian Community.

The analysis of international practices in this field allows us to conclude that the leading player in the ICT market for agriculture is currently the United States, where the coverage of agricultural production with smart technologies reaches 80%. According to *Research and Markets*<sup>16</sup>, the smart farm market in the Americas in 2023 will reach \$ 11.93 billion<sup>17</sup>. In Europe, this figure is slightly lower.

Summarizing the international experience in the use of ICT in agriculture, we highlighted the main directions of their application:

1. In **interacting with the authorities**, digital platforms facilitate the interaction between farmers and the governmental authorities by simplifying the procedures for obtaining the necessary information, grants, and documents (e.g. the European REFIT platform<sup>18</sup> and the E-Government Centre in the Republic of Moldova<sup>19</sup>).

2. **Agricultural consultancy services** include assistance for marketing activity, accounting, implementation of ICT in production, legal aid of online farm producers (an example is the European technology platform FOODIE<sup>20</sup>).

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<sup>14</sup> Agricultural Information Center. Available at:

<https://date.gov.md/ckan/organization/2129-centrul-informational-agricol>

<sup>15</sup> Status of Implementation of E-agriculture in Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia (2018). FAO. Available at:

<http://www.fao.org/e-agriculture/news/status-e-agriculture-implementationcentraleastern-europe-and-central-asia>

<sup>16</sup> Smart Agriculture Market by Agriculture Type (Precision Farming, Livestock, Aquaculture, Greenhouse), Hardware (GPS, Drones, Sensors, RFID, LED Grow Lights), Software, Services, Application, Farm Size, and Geography - Global Forecast to 2025. Available at:

<https://www.researchandmarkets.com/reports/5023854/smart-agriculture-market-by-agriculture-type>

<sup>17</sup> Americas Smart Farming Market: Focus on Solutions (Hardware Systems, Software, Services) and Applications (Precision Crop Farming, Livestock Monitoring and Management, Indoor Farming and Aquaculture) (2018). Analysis & Forecast 2018-2023. – 195 p. Available at: <https://www.marketresearch.com/BIS-Research-v4011/Americas-Smart-Farming-Focus-Solutions11833135/>

<sup>18</sup> European Commission Platform. Available at:

[https://ec.europa.eu/info/content/refit-platform\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/content/refit-platform_en)

<sup>19</sup> E-Government Agency. Available at: <http://www.egov.md/en>

<sup>20</sup> Farm Oriented Open Data in Europe. Available at: <http://www.foodie-project.eu/>

**3. Agricultural management** currently covers several key areas that focus on remote control of the production process and technical means, precision agriculture, remote sensing of agricultural land, control of the location and condition of animals on the farm. Remote control of the production process is achieved using software products that ensure uninterrupted data exchange; for example, *The Pivot Mapper Program*<sup>21</sup> allows the management of remote land irrigation. For the implementation of management processes, signal transmission-reception systems (*GPS navigation systems, GNSS*) are developed.

As part of the agricultural management and demand strategy, large-scale robotization of production processes (agro-robots) takes place, which helps to solve the problems of insufficient staff in agriculture, automation of routine activities, performing heavy work or high-precision operations. (e.g. *Mobile Agricultural Robot Swarms* (Germany)<sup>22</sup> - mobile agricultural robots controlled by special applications by a single operator).

To control "smart technology", new types of systems are being developed. That ensures the precise movement of hardware that allows automatic control of the flow of agricultural machinery on previously created routes along rows of planted plants, complex field contours, with precision high and in adverse visibility conditions (e.g. *CLAAS CAM PILOT* (Germany), *Raven Cruizer* produced by Raven Industries (USA), *CenterLine 220*, developed by TeeJet Technologies (USA), *Leica mojoMINI* from Leica Geosystems (Switzerland), *TRACK-Leader* from Muller-Elektronik (Germany)). Besides, the "smart technology" is equipped with crop mapping systems and soil moisture sensors.

**4. Information management and knowledge exchange.** For agricultural innovation systems, an example of the implementation of this direction can be interactive education services and qualification courses, international trade of real experience in the industrial application of ICT through regional networks (e.g. *ESCORENA* and *AGROWEB* - European Union) and global platforms, as well as on platforms designed to host agricultural food start-ups, for example, *The FoodBytes platform! Rabobank* (Chicago, USA), which allows the evaluation of the best start-ups (selected by a group of experts) of representatives from various countries in the field of agriculture and finding potential investors for their implementation.

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<sup>21</sup> The Pivot Mapper Program. Available at: <https://www.pivotmapper.com/>

<sup>22</sup> The European Coordination Hub for Open Robotics Development. Mobile Agricultural Robot Swarms (MARS). Final Report. Available at: <http://echord.eu/public/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Final-Report-MARS.pdf>

## 5. Expert systems or decision support systems in agriculture.

In the design and construction phase, several software products that allow the creation of projects of recovery systems, hydraulic structures, as well as buildings and structures involved in agricultural production in the GIS coordinate system (e.g. *IRRICAD* - an integrated software package specially designed for the design of the irrigation or pressurized water supply system<sup>23</sup>). At the stage of planning and organizing the production process in agriculture - support systems verify the correctness of farmers' decisions: from choosing crops from different areas of the land to using various technologies for their cultivation or forecasting the consequences of applied agro technical measures, potential yield.

ICTs are widely used in the word for agriculture radical modernization.

In response to the changing agro-commercial environment, ICTs are focused on increasing the accuracy, volume and speed of data transmission and processing, remote monitoring and information system assistance, decision making, which allowed the implementation of precision cultivation processes, automation and robotization of production.

The cloud and platform technologies innovation has made it possible to provide and expand access to databases and decision support programs to an unlimited number of stakeholders.

The primary condition for ensuring their use is the provision of access points to Internet resources in rural areas, which is currently an objective of the Digitization Strategy of the Republic of Moldova<sup>i</sup>.

Analysing the good practices for implementing smart technologies in agricultural business development, we concluded that the Republic of Moldova has sufficient technological capacity to launch a project to create digital platforms such as virtual incubators to incubate innovative ideas and technologies in agriculture.

At present, in the field of agriculture, the Moldova 2020 Digital Strategy envisages only the development of the following projects: Information system for real-time data transmission through web solutions and mobile telephony with components: *PACT (Early Warning and Communication Platform)* and *SIMA (Information System of Agricultural Marketing)*.

The development of digital agriculture could catalyse a radical transformation of all industries, because digital agriculture will not only change the way farmers work, but will fundamentally transform every link in the value chain in the economy.

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<sup>23</sup> IRRICAD Standalone (2019). Available at: <https://www.irricad.com/irricad-standalone/>

Digital agriculture will affect farmers' behaviour and will affect suppliers, processing companies, distribution and retail of agricultural products to consumers. Digital technologies can be applied at all levels and industries and reflect a radical shift in resource management towards optimized quality, individualized, intelligent and anticipatory, real-time, hyper-connected and data-driven governance.

Each of the technologies considered can bring tangible productions and socio-economic effects both in the presence of adequate equipment manufactured in the Republic of Moldova and abroad, as well as in the presence of the operational capabilities of agricultural enterprises.

The use of digital technologies in the agricultural sector of the Republic of Moldova requires a detailed examination.

In 2018, the Republic of Moldova ranked 139th in the world in terms of GDP (constant USD 2011 international), 124th in total exports, 121st in total imports and 77th for economic complexity according to the Economic Complexity Index (ECI)<sup>24</sup>. With a negative trade balance,

According to the statistical data, in 2018, Moldova exported goods and services worth \$ 3.4 billion and imported \$ 5.99 billion. In the top of exports were insulated wire (\$ 581 million), a product of Automotive industry, and sunflower seeds (\$ 201 million), wine (\$ 135 million), other categories of agricultural products were shipped in non-essential quantities (wheat, sugar beet), others did not cover domestic consumption needs and were imported (meat, milk). At present, the problem of accelerated import substitution cannot be solved without the introduction of innovative technologies in the country's agro-industrial complex.

The development of agriculture in the Republic of Moldova will determine the establishment of the necessary level of food security both for rural regions and for the country in general. The agro-industrial complex of the Republic of Moldova has about 3 thousand enterprises with various forms of ownership, of which over 500 companies are large and medium.

The most popular agricultural areas in the country are based on the production of:

- 1) cereals;
- 2) industrial crops;
- 3) grapes;
- 4) sugar;
- 5) dairy products.

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<sup>24</sup> Economic Complexity Index. Available at: <https://oec.world/en/profile/country/mda>

Climatic conditions and unique chernozem soils have a beneficial effect on the diversity of agricultural sectors and create favourable conditions for the cultivation of plant varieties and animal husbandry.

The main conditions for ensuring the efficient functioning of the agricultural sector:

- 1) progressive use of fertile lands;
- 2) the development of animal and crop breeding;
- 3) modernization and improvement of the processing industry.

Currently, the agriculture of the Republic of Moldova is characterized by a predominance of the cereal and industrial crops industry compared to the livestock industry - 71.32%, respectively 26.9%. The main specialization of crop production is the cultivation of cereals and fodder crops (silage, corn, green fodder), then there are technical species (sugar beet and sunflower).

In the livestock sector, predominate:

- 1) cattle breeding;
- 2) raising pigs;
- 3) sheep breeding;
- 4) poultry farming.

The rest of the industries (fish farming, horse breeding, beekeeping, rabbit breeding) have a small share in total production.

The development of the agro-industrial complex also occurs with the restoration of industries horticulture, viticulture and vegetable growing, with an increase in the cultivation area of traditional crops of the climatic zone.

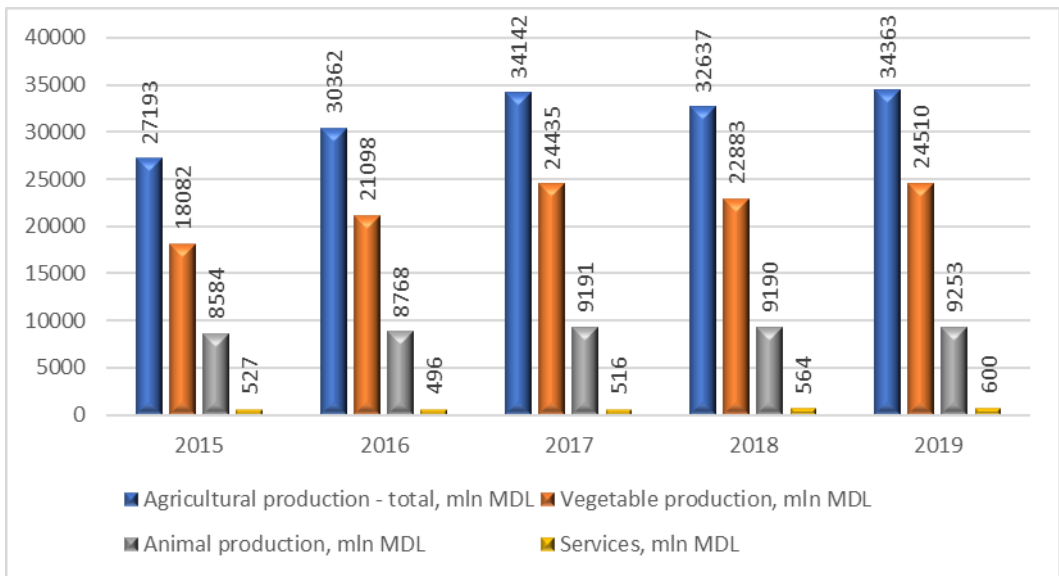
The development program of the agricultural sector, at present, must be focus on solving the following problems:

- 1) modernizing the quality management of agricultural and food products;
- 2) human resources development;
- 3) reconstruction of abandoned lands, their reorganization;
- 4) increasing soil fertility;
- 5) restoration and continuous development of irrigation areas;
- 6) raising the level of technical and technological endowment of the agricultural sector,
- 7) implementation of modern varieties, resistant to drought;
- 8) compliance with crop rotation and other basic technological requirements;
- 9) looking for new sources of financing and investments.

According to the National Bureau of Statistics, global agricultural production on branches of agriculture, in 2019 increased by 27% compared to 2015, of which the creation of vegetable origin by 35.5%, and the production of animal origin by only 7.7% (see figure 2).

The agricultural production volume on the territory of the Republic of Moldova has an increasing trend every year (the exception is 2012, characterized by a deep drought that caused the decrease of the average harvest in the main crops). The last ten years have been characterized by an increase of this indicator from MDL 19,873 million to MDL 34,363 million. The rise of the volume of agricultural production indicates a stable growth dynamics and potential. Animal production has also experienced an increasing trend, but with different dynamics and lower rates.

Currently, there is a definite trend towards expanding the volume of the agricultural output by increasing the number of farm holdings and sales revenues from production activities in the period 2015-2018 (see Figures 3, 4). That is due to the transformation of price policy and credit mechanisms, increasing budget allocations for the development of the agricultural sector.



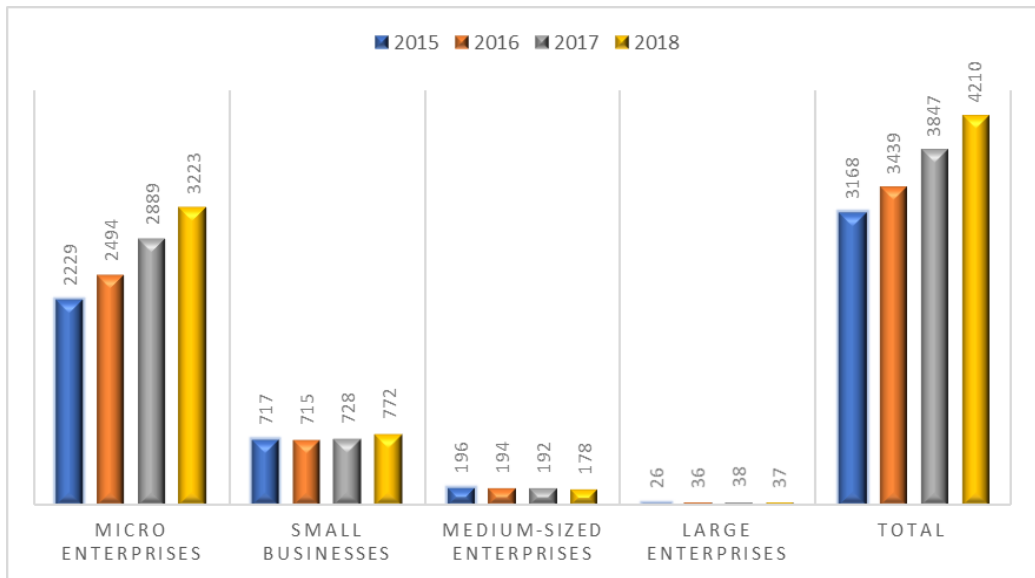
**Figure 2. Dynamics of agricultural production by branches of agriculture, million lei, 2010-2019**

*Source: Prepared by the authors according to NBS data*

According to statistical data, the number of agricultural holdings in 2018 increased by 32.89 percentage points from 3168 in 2015 to 4210 in 2018. The largest share of 76.56% of total farm holdings belongs to micro-

enterprises, and 18, respectively, 34% of small enterprises that are the primary beneficiaries and promoters of technological innovations in agriculture.

It is interesting to analyze the dynamics of the average number of staff employed in the agricultural sector in correlation with the dynamics of sales revenues. Thus, in the last 14 years, the number of employees is continuously decreasing, at the same time the increase of sales revenues in this sector denotes the fact of the gradual replacement of the labour with more efficient agricultural equipment and the automation of some production processes.



**Figure 3. Dynamics of the number of agricultural holdings by categories<sup>25</sup>**

*Source: developed by the authors based on NBS data*

The decrease of the average number of employed persons and the increase of the sales incomes realized by the agricultural exploitations, demonstrate the necessity and accessibility of the farming exploitations for the implementation and capitalization of the information technologies in their activity.

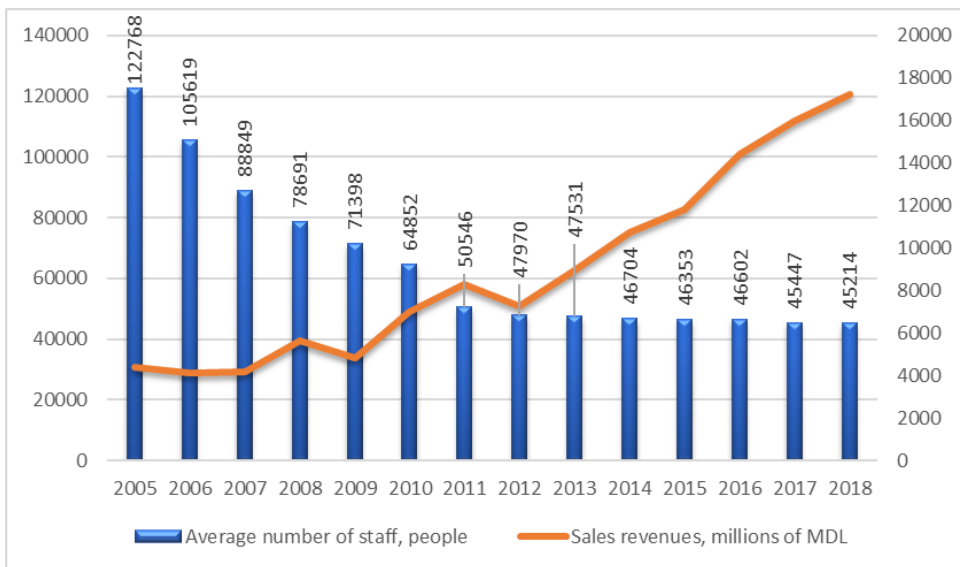
<sup>25</sup> **Note:** For statistical purposes, medium-sized agricultural holdings are enterprises that have up to 249 employees, have an annual turnover of up to 50 million MDL or have total assets of up to 50 million MDL, and are not enterprises micro or small. The small farms have up to 49 employees, have an annual turnover of up to 25 million MDL or have total assets of up to 25 million MDL and are not micro-enterprises.



The agricultural sector in the Republic of Moldova has sufficient development potential in many areas of activity. Innovative agricultural technologies reduce production costs, increase productivity and help improve product quality.

At the same time, we can highlight several needs that farmers are currently facing and some trends in local agriculture IT tools exploring:

**1. The need to optimize water consumption and attract water sources funding for the development of optimal irrigation systems and other hydraulic tools.** To analyze the condition of the soil and the time of irrigation, farmers need specific tools, such as satellite imagery, field-monitoring drones, and soil sensors. They make it possible to analyze the level of nitrogen and other nutrients in the soil, humidity and other important parameters. According to surveys in recent years, farmers have invested in optimal irrigation systems using mobile devices to monitor and control water flow and water distribution in those parts of the field where it is most needed. However, the number of such farms is minimal, and some farmers are applying these technologies on an experimental basis.



**Figure 4. Dynamics of the average number of employees (persons) and sales revenues (millions MDL) in the period 2005-2018**

*Source: Developed by authors based on NBS data*

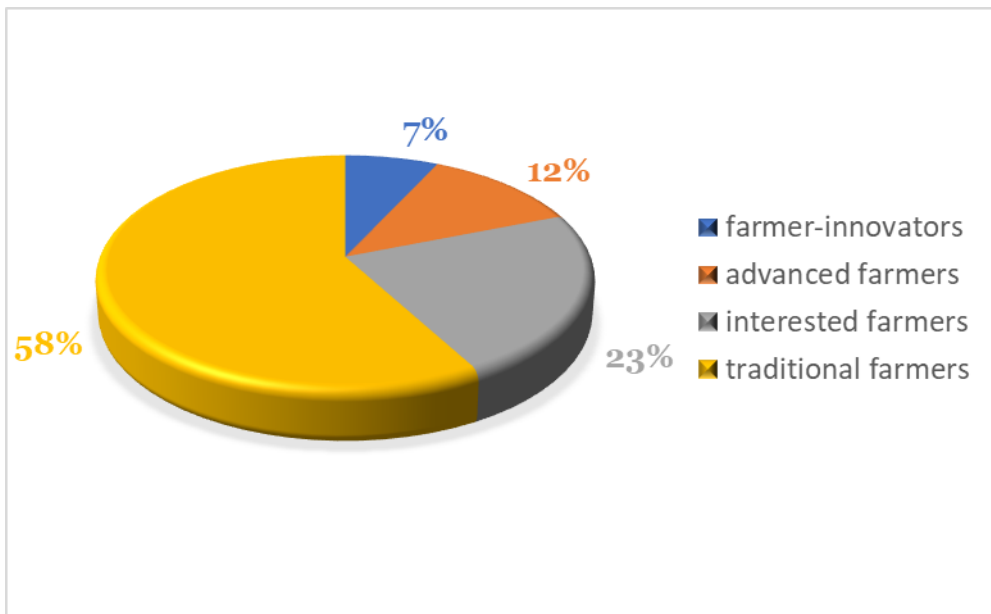
**2. The large gap between technically advanced farmers and continuing farmers to implement traditional methods of tillage and fruit collection.** The survey conducted on a sample of 233 agricultural holdings in the Republic of Moldova, for grouping farmers according to the degree of perception of the need to implement IT in their activity allowed us to identify four basic types of farmers:

- a. **innovative farmers**, who develop new innovative products to streamline the production process in agriculture, represent 7% of those interviewed;
- b. **advanced farmers** in the use of IT products, those who use modern sensors, satellite imagery and other products to increase performance in agriculture - represents 12% of the total;
- c. **farmers who are interested** in the implementation of IT in agriculture and experience some products (try to apply some IT products because they understood their usefulness) - 23%;
- d. **traditional farmers**, who give up the use of new technologies in agriculture (considers that technologies are expensive and inefficient) - their share is 58% (see Figure 5).

The gap between the four categories of farmers and the large share of traditional farmers (58%) has a negative impact and stagnates the implementation of information technologies in agriculture.

**3. Farmers lack of technical skills.** This trend complements it the previous

one. Lack of technical knowledge is more characteristic of employees in the agricultural sector than managers. In the survey, we identified that workers do not want to learn and use new technologies and are anxious that the technique will replace their work, and human resources will no longer be needed. Because of this perception, many farmers face resistance to new technologies from employees. At the same time, 72% of the interviewed farmers warned about the lack of workers versed in the use of new technologies, and mentioned the need for investments in training existing employees.



**Figure 5. Types of farmers identified by the degree of perception of digital agriculture, in %**

*Source: developed by the authors based on the survey of the sample of 233 farmers*

**4. Slowing down the introduction of new technologies in agriculture due to the lack of financial assistance and subsidies from the state for the ICT implementation.** Among the farmers interviewed, 63% mentioned the lack of financial aid and government subsidies for the application of ICT in agriculture. According to the Analytical Report on the management of financial resources allocated to the National Fund for Agriculture and Rural Development for 2018, prepared by the Agency for Payments and Interventions in Agriculture, the largest share of funding is directed to the purchase of agricultural machinery and equipment - 33.8%, which constitutes MDL 292.4 million of the total allocated financing. The repayment of interest paid by agrarian producers on accessing loans represents 25.5% or MDL 95.9 million, and for the share for stimulating investments in the establishment, modernization and deforestation of multiannual plantations corresponds to 20% or 210.2 million MDL<sup>26</sup>. Analysing the amounts requested by agricultural producers, we can see that in 2018, the most significant requests for subsidies were directed to the development of post-harvest

<sup>26</sup> Analytical report on the management of financial means allocated to the National Fund for the Development of Agriculture and Rural Environment for 2018. Available at: <http://madr.gov.md/sites/default/files/RAPORT%20ANALITIC%202018.pdf>

and processing infrastructure. The demands for the implementation of ICT in agriculture were non-essential.

At the same time, 89% of the interviewed farmers mentioned the lack of tax incentive facilities for agricultural holdings that make investments and apply digital technologies in their activity.

### **5. Slowing down the introduction of new technologies in agriculture**

**due to lack access to the WI FI network in some localities of the country.** There has been a trend for farmers to widely use high-performance sensors, drones and monitoring systems that require Internet access. According to the authors' survey, 18% of farmers surveyed rated the Wi-Fi network as "good quality", 23% called wireless network access "problematic", and 9% of farmers said that the internet is "poor quality". The other respondents rated the quality and speed of the internet as "satisfactory". If certain information is not received in time, and there are connection problems, the value of precision farming is reduced. The survey had as respondents Moldovan farmers who are active users of the 4G network.

**6. Increasing the popularity of mobile applications.** The interviewed farmers referred to diversify remote management capabilities. In our view, this is an essential step forward the digital agriculture development. Mobile apps have skills for setting and modifying technology parameters. For example, the application can change the settings of an uncrewed tractor or a garden robot without interrupting the work process. Mobile apps for parallel guidance and fertilizer and soil moisture monitoring systems are popular among advanced farmers in the use of ICT.

Therefore, the trend of intensive use of digital products is observed among farmers, creating favourable conditions for the development of intensive agriculture.

Based on the surveys, the main factor, which prevents the introduction of ICT in agricultural activities, is the lack of robotic equipment and software. Many of the Industry 4.0 products offered on the international market either require considerable financial investments or are incompatible with the conditions of activity and require qualified specialists in the field. They create difficulties in using new technologies on farms. At the same time, in the last years, the trends in agriculture, as in other sectors of activity, are the implementation of technical equipment, the use of new projects and innovative technologies that contribute to obtaining guaranteed profits.

Digital technologies in agriculture must be applied based on the strategic approach of the state, the systematic development of innovative

programs for the plant and animal breeding branch of the country's regions. The efficiency of innovations is economically proven, such as production volumes and environmental indicators. However, it is necessary to meet technical, economic, ecological and personnel criteria for the use of Industry 4.0 innovations in agriculture.

### **Conclusions**

The authors of the study described the role of digital technologies and innovations in the development of agriculture, considered the main criteria meant to increase the efficiency of production activity in this branch. The state of agriculture was studied on the example of the Republic of Moldova; the constant growth of the leading agricultural activities was identified, associated with favourable conditions, infrastructure, and state support, introduction of innovations based on obtaining an economic, industrial and environmental effect.

The use of digital technologies in agriculture in the Republic of Moldova will contribute to increasing profits, profitability by reducing and optimizing labour costs and optimal allocation of resources. The results obtained will positively affect the competitiveness of agricultural products; will increase productivity and the rational use of natural resources.

The agro-industrial and agricultural specialization of the economy of the Republic of Moldova requires not only favourable climatic conditions, but also state support for the innovative development of the industry. The positive dynamics of agricultural production volumes is ensured by the use of digital technologies related to a scientific approach to the development of agricultural crop production, precision agriculture and biologically active preparations based on nanoparticles of biogenic metals. It is necessary to develop a regional program to support small and medium-sized enterprises in the field of agricultural production and a preferential tax system of farming holdings that actively introduce digital technologies into their work.

The limits of innovation are related to the physical capacity of arable land, while maintaining the high quality of consumer products. Digital technologies are needed to create favourable working conditions and increase their efficiency, to ensure the demand for engineering and ICT specialists. That, of course, will increase the prestige of work in the agro-industrial sphere and make it possible to solve several social and economic problems.

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# A FUZZY READING OF SARACEN-CHRISTIAN INTERACTION IN BOEVE DE HAUMTONE, GUI DE WAREWIC AND ROMAN DE HORN

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**Abstract:** *Multiple works have been written on the topic of Saracen-Christian interaction in Medieval romances, while combining and commenting on the similarity between Said's theory and the hostility between two ethnic groups. For a more expanded analysis and further research on this field, current article will explore friendly occasions, shared experiences, tolerant and accepting attitude while at the same time focusing on the hostile side of the relationship as well. Because both ways will be examined, the approach of this paper is seeking a broad framework within which the descriptions of Saracens/Christians, friendships and familial affiliations will be analyzed. Three Anglo-Norman romances have been selected for this purpose, namely Boeve de Hauttone, Gui de Warewic and Roman de Horn. This paper will particularly focus on Said's Orientalism and subsequently combine his notion with the romances. However, rather than merely emphasizing the inimical tone, the aim is to communicate the fuzziness that seems to surround the romances by means of both positive and negative portrayals. The paper at hand will discuss examples from medieval texts that point to a Saracen-Christian interaction of a more complicated kind rather than entirely conflictual matters as has often been stated.*

**Keywords:** *Anglo-Norman Romances, Middle Ages, Edward Said, Orientalism, Boeve de Hauttone, Gui de Warewic, Roman de Horn.*

Different linguistic approaches have attempted to shed light on the very nature of Saracen-Christian affiliation. Romances in particular functioned as a means to which people could form an understanding of their worldviews and other cultures that seemed foreign and peculiar from their own lifestyle. Unlike other nationalities, English fiction was established from very early on, during the seventh century to be more specific, and allowed its readers to become acquainted with various kinds of knowledge, viewpoints and experiences.<sup>1</sup> It appeared in different shapes,

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<sup>1</sup> L. Ashe (ed.), *Early Fiction in England: From Geoffrey of Monmouth to Chaucer*. Penguin Books, 2015, p.1.

in different fields providing the reader with language that could engage with culture and at the same time deal with “chivalric and heraldic” ideas (Ashe 6). Furthermore, Roberta Krueger asserts that the epistemology of the word “romance” stems from “the Old French expression “mettre en romanz,” which means to translate into the vernacular French”.<sup>2</sup> She further states that the term was firstly introduced within the context of medieval court and is particularly used “to refer to the narratives of chivalric adventures” (Krueger 1). For Nathaniel Griffin, no *obvious* distinction is to be found between a *chanson de geste* and a romance, apart from small variations in both genres. The former “always precedes the romance in point of time” and the latter functions as “a continuation of the epic, differing from it only in respect to such external details of setting and background as an advancing civilization would inevitably bring in its train”.<sup>3</sup> The genre of epic has less focus on the social stratification in given societies whereas romances emphasize the importance and the complexity of social structures, though this might not be the case in all romances (52). In terms of the thematic structure of the romance, Ashe et al. stress that its “lethal chivalric violence, its glories, its moral problems, and its justifications” were the highlighted central matters.<sup>4</sup> Romances were thus a way of reflecting a family’s lineage and genealogy which then could live on as ancestral romances through centuries.<sup>5</sup>

The structural and thematic traits of *Boeve de Haumtone*, *Gui de Warewic* and *Romance de Horn* have been discussed by scholars who have tried to position these texts either within the category of romance or *chanson de geste* or still combination of both.<sup>6</sup> The fact that there is not any definite answer to the ongoing debate indicates that the romances can be read from multifarious possibilities because they are rich in their interpretations as well as extensive and far-reaching in terms of textual content (66). This particular benefit suits the approach of this research, whose purpose is to interpret the abovementioned texts from the

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<sup>2</sup> R.L. Krueger (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Medieval Romance*. Cambridge University Press, 2000, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup> N.E., Griffin, "The Definition of Romance." *Modern Language Association*, vol. 38, no. 1, 2002, p. 52.

<sup>4</sup> L. Ashe et al. (eds.), *The Exploitations of Medieval Romance*. D.S Brewer, Cambridge, 2010, p. 67.

<sup>5</sup> R.L. Krueger (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Medieval Romance*. Cambridge University Press, 2000, p. 5.

<sup>6</sup> Ashe *The Exploitations of Medieval Romance*, p. 65-66. Marianne Ailes, Judith Weiss, Laura Ashe, Sarah Kay, William Calin have all contributed to the debate of thematically, structurally and historically identifying *Boeve de Haumtone*, *Gui de Warewic* and *Roman de Horn* (Ashe et al. 66); Hulya Tafli Duzgun also mentions this (2018).

perspective of a romance genre, formed in the 10th century.<sup>7</sup> Where the heroic/chivalric actions and love in romances are the focus, the thematic interest in epics is rather “the role of the gods or the supernatural; the treatment, importance and interconnectedness of the themes of vengeance, honour and glory”.<sup>8</sup> Romances are also used as epic tales as pointed out by Ashe et al. In fact, both terms are used rather interchangeably. The romances were initially viewed to be associated with the upper classes during Medieval England. Later on, however, these became open for anyone who wanted to read about courtly ideals, chivalric battles, family ethics and love adventures partly sprinkled with individual or familial affiliations. As the antitheses of the *clericus/laicus* and *litteratus/illiteratus*<sup>9</sup> became more and more indistinct, medieval people, especially from 1170s and onwards were considered fit to read letters as long as they were showing attention to them.<sup>10</sup>

The purpose of this paper is to interpret the Anglo-Norman romances *Boeve de Haumtone*, *Gui de Warewic* and *Roman de Horn* (henceforth *Boeve*, *Gui* and *Horn*) from the perspective of a romance genre. The theme of social distinction will model the overall pattern from which the particular matter of the Saracen-Christian relationship will be analyzed. Edward Said’s theory of *Orientalism* will be utilized so as to establish a contextual background. This paper aims to illuminate both the friendly and antagonistic facets of the Saracen-Christian contact which is why abovementioned sources will be utilized in present research. Focusing on Said’s utterance about “Orient” and “Occident” being “man-made”, it becomes crucial to underscore that the Saracen-Christian interactions in *Boeve*, *Gui* and *Horn* are written constructions as well.<sup>11</sup> However, these constructions mediate a certain worldview to the audience. On this matter, Susan Crane states that literature and history should be seen in the same light as “the effort to reconnect literature to history is vital for those who believe that literary texts are social communications that played a part in the lives of their first audiences”.<sup>12</sup> The Anglo-Norman romances are extant examples of “cultural and geographical entities” where the Saracen-

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<sup>7</sup> Griffin, "The Definition of Romance", p. 69.

<sup>8</sup> K.S. Whetter, *Understanding Genre and Medieval Romance*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008, p. 52.

<sup>9</sup> These terms, which had their roots from the Roman world and which in modern terms would be translated into clergy/laymen and literate/illiterate, were defined to be of “medieval creation” (Clanchy 1993, 226-227).

<sup>10</sup> M.T. Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record*, England 1066-1307. Oxford: Blackwell, 1993, p. 227.

<sup>11</sup> E.W. Said, *Orientalism*, London: Penguin Group, 1991, p. 5.

<sup>12</sup> S. Crane, *Insular Romance: Politics, Faith, and Culture in Anglo-Norman and Middle English Literature*. London, University of California Press, 1986, p. 2.

Christian interaction expresses itself, for instance, on the battlefield, in households and during long journeys.<sup>13</sup> The Saracen-Christian relationship described in those scenes functions as “social communications” that articulate a certain perception of the audience’s as well as the composer’s view on this interaction.<sup>14</sup> This perception is argued to be both hostile, inclining towards a polemic tone against the “heathens”, but also friendly by scholars such as Hulya Duzgun, Jeffrey Cohen, Suzanne Akbari, John Tolan, Lampert-Weissig, Siobhain Bly Calkin and others. Duzgun compares *Boeve and Bevis* ultimately concluding that the depiction of the Saracen-Christian relationship should be viewed from a nuanced perspective rather than making swift, oversimplified statements about the presentation of a hostile East.<sup>15</sup> Duzgun also focuses on *chanson de geste* and middle English romance tradition, while asserting that making of national identity of the hero is structured by the Saracen-Christian enmity.<sup>16</sup> Cohen centers on the bodily racialization of the pagan “Other”, emphasizing that Saracens are described in terms of their skin color/physiology to mark the difference between the “other” and the Christians, who “did not have a race [...] because the body of the other always carried that burden on its behalf”.<sup>17</sup> Similarly, Akbari and Tolan explore the racial aspect of the Saracens. While Akbari asserts that “Middle Ages gave rise to racism itself” in connecting the Saracen’s skin color with subservience and degradation, Tolan<sup>18</sup> historically identifies the Saracen as the Muslim who, though difficult to subordinate through war, was “intellectually and socially circumscribed”.<sup>19</sup> Still further, the work of

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<sup>13</sup> Said, *Orientalism*, p. 5.

<sup>14</sup> Crane, *Insular Romance: Politics, Faith, and Culture in Anglo-Norman and Middle English Literature*, p. 2.

<sup>15</sup> H.T. Duzgun, "Paiens unt dreit? Reversed dichotomy and the East in Boeve de Haumtone and Bevis of Hampton." *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 47, 4, 2020, p. 578.

<sup>16</sup> H.T. Duzgun, "Ortaçağ İngiliz Romansı Olan Havelok The Dane'de Millî Kimlik". *Millî Folklor*, 124, 2019, p. 91.

H.T. Duzgun, *Ortaçağ Anadolu'dan İngiltere'ye: Antakya'nın Sarkisi'nde Türkler*. Ankara: Siyasal Kitabevi, 2019, p. 6.

H.T. Duzgun, 'Location and the Making of Identity in the Romance of Horn'. *Interactions*, 25(1-2), 2016, p. 89.

<sup>17</sup> J.J., Cohen, "On Saracen Enjoyment: Some Fantasies of Race in Late Medieval France and England." *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 1 January; 31 (1), 2001, p. 116.

<sup>18</sup> In this specific context, Tolan focuses on Christian writings regarding the military time period between the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries (2002, xviii).

<sup>19</sup> S.C. Akbari, *Idols in the East: European Representations of Islam and the Orient, 1100–1450*. Cornell University Press, 2009, p. 159.

J.V., Tolan, *Saracens: Islam in the Medieval European Imagination*. Columbia University Press, 2002, p. xviii.

Lampert-Weissig explores the depiction of the Saracens as opposed to the Christians, discussing medieval texts from a postcolonial and a global standpoint. In challenging the conventional understanding of Middle Ages, she feels the need for a much more contextual and intertextual approach in which the idea of *Orientalism* can, globally as well as geographically, unfold itself.<sup>20</sup> Calkin, on the other hand, is oriented towards Medieval nationalism and the particular period of the 13<sup>th</sup> and early 14<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>21</sup> Utilizing the Auchinleck manuscript, she analyzes how religion and the idea of nation mould the English identity when set up against its “religious other”.<sup>22</sup> Though crucial points are made by these scholars, there seems to be a lack of insight into the deeper and more complex nature of the Saracen-Christians relationship. This paper has therefore found it essential to conduct an extensive research to demonstrate that the interaction between Saracens and Christians is not as monolithic as usually believed. The ideas of the abovementioned scholars will function as the driving force without which the Saracen-Christian relation could not be studied to its fullest. The aim is thus to open a space for this research to address the matter of a hostile-friendly description encountered in *Boeve, Gui and Horn*. This area has therefore become of particular interest, which is why present research will contribute in developing previous ideas with even newer ones. In order to respond to the fuzzy portrayal of the Saracen-Christian relationship, Said’s notion of the Orient/Occident will be combined with the romances, as there seems to be a clear distinction of population groups in terms of race, religion and culture.

What becomes the chief focus therefore is to scrutinize the interaction between the Saracens and the Christians by means of examples specifically selected to serve the purpose of fulfilling the aim of this paper. While doing this, it is equally important to compare in what way the actions of the Saracens and Christians are described in relation to their verbal depictions within dialogues.

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<sup>20</sup> L. Lampert-Weissig, *Medieval Literature and Postcolonial Studies*. Edinburgh University Press, 2010, p. 15.

<sup>21</sup> While Calkin mainly concentrates on the 13<sup>th</sup> century England and Middle English language, her method and statements about the geographical East/West can also be applied within the scope of this

research, i.e. the context of the Anglo-Norman period.

<sup>22</sup> B.S. Calkin, *Saracens and the Making of English Identity: The Auchinleck Manuscript*. (Studies in Medieval History and Culture.) New York and London: Routledge, 2005, p. 10.

### ***Orientalism* within the context of Anglo-Norman literature**

Said argues that there is a particular discourse which “geographically, morally, culturally” distinguishes the West from the East.<sup>23</sup> This view is produced and incorporated historically through “elaborate theories, epics, novels, social descriptions, and political accounts concerning the Orient, its people, customs, “mind,” destiny, and so on” (3). Having stated that the East, and with it the Orient, is “a European invention, and had been since antiquity a place of romance, exotic beings, haunting memories and landscapes, remarkable experiences” Said goes on to divide the representation of the East into three categories whose definitions complement each other so that an overall idea of Orientalism can be drawn (1-2).

He firstly states that, *Orientalism*, by being written about in scholarly works lives up to its label as “anyone who teaches, writes about, or researches the Orient [...] is an Orientalist, and what he or she does is Orientalism” (2). The second definition is that which discriminates the East from the West by drawing lines between these two, carried out through forms of written texts whose basis stems from “ontological and epistemological distinction made between “the Orient and [...] “the Occident”” (2). The Occident is in stark contrast to the Orient, by being the non-European, those who are on the other end of this antithesis (7). This leads to Said’s third typology, particularly the execution of the Orient. This definition is interconnected with the other two explained above. In a convincing tone, Said elaborates that *Orientalism* is a “corporate institution for dealing with the Orient” where anyone who are “making statements about it, authorizing views of it, describing it, by teaching it, settling it, ruling over it” is recognized as an Orientalist (3). Moreover, it is stated to be a Western development that has a purpose of dominating the Orient by propagating knowledge about it so as to generate the European/Occident power relations (3).

Said puts forward Foucault and his notion of power when arguing about concocted images of the Orient and the impact of such representations. It was, Said asserts, advantageous for the West to represent the East in such a way as to show it incapable of speaking for itself. Having discursively shown that “subject races did not have it in them to know what was good for them” (37), it becomes the task of the Westerner/Orientalist to control and authorize the Orient by displaying how different “they” are from “them”. The binary relation appears thus unbalanced, where the West portrays the East as the weak, the inferior and the estranged “other”, in contrast to the superior, authoritarian and dominant European (40). Indeed, various other terms have been utilized

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<sup>23</sup> Said, *Orientalism*, p. 31.

to distinguish the Europeans from the non-Europeans in the East. In Balfour's and Cromer's words, the Easterner was "depraved (fallen)", "childlike" and "different" among other degrading names (40).<sup>24</sup> Yet, the "truths" made about the Orient/Occident division are merely created fantasies that has a purpose of geographically separating and governing the East. In that process, Orientalists academically justify this alienation as appropriate because after all, the East was considered "the different, the strange, the distant" (137).<sup>25</sup>

Siobhain Bly Calkin, Norman Daniel and Dorothee Melitzki are examples of few scholars who also support Said's standpoint by agreeing to the idea that there is no actual correspondence between western textual depictions of the Muslim/Orient and their situation in medieval time period. While Calkin is unable to see a connection between the written works on Muslims and the historical facts, she describes the whole issue as having "little or no resemblance" to reality.<sup>26</sup> In the same line of skepticism, Daniel also highlights the making of a "deformed image of Islam" while criticizing the way Islam, the Prophet Muhammad and Muslims are portrayed to be different from the Christian belief in his book *Islam and the West* (1960).<sup>27</sup> The Prophet and his followers were polemically described to be immoral people, who abused God and religion to decriminalize their sins:

Other religions, the preacher should say, were delivered by holy men, this one by an adulterer whose revelations justified his sins and whom no miracle confirmed. "The vileness of his religion is clear, then, as much from the vileness of the person teaching it, as from the shameful character of the things taught, and from the defect in the divine evidence [...]" (1960, 71).

Metlitzki, like Daniel, also stresses the circulation of inaccurate medieval stereotypes made about the Muslim Orient such as the religion

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<sup>24</sup> Balfour and Cromer, two powerful Englishmen, were politically and colonially involved during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century (Said 36-38).

<sup>25</sup> Cromer put into words his study of mankind and in doing so disclosed his views on the Easterner as follows: "I content myself with noting the fact that somehow or other the Oriental generally acts, speaks, and thinks in a manner exactly opposite the European" (164). Cromer's assumed "facts" are premised upon outer observation and transmitted views of the Orient. Simply by *being* "Orientals" and belonging to the race they do, the Easterner is ostensibly deemed "backward" and "divergent" (164-5).

<sup>26</sup> Calkin, *Saracens and the Making of English Identity: The Auchinleck Manuscript*, p. 1.

<sup>27</sup> N. Daniel, *Islam and the West: The Making of an Image*. The Edinburgh University Press, 1960, p. 8.

being a polytheistic one.<sup>28</sup> In like fashion, the Saracens in Anglo-Norman romances are represented in a “deformed” way and in a demeaning manner. Although this will be analyzed thoroughly in subsequent section, it is worth mentioning briefly that the Saracens are illustrated as “evil”, “vicious” and “enemies” by the Christians.<sup>29</sup> Likewise, the Saracens, in turn, depict Christians as “cruel” beings who must be fought against in the name of “Mahomet” (130-31). As the romances are written in a way that favors the Christians, following the storylines from their perspective, present paper will focus on this particular point of view to concentrate on how the narrators in each of the romances render the Saracen-Christian liaison.<sup>30</sup>

### **The Saracen-Christian relationship**

*Boeve De Haumtone*, *Gui De Warewic* and *The Romance of Horn* are romances that deal with themes such as friendship/enmity, exile/return, loyalty, family as well as chivalry and love relations. *Boeve of Hampton* was composed towards the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> century while the romance of *Gui De Warewic* is dated around 1232-42 by Alfred Ewert.<sup>31</sup> *Horn*, however, has three written versions with different titles, “one in Anglo-Norman (*the Romance of Horn*) and two in English (*King Horn* and the unfinished *Horn Childe*)” according to Judith Weiss who mentions these details in *The Encyclopedia of Medieval Literature in Britain*.<sup>32</sup> The first and oldest one in the line was believed to be written around 1170 while the latter versions were dated around 1200s and 1320s.<sup>33</sup> The story of *Boeve* was said to be “influenced by the early crusades” which in fact connotes certain images in the reader’s mind such as hostile relations and Said’s binary opposition.<sup>34</sup> However, there is a non-hostile side presented in the text, which might have been neglected by most scholars. The protagonist in

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<sup>28</sup> D. Melitzki, *The Matter of Araby in Medieval England*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977, p. 209-210.

<sup>29</sup> J. Weiss (trans.), *Boeve De Haumtone and Gui De Warewic: Two Anglo-Norman Romances*. vol. 3, Library Congress Cataloging in Publication Data, 2008, p. 84-85.

<sup>30</sup> In *Boeve*, *Gui* and *Horn* the heroic manners demonstrated by Christians, their chivalric success and the subsequent verbal insights disclose which side the protagonist and the point of view favor the most (Weiss 2008, 60; 136 and Weiss 2009, 72).

<sup>31</sup> Weiss, *Boeve De Haumtone and Gui De Warewic: Two Anglo-Norman Romances*, p. 12.

<sup>32</sup> J. Weiss (trans.), “Horn”. *The Encyclopedia of Medieval Literature in Britain, 4 Volume Set*, by Sian Echard and Robert Rouse, Wiley-Blackwell, 2017, p. 1034.

<sup>33</sup> D. Speed, “The Saracens of King Horn.” *Speculum*, vol. 65, no. 3, 1990, p. 567.

<sup>34</sup> J. Weiss (trans.), *Boeve De Haumtone and Gui De Warewic: Two Anglo-Norman Romances*. vol. 3, Library Congress Cataloging in Publication Data, 2008, p. 3.

All quotations of *Boeve* and *Gui* will be taken from Judith Weiss’ *Boeve de Haumtone and Gui de Warewic: Two Anglo-Norman Romances* (2008).



the romance represents the hero, who, as a child, ends up in a Saracen household after his mother deviously plots her husband's murder in order to marry an emperor in Germany (2). It is on this stage that Boeve first gets acquainted with people from another race and religion, more specifically, with the Saracen King Hermin and his landfolk. The friendly relations between Hermin and Boeve are highlighted in Duzgun's article by means of two examples, both of which carry significant analytical elements in terms of the Saracen-Christian interaction.<sup>35</sup> Therefore, both instances will be analyzed in order to fully grasp the depth of this relationship. The first example mentioned by Duzgun is the Saracen King's reaction to Boeve in their first encounter (569). The King instantly harbors affectionate feelings for Boeve, insisting that he convert to his creed by offering him his kingdom and with it, all that he has, namely his heir, Josiane (569). The story does not diverge from the ubiquitous crusading-theme of staying loyal to Christianity and knowing one's enemy, however, that is when observed from the surface. Despite Boeve's steadfast refusal of ever changing his religion "for all the land in heathen parts nor for your daughter", he, by deciding to stay on the "heathen land" in fact seems to have chosen his stand at the end of the story, as Duzgun also points out (578).<sup>36</sup> Hermin does not feel hurt by Boeve's offensive slurs directed against him. When Boeve says "Mahomet can't even do as much as an ant, for an ant can move and he can't. Shame on him who trusts in Mahomet!", the King replies most caringly while acknowledging Boeve's profound loyalty,

"child, [...] your heart is most constant, and since you will not honor Mahomet, you shall serve me by day with my cup at meal-times. When you come of age, I shall knight you and you shall carry my standard in battle" (32-33).

The latter part of Hermin's speech is also remarkable. Hermin, stating that Boeve will be knighted and serve his kingdom in his adulthood, seems to bear boundless love for him as he plans Boeve to be a part of his life for years to come. It is a rank of honor and praise that he bestows Boeve though he is given the position of an errand boy to begin with (Duzgun 2020, 569). This, indeed, becomes a way of keeping Boeve near him as

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<sup>35</sup> H.T. Duzgun, "Paiens unt dreit? Reversed dichotomy and the East in Boeve de Haumtone and Bevis of Hampton." *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 47, 4, 2020, p. 569.

<sup>36</sup> Duzgun states in her article that, Boeve, having chosen to live in the East indirectly contributes to the view that "the East is not portrayed as a scary, evil place as it is in other contemporary romances" (2020, 578).

“the king felt much love for Boeve the wise”.<sup>37</sup> It is relevant now to mention Duzgun’s second example where Hermin feels enforced to penalize Boeve. While Hermin’s trust in Boeve alters upon hearing rumors about him and Josiane having engaged in sexual relations, it is on personal grounds and not because of Boeve’s religious belief and background that he sends him away (38). This incident shows the opposite of what has hitherto been said about the inimical Saracen-Christian relationship and is therefore substantial to include in order to expand and challenge the common “us vs. them” discourse. Although a belligerent ambience is present in the background, it is worth fixating upon the other side of the picture as well, which, appearing at certain intervals throughout the romance, is more friendly and pleasant. Even when Boeve insults Hermin by using religion as a barrier between them, and Hermin has doubts about Boeve there still appears to be deeper feelings involved. For upon hearing these rumors, Hermin is unwilling to carry out his punishment, voicing his hesitancy and his initial disbelief to the knights who want to deceive Boeve,

“Do you think this could be true?” he said. “Yes,” said one of them, “by Mahomet my god!” “My lords,” said the king, “now what do you advise? Ever since he came to me, I’ve loved him so; if I have him killed, you can be sure I’ll feel such sorrow that I’ll soon die of it” (38).

This passage shows that Hermin’s familial feelings towards Boeve exceed matters of race and religion, for were it for these, he would not have cared to pick a lesser punishment for him. What is also noteworthy is that when hearing about the rumor, Hermin “bowed his head”, showing sign of disappointment for the person he deeply loves as well as shame and humiliation on behalf of Josiane and Boeve (38). All feelings that can only belong to a Christian man of honor and which are also attributed to the character of the Occident.

Up to now, the positive side of the Saracen-Christian relationship has been presented from *Boeve*, yet, there is also a side to this where Said’s view of the Orient/Occident can, to some extent, be confirmed. The very same example above is contradicting in a way that it both portrays the Saracen King admitting his love to Boeve, but at the same time, the other Saracen knights appear to falsely swear upon their God when trying to set up Boeve. This episode strengthens the stereotype of the foreign other being unreliable in his words. In a picturesque example conveyed by then British archaeologist T.E. Lawrence, the Orientals “were as unstable as water”, “their mind was strange and dark full of depressions and

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<sup>37</sup> Weiss, *Boeve De Haumtone and Gui De Warewic: Two Anglo-Norman Romances*, p. 8, 33.

exaltations, lacking in rule”.<sup>38</sup> Evelyn Baring (Earl of Cromer) also purported to this when attempting to rationalize the mind of the Orient, “his reasoning is of the most slipshod description” which is why “subject races did not have it in them to know what was good for them”.<sup>39</sup> As there is an ambiguous feature involved in *Boeve* and *Gui*, it becomes necessary to look at the wavering representations of Saracens and Christians through the negative and positive depictions and lastly compare both to *Horn*. The haphazard way of presenting the Saracens and Christians in Anglo-Norman romances is thus remarkable in the following example, where there seems to be a mismatch in Hermin’s words and actions. He appears not to bear boundless affection for his beloved Boeve after all. Although he expresses his feelings and goes for a lesser punishment, he still believes the rumours about Boeve in the first instance and agrees to deceive him. Right after Hermin decides to execute the punishment, he calls upon Boeve and makes him solemnly swear on his faith to bring a letter to King Bradmund in which his downfall is declared. He is by all means forbidden to read the letter and hence expected to blindly trust Hermin. Unaware of Hermin’s sneaky deceit, Boeve expresses his utmost devotion when uttering “I’m at your command!” firstly upon hearing his task and secondly again after Hermin denies him his “speedy horse” and his “fine, sharp sword Murgleie”.<sup>40</sup> Hence, a discrepancy between Hermin’s scepticism and Boeve’s undeterred commitment is visible at this scene. For whatever reason Hermin’s actions are led, they ultimately turn out to be deceitful, distrusting and dishonest in contrast to Boeve’s decent behaviour.

Other examples of Saracens portrayed negatively in *Boeve* and *Gui* are expressed through corporeal descriptions of Saracen giants. In *Boeve*, the hero encounters the giant Escopart and calls him out to introduce himself while mocking him: “Pagan,” said Boeve, “you look very ugly: is everyone in your land so large and terrifying?” (59). Apart from this verbal exclamation from Boeve’s part, the narrator also describes Escopart as a

churl who was certainly nine feet tall [...] the space between his eyes was a foot wide, his forehead was as large as an elephant’s buttocks, his skin was blacker than ink, his nose was misshapen and knobbly in front, his legs too were long and thick, and his feet long and flat. He was a hideous fellow [...] when he spoke, he barked as horribly as if he were a vile baying hound (58).

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<sup>38</sup> T.E. Lawrence, *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*. Wordsworth Editions Limited, 1997, p. 26.

<sup>39</sup> E. Baring, *Orientalism: Early Sources, Modern Egypt Part 2*. Vol. VI, Macmillan and Co., 1908, p. 146.

<sup>40</sup> Weiss, *Boeve De Haumtone and Gui De Warewic: Two Anglo-Norman Romances*, p. 39.

Cohen explicates the very role of giants in medieval romances to function as “laughable”, and their existence to be for the sole pleasure of the Christian.<sup>41</sup> Just like the description above, the giant figures as comical, unnatural and inherently different from the Christian. The “smashing of the Saracen’s flesh” and their humoristic conduct do not infuse sympathy nor leave any room to “humanize the enemy” (127). On the contrary, their exaggerated and disfigured bodies were linked to otherness and posed a threat to the Christian belief (119). The fact that Escopart later converts to Christianity, then betrays Boeve and reverts back to being a pagan also indicates what has been earlier stated about Saracens; that their words and conduct are not to be trusted. It was a common theme to include giants in “twelfth century rhetoric” as a “symbol of the perversion and terrifying power of heresy”.<sup>42</sup> In fact, Ashe et al. draw parallels between giants and biblical tales, particularly from 1 Samuel 17 where the giant Goliath is successfully defeated by David through divine aid of God. Just before David kills Goliath, he predicts his victory beforehand and expresses this to him and the audience in order to prove that there is “a God in Israel” whom all ought to believe in:

This day the Lord will deliver you into my hand, and I will strike you down and cut off your head. And I will give the dead bodies of the host of the Philistines this day to the birds of the air and to the wild beasts of the earth, that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel,/All those gathered here will know that it is not by sword or spear that the Lord saves; for the battle is the Lord’s, and he will give all of you into our hands.<sup>43</sup>

The underlined message from this narrative is thus to show “the significance of victory over the giant as a vindication of the Christian faith” and that salvation is either to be found in “conversion or death”.<sup>44</sup> This is also the case with Escopart who is half-convinced by Josiane to become christened, and with Boeve’s words “I’ll cut off his head with my steel sword unless he agrees to what you [Josiane] say”, he eventually gives in roaring “Boeve, don’t kill me, I want to be a Christian” (Weiss 60)<sup>45</sup>. As to

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<sup>41</sup> Cohen, “On Saracen Enjoyment: Some Fantasies of Race in Late Medieval France and England.” p. 127.

<sup>42</sup> Ashe, *The Exploitations of Medieval Romance*, p. 102.

<sup>43</sup> *New International Version*. [Colorado Springs]: Biblica. *BibleGateway.com*. 2011, Sam. 17. p. 46-47.

<sup>44</sup> Ashe, *The Exploitations of Medieval Romance*, p. 103.

<sup>45</sup> Weiss, *Boeve De Haumtone and Gui De Warewic: Two Anglo-Norman Romances*, p. 60.

the bodily descriptions of the giant, Cohen further argues that “race was a plastic category of identity” in late medieval writings:<sup>46</sup>

Like monsters, racist representations inevitably conjoin desire and disgust. The Saracens were no exception. The extended visualizations of “lusty, black-skinned people” in the *Chanson de Roland*, for example, brought “the darkness of Africa” queerly close to Christianity, a temptation within a threat (119-120).

In that respect, Escopart becomes an embodiment of all that is vicious and wicked. His ink-black body alone endangers pure and good qualities of “God’s” true people (Weiss 35).<sup>47</sup> The grotesque Saracen body expressed through the giant is thus portrayed in such a way as if there is no other choice but to kill it for it is a source of disruption, a danger to human life. However, the fuzziness again appears because not all Saracens are expressed in the gruesome way the giant is. This is noted by Jennifer Fellows and Ivana Djordjević, who state that, apart from two other cases in *Boeve*, namely the descriptions of Rudefoun and Bradmund’s brother, “almost no one’s skin colour or facial features are worthy of mention except Escopart’s”.<sup>48</sup> Still, the giant’s body as an imminent threat is also found in *Gui*. The giant, Amorant, is described in physical terms while his blackness is figuratively associated to malevolence and geographically to Africa:

He had come from Ethiopia and was large, ugly, terrifying; he was blacker than a firebrand and his look was like a dragon’s [...] When Gui saw the Saracen, who was so big and strong, “Heavenly God!” he said. “That’s not a man, that’s a devil” (185-189).

Additionally, the giant’s appearance being equally horrific as his personality is emphasized in the romance as well. During the battle, Amorant asks for Gui’s mercy to drink water which he grants him with the condition of him returning the favour, but when Gui asks for the same a little later the giant breaks his promise and is deemed an untrustworthy traitor (194):

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<sup>46</sup> Cohen, “On Saracen Enjoyment: Some Fantasies of Race in Late Medieval France and England.” p. 115.

<sup>47</sup> Similar to the representation of giants, children and women are portrayed in a difference sense in medieval tradition. For further information, see Tafli Duzgun’s *Sheela Na Gig* chapter (2015), *Le Bone Florence of Rome* (2017) and her *Unnatural Children* article (2015).

<sup>48</sup> Weiss, *Boeve De Haumtone and Gui De Warewic: Two Anglo-Norman Romances*, p. 147.

“In God’s name, Amorant! [...] wait now until I’ve drunk and recovered my strength; then we shall fight each other [...]” “be quiet, fellow!” said Amorant. “Even for this city filled with pure gold, I won’t keep my promise to you now lest I fail to destroy King Triamor” (193).

In that way, Amorant’s physical image lives up to his wicked personality and reinforces the negative assumptions made about the Saracens. Weiss mentions that *Horn* also contains black men coming from Africa while bringing evil with them from afar.<sup>49</sup> There are thus negative images in the portrayal of Saracen-Christian interaction as well, which scholars have tried to highlight. Siobhain Bly Calkin for one has stated in agreement with Said that

The Muslims depicted in medieval western texts, then, constitute no act of mimesis but are rather wholly fictional figures. They are Orientalist constructs, representations of the East produced in the West for western consumption that enshrine western ideas of easternness rather than any empirical reality of the East.<sup>50</sup>

Though above statement contains a truth that this research has attempted to pinpoint, there is a fuzziness that lies in between negative and positive descriptions of the Saracen-Christian interaction. The mentioned episodes contain conflicting ideas in terms of the verbal descriptions made by the Christians and their actions towards the Saracens. Boeve’s verbal insults against Escopart is not in harmony with, for instance, a scene where high tolerance is shown between two different faiths. In the latter scene, both Boeve and the Saracen Yvori pray for their own gods before entering into war with one another: “Boeve invoked God, who does not lie; Yvori invoked Mahomet and Apollo. Then they mounted their glossy horses and struck each other great blows on their Persian shields”.<sup>51</sup> This openness is also found in *Gui*, though differently. Much alike Yvori and Boeve, Gui and Amorant also pray for their gods before the fight but instead of a peaceful and accepting attitude, Gui ridicules the other’s belief after being provoked by the comment “May Mahomet always be your help!”, upon which Gui replies “May the Son of Mary give me strength and help, for Mahomet isn’t worth a straw, nor is his strength worth a shell” (188). Once again, there appears to be a narrative clash between verbal expressions and conduct, for just before the fight, Gui and

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<sup>49</sup> J. Weiss (trans.), *The Birth of Romance in England: Four Twelfth-Century Romances in the French of England*. Tempe: ACMRS, 2009, p. 69.

<sup>50</sup> Calkin, *Saracens and the Making of English Identity: The Auchinleck Manuscript*, p. 1.

<sup>51</sup> J. Weiss (trans.), *Boeve De Haumtone and Gui De Warewic: Two Anglo-Norman Romances*. vol. 3, Library Congress Cataloging in Publication Data, 2008, p. 90.

the Saracen King Triamor interacts in a friendly manner. Gui introduces himself as an Englishman, which is met with a non-hostile approach by the King. With the mere expression “I ought to hate you”, the King, after kindly asking him if he wants to fight or not, finalizes a friendly agreement with Gui (188). King Triamor addresses Gui as a “friend” and subsequently inquires “will you fight for me? Or I shall look for another. Tell me: will you fight for me?” (188). When Gui defeats Amorant, the King also verbalizes his friendly attitude by way of praising Gui and respecting his religion: “I want to pay you great honour: I give you the third part of my land. I don’t want to abjure your faith, for you are a good man and a true believer” (195). As shown, *Boeve* and *Gui* consist of verbal exchange and actions between Saracens and Christians that are both hostile and friendly. In *Boeve*, the insults are not in accordance with the actions while in *Gui* the opposite is detected.

The friendly aspect is not a dominant theme in the earlier version of *The Romance of Horn*. In fact, *King Horn* contains an obscure definition of who the enemy exactly is. In contrast to this, Speed studies the combative language in her article, emphasizing that *The Romance of Horn* is more polemic-oriented with the Saracens in the text being overtly described to be of Islamic origin.<sup>52</sup> This particular point of view contributes to the strengthening of Said’s binary opposition and the existing pattern of evil Saracens and good Christians. Speed distinguishes between *King Horn* and *The Romance of Horn* by attaching great importance on the definition of the word “Saracen” as the slightest change of meaning can lead to a different Saracen-Christian understanding:

In *King Horn* [...] there is no such explicit information about the homeland of the Saracens, which is referred to only in general term *paynyme* ‘pagandom’ [...] *Sarazin* in *King Horn*, it appears, might as easily mean “pagan” or “Muslim” as “Dane” [...] Of the other two early versions of the Horn story, one features Saracens as the invaders, the other does not (567).

As evidenced by Speed, the two versions of *Horn* differ in their understanding of the invader. *The Romance of Horn* is much clearer in its way of describing the Saracens, “here the invaders are called Saracens, and they come explicitly from Islamic regions: collectively, from Africa” (567). Though the Saracens are visibly defined to believe in “Mahomet” and are from Africa, there is one exception in *Gui* that is similar to the definition of ‘Sarazin’ in *King Horn*. This exception appears in the word form ‘Sedne’ in the context of the “wicked” King Anelaf who had brought a “Saracen”

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<sup>52</sup> Speed, “The Saracens of King Horn.” p. 593.

(‘Sedne’) with him named Colebrant.<sup>53</sup> Colebrant, people believed, was from Africa, “hideous, large, and strong and powerful” (218). ‘Sedne’ is also explained by Ashe et al., “only Colebrant is a ‘Sedne’, a variant of the more common spelling ‘Sesne’, used elsewhere in the poem to refer unequivocally to Saxons”.<sup>54</sup> It is further argued that the enemies, whether Saxon or Eastern, were often referred to as Saracens and that “there is a precedent not only for calling invading Danes Saracens but for insisting on their African origin too” (34). As the geographical area of the Saxons is discordant with Africa, Weiss believes that the term ‘Sedne’ points to Saracens rather than Saxons (34). It would be wrong to state that a Saracen/Sedne without question is referring to people whose roots are Eastern. The contextual definition of Saracens blurs the understanding of the enemy even more, and contributes to the fuzziness which has been hitherto analyzed. The composers of the mentioned romances had an idea of “external foes” that should fit a certain belief, mainly influenced by a historical background of power structures and opposing forces.<sup>55</sup> They were thus linked to Africa (like Colebrant), though the geographical area states otherwise as in the case of King Anelaf. This rather confusing aspect ought therefore to be taken into consideration when participating to the discussion of Saracen-Christian interaction in Anglo-Norman texts.

In the context of *Horn*, the narrative is permeated with battles and religious tension. The theme of vengeance overshadows and darkens every possibility that could potentially be formed into friendly interactions. One sees the world through the eyes of the hero, Horn, who cannot identify the Saracen other than the evil, wicked being he is, due to the traumatic experience of his father’s murder and the painful aftermath of being suddenly wrested from his familiar surroundings. In *Boeve* and *Gui*, there are scenes where Saracens are spared their lives or shown mercy, for example with Escopart’s conversion or when Amorant is permitted to drink water. *Horn*, however, does not leave room for friendly occasions to evolve. In one example, when the hero is fighting a Saracen (Marmorin), he “did not spare him, did not treat him like a kinsman, but cut off his head in front of his clan”.<sup>56</sup> This type of narrative setup reinforces Said’s picture of the Orient as opposed to the Occident. Nonetheless, just as there are romances that seem wholly antagonistic, romances like *Boeve* and *Gui* include literary elements that require the reader to look at the Saracen-

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<sup>53</sup> Weiss, *Boeve De Haumtone and Gui De Warewic: Two Anglo-Norman Romances*, p. 217.

<sup>54</sup> Ashe, *The Exploitations of Medieval Romance*, p. 34.

<sup>55</sup> Speed, “The Saracens of King Horn.” p. 593, 576, 577.

<sup>56</sup> J. Weiss (trans.), *The Birth of Romance in England: Four Twelfth-Century Romances in the French of England*. Tempe: ACMRS, 2009, p. 72.



Christian relationship from a nuanced viewpoint with a perspective which is more friendly and open.

In conclusion, there is an ambiguity that embodies the Saracen-Christian interaction and which this paper has attempted to voice. Said's binary opposition can indeed be applied in the contexts of the analyzed romances and it can also be said that "White skin is, in some medieval texts, not simply a conventional marker of beauty [...] but also [...] a provocative formulation, 'the color of salvation'" as Lampert-Weissig puts it.<sup>57</sup> Additionally, a racial and moral distinction is made between the Saracen and the Christian which is also written about in numerous texts and which again validates Said's dichotomy. However, this paper has attempted to augment the Saidian approach by showing another side that is to be found in Anglo-Norman romances and that demands further study. It appears, from mentioned scholarly works, that there is a tendency to concentrate on the inimical tone, and rightly so, since literary evidence of it can be extracted from *Boeve*, *Gui* and *Horn*. For that reason, the receptive episodes in these romances ought not be overlooked but properly scrutinized in a way that can offer new ideas to the debate of Saracen-Christian interaction. Stating that the Saracen-Christian interaction is simply built on dualities such as strong/weak, good/evil, Saracen/Christian or saved/damned, is to be blind to the deeper and more abstract side of this relationship. Indeed, there are non-hostile scenes in which feelings such as trust and affection are revealed. Therefore, it becomes adequate to identify the interaction to be somewhat fuzzy.

This paper, however, has sought to verbalize the yet under-explored Saracen-Christian interaction by showing another side within and beyond a polemic image. Returning to Susan Crane's notion of romances functioning as "social communications", all three romances are medium for how Saracens and Christians were understood at the time they were crafted.<sup>58</sup> Rather than reflecting in black-and-white terms, this perception eventually begs for an expanded view that current research has endeavoured to support through the concept of fuzziness. Though scholars such as Duzgun, Fellows and Djordjević have initiated to open up the conversation of another East/West relation, more work on this field seem necessary for the purpose of a rewarding dialogue to the subject of the Saracen-Christian interaction.

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<sup>57</sup> Lampert-Weissig, *Medieval Literature and Postcolonial Studies*, p. 73.

<sup>58</sup> Crane, *Insular Romance: Politics, Faith, and Culture in Anglo-Norman and Middle English Literature*, p. 2.

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# BOUNDARIES OF THE BODY POLITICS IN MEDIEVAL HAGIOGRAPHICAL ROMANCE

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**Abstract:** *The boundaries addressed in Medieval England are of various kinds. They include not only the socio-cultural, political and geographical frontiers that romance of medieval England imagine and imply, but also demarcations of metaphors, such as the boundary between factuality and fictionality; boundaries between different genres of literature; and boundaries between different kinds of experience such as magic, miracles, supernatural and divine. Particularly tangible manifestations of divine favour abound in the romances of medieval England. In this sense, *La Estoire de Seint Aedward le rei* is an intensely body-conscious text, and this paper looks into the boundaries of the king's body and the body politics in this hagiographical romance. The aim of this paper is to explore how the boundaries of Edward will be reshaped and how each Edward is erased in turn to make a room for the next Edward, where both the manuscript and his body are re-inscribed with a new agenda.*

**Keywords:** *Medieval, Literature, England, Boundaries, Hagiography, Romance*

The boundaries addressed in Medieval England are of various kinds. They include not only the socio-cultural, political and geographical frontiers that romance of medieval England imagine and imply, but also demarcations of metaphors, such as the boundary between factuality and fictionality; boundaries between different genres of literature; and boundaries between different kinds of experience such as magic, miracles, supernatural and divine. Particularly tangible manifestations of divine favour abound in the romances of medieval England. In other words, Saints' lives are concerned in distinctive ways with the body, as it is expected in a genre so largely founded in the martyrs' imitation of Christ's passion. In this sense, *La Estoire de Seint Aedward le rei* (henceforth *seint Aedward*) is an intensely body-conscious text, and this paper looks into

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the boundaries of the king's body and the body politics in this hagiographical romance.

*Seint Aedward* survives in Cambridge University Library MS Ee.3.59 and it is an intensely body-conscious text. It is an ideological project to construct several kinds of stable body; the text works on and through Edward's body, using the material body to figure the body politic, and when the material body expires, it is assimilated into the more powerful body of the church. Paris's ideological project is itself a creation of a textual corpus, rewritten from a canon of previously Edward *Lives*, and selectively inscribes his own chosen ideologies onto the body of the king. He is a textual body that figures as a site of struggle, differentiation, and appropriation, as a virgin, Saint, and palimpsest respectively. As a politicized discursive nexus, the body functions as a kind of inscriptive surface. This is everywhere evident in the nexus of body material and body politic, manipulating Edward into a palimpsest- rewritten for the fifth time since his demise, and even retold three times in distinct narrative strands of Paris's *Seint Aedward*: the textual body, the rubric, and the illustrations.

The details incorporated in each of Edward *Lives* are not ecumenical in nature but adapted according to contemporary concerns. The first, the eleventh century *Vita Aedwardi Regis*, is an encomium of the Godwins; both the *Vita Beati Eadwardi* and *Vita Sancti Edwardi* on the following century, were engaged in promoting Westminster through Edward's canonization, while the nun of Barking's *La vie d'Edouard* depicts a king endowed with 'court spirituality'.<sup>1</sup> The visual and textual expression of Edward varies from the old, frail and very quickly dead figure in the Bayeux tapestry, to the depiction of a king with a fiery temperament and a love of hunting in the first anonymous *Vita Aedwardi Regis*, before morphing into a man imbued with a growing spirituality from Osbert of Clare's *Vita*, through to Aelred's, to the Barking *Vie* and Paris' *Seint Aedward*.

As Fenster and Wogan-Browne comment, both Osbert and Aelred 'participated in a form of learned, institutional *fama*-making *fama sanctitatis* that is, they engaged in writing holiness on the body. Intensifying this Paris transformed and translated Aelred's corpus by being particularly preoccupied with bodily wholeness. Edward is a focus of mystical and miraculous kingship, which is constructed as a saintly parallel and a guarantee of the rule of King Henry III. The king was particularly interested in the visual portrayal of the monarch as a figure

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<sup>1</sup> Jocelyn Wogan-Browne and Thelma S. Fenster (trans.), *The History of Saint Edward the King*, Tempe, Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2008, p.22.

evident in the stained glass windows of his Great Halls. However, it was Edward who represented an enduring royal presence to Henry. He commissioned, for example, the scene of the ring episode depicted in the *Seint Aedward* for the splays opposite his bed in the Painted Chamber at Westminster, the coronation of Edward behind the bed.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, Edward's picture was painted on his thrones, and Henry wore Edward's regalia at his coronation. It is apparent that Henry III's kingship was promoted in the figure of Edward. In the shadow of Edward, the king was around him to understand about his own kingship. Taking *Seint Aedward* into account, the King fed many people mirroring the episode of Edward's ring. The state of the King's body and the body politic are linked here. The king's patronage in Westminster and elsewhere of art celebrating his unity with his peers, and a unified body politic, is refigured by Matthew Paris in Edward's words: 'You, Lords and you, the people, who are the crown and the kingdom, if you stand together (as one body) every one of your neighbours will fear to do you harm'.<sup>3</sup> In spite of his personal preference not to marry, he recognizes his people's requests as legitimate. 'He wants to reward his men, because a king does not have his men completely when he does not have the hearts of his people'.<sup>4</sup> Matthew Paris is clear in his *Seint Aedward* that 'God and his saints have one common will'. 'He is the head of his saints and ours, and he wants what his apostles want'.<sup>5</sup> After becoming king, the link between the monarch's body and the state is made explicit as 'they prayed to God to protect their rightful Lord Edward for a long time. The taste of the country good then'.<sup>6</sup> Matthew Paris, at this point, tries to forge a unity between a body-material, politic and textual. The prophesy (tree image) of Henry makes it clear that when the regal line is legitimate, the tree is furnished with branches, flowers and fruit, and embellishes with leaves and greenery. Matthew Paris appears to mould Henry III as the fulfillment of Edward's death-bed image that one of his descendants would unify the kingdom.

This notion of Henry's pre-natal election is prefigured by Paris in his depiction of the English people calling for Edward 'as was said on Palm Sunday to the son of Mary. He was chosen king before he was born and called the blessed king'.<sup>7</sup> By depicting Jesus, Edward and Henry III, Paris uses the void left by Edward's absence of children to imply that Henry III

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<sup>2</sup> Paul Binski, *The Painted Chamber at Westminster*, London, Society of Antiquaries of London, 1986, p. 36.

<sup>3</sup> Wogan-Browne, and Fenster, *The History of Saint Edward the King*, 2008, p. 114.

<sup>4</sup> Wogan-Browne, and Fenster, *The History of Saint Edward the King*, 2008, p. 108.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid*, p. 115.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid*, p. 103.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid*, p. 103.

is metaphorical son of Edward: 'Jesus, I have no father, but you'.<sup>8</sup> In other words, Paris embodies the idea of the flesh and blood of Christ in the Eucharist as the mingling of the human substance of man with the divinity of Christ. When Edward witnesses the raising of the host as the infant body of Christ himself. In the text, it has also been noted that Edward returns from the dead, and when he dies again, it is 'pure and whole and virginal in body'.<sup>9</sup> This preoccupation with the integrity of the king's body and the concern that it be free from decay is most palpable in the closing section of the *Seint Aedward*, describing Edward's uncorrupted corpse: 'The cloth in which Edward's body was wrapped was found whole and unfaded. They handled his head, his hands, his chest, and folded his hands as on a sleeping living body'.<sup>10</sup> The fragmentation of relics and body does after all enable maximum participation in a Saint's cult, as Wogan-Browne states 'virgin bodies produce identity, treasure, territory, and revenue in an endlessly fecund process of dissemination and translation'.<sup>11</sup> Participation in a Saint's cult involves collecting, kissing, touching or wearing relic-pieces, and thus each fragment must be understood as signifying or even transmitting the power of originary wholeness. Wogan-Browne asserts that 'wholeness, not dismemberment is the crucial desire of Saints' lives'.<sup>12</sup>

The emphasized wholeness is in keeping with the virginity of this childless king, symbolic of his corporeal integrity, and representative in turn of the integrity of the kingdom. The bishop's guardianship of Edward's body confers guardianship of his church. The church is protected as the king's whole body: 'If anyone should undertake to prevent, take away, sell, or in any way disturb, damage, worsen, or destroy [the church's] freedom...they may have no place among the elect'.<sup>13</sup> Indeed, the king's body is closely associated with the church bodies, especially that of Westminster, which looms over the text evoking 'the medieval metaphoric association between 'body' and 'building' as containers or vessels' breeding 'a polyvalent and shifting use of both concepts'.<sup>14</sup> The repetitive motif of empty vessels being filled figures the king's body as a container: 'the holy spirit filled him with joy', he was 'filled with compassion, gentleness and humility' and 'he was so filled with the wisdom of the celestial'.<sup>15</sup> In turn, when Edward fears bodily harm and maim during exile, 'he put his hope in

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid, p. 101.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid, p. 159.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid, p. 172.

<sup>11</sup> Wogan-Browne, Jocelyn and Thelma S. Fenster, *Saints' Lives and Women's Literary Culture*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2001, p. 68.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid, p. 68.

<sup>13</sup> Wogan-Browne, and Fenster, *The History of Saint Edward the King*, 2008, p. 132.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid, p. 44.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid, pp. 101, 107, 144.

God. He went into a church'.<sup>16</sup> As a fragile virginal body, Edward must be safely enclosed, and Westminster effectively becomes Edward's anchor hold. Enclosure images pervade virgin narratives, manifested most evidently in the figure of the recluse in her anchor hold, and indeed, as an open grave was kept in the corner of anchoritic cells, so Edward and Henry III made room for their tombs in Westminster.<sup>17</sup>

Edward 'instructed that his body be placed in a sepulcher in the church', and in the same passage the sheer strength and power of Westminster is emphasized – the 'great hewn stones', the 'wide and deep foundation' that is 'very hard and strong' from 'good and faithful craftsmanship' – in contrast to his fragile vessel.<sup>18</sup> As Edward is eventually struck by fever and his material body becomes enfeebled, he simultaneously 'enriched the church and adorned it', as his new container.<sup>19</sup> Likewise, as Binski puts it 'in 1245 the new church was planned in such a way as to retain the position of the high altar and to expand the plain of the apse yet further eastward in order to create an autonomous shrine space.'<sup>20</sup> Seemingly planned as a royal mausoleum, Binski recalls that Paris writes in St Peter as offering to make Westminster 'his frequent resort to open the gate of heaven, so privileging it as a burial place.'<sup>21</sup> Locating one's resting place so exactly is to cause a fixation on the body in death. *Memento mori* prepared the spectator for death by stimulating the imagination into active contemplation, it 'remembered' the future. Similarly, exhuming bodies for translation, also engages in translating the body into life-like *memento mori*, and Edward's body in the closing passage of the *Seint Aedward* becomes a memento of wholeness from holiness.

Edward's miracles that proceed from his body in the form of restoring bodily completeness proceed from this site precisely because it is virginal. This originary wholeness is emphasized by what Baswell calls the 'marvelous unstable bodies', the 'othered subjects [that] define bodily

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid, p. 107.

<sup>17</sup> In *De Institutis Inclusarum* Aelred refers to the virgin and his sayings may be applied to Edward here. For further information see, Huntington in *Medieval Virginites*, 2003, p. 128. Also, for further information on anchoritic cells, see Jocelyn Wogan-Browne, *Saints' Lives and the Literary Culture of Women, c. 1150-c. 1300: Virginites and its Authorizations*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2001, p. 28.

<sup>18</sup> Wogan-Browne, and Fenster, *The History of Saint Edward the King*, 2008, p. 129.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid, p. 154.

<sup>20</sup> Paul Binski, *Westminster Abbey and the Plantagenets: Kingship and the Representation of Power*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1995, p. 90.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid, p. 91.



integrity by their radical alterity'.<sup>22</sup> The power of an enduring body-both Edward and his church- is its intense embodiment of foundation, legitimacy, continuity and its ability to confer and defend identity. As Wogan-Browne states of Saints' lives in general, 'Inviolable and continuous identities are underlined not only in their lives, but even more importantly in their post-mortem careers'. Baswell has already noted the symmetry evident in the order and type of cure enacted pre and post death.<sup>23</sup> Likewise Fenster and Wogan-Browne have stated that achieving this by leaving out many of the posthumous miracles in his source Aelred's *Vita*, Paris purposefully creates symmetry to force into relief the difference in power between bodily presence before death, with the power of the new body in death.<sup>24</sup>

In enacting his first miracle on the body of the Irish cripple Michel, the cure will only be effective if king Edward himself 'deigns to carry [him] on his own shoulders to the church'.<sup>25</sup> The requirement of the king's body in the equation lessens by the end of his life as he heals the last four blind men by association. A servant needs only the king's water to invoke his name to cure the men, for the king's power has grown, as conveyed by 'word spread to countries far away'.<sup>26</sup> Near to death, he is like the spiritual *imitatio Christi* and he becomes a more powerful body in death as a cripple and seven blind men from further a field are cured at the site of his tomb, before he both cures Harold's gout and he afflicts him with the arrow through the eye, far from the site of his body. As Paris puts it 'A man's body may be buried but its power cannot be hidden. The body of a virgin cannot be corrupted in death'.<sup>27</sup> Interred within Westminster, he has effectively become one with Christ's body, since within the shifts of 'metaphoric associations between 'body' and 'building' as containers or vessels, the church could be thought of as 'analogous to Christ's own body' and in turn 'to the body of a man who lived similarly, in *imitatio Christi*. Edward's body is figured as contained and protected by this living, incorrupt body enabling Paris to assert in the rather aggressive exhortation closing the poem, that Henry III 'must' look after this 'house of kings'<sup>28</sup>.

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<sup>22</sup> Christopher Baswell, 'King Edward and the Cripple' in *Chaucer and the Challenges of Medievalism: Studies in Honour of H.A. Kelly*, (Donka Minkova and Teresa Tinkle, eds.), Frankfurt, P. Lang, 2003, p. 28.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid, p. 27.

<sup>24</sup> Wogan-Browne, and Fenster, *The History of Saint Edward the King*, 2008, p. (68)

<sup>25</sup> Ibid, p.123.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid, p.144.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid, 160.

<sup>28</sup> Wogan-Browne, and Fenster, *The History of Saint Edward the King*, 2008, p. 172.

It has been generally stated that Edward seems the least bodied presence of the text, seemingly reinforced by his representation in the illustrations, 'sitting or lying down on about thirty occasions – only once discomposing himself physically on the occasion of carrying Michel'.<sup>29</sup> He is, however, not quite as 'sedate' as Binski states, embodying as he does a different sense of mobile in the episodic rhythm of prayer, vision, cure and prophesy.<sup>30</sup> It may be a gentle amble, but it is none the less movement, and significant movement at that, from corruptible mortality to sanctity, from unruly bodies made stable. If the figure of the king seems static in the illustrations, it is because the background figures function to create a sense of movement from left to right between frames, either gesturing towards the next frame with their arms or physically walking out of frame into the next (folio 26v and folio 27v in CUP, Ee.3.59).

To conclude, the fixed nature of Edward is perhaps fitting for a figure of enduring virginity, enacting as he does a 'validating image of integrity and stasis outside of historical change and decay'.<sup>31</sup> Concentrating entirely on this mode, however, is to risk Edward that begets many kinds of stable body, from the mirrored body politic and the building of Westminster within the text, to the created institutional identity that survives it, to be manipulated by Henry III. Therefore Edward is a textual body that figures as a site of struggle, differentiation, and appropriation, as a virgin, Saint, and palimpsest. As a politicized discursive nexus, his body functions as a kind of inscriptive surface. This is everywhere evident in the nexus of body material and body politic, manipulating Edward into a palimpsest-rewritten for the fifth time since his demise, and even retold three times in distinct narrative strands of Paris's *Seint Aedward*: the textual body, the rubric, and the illustrations. The boundaries of Edward as a virgin, Saint, and palimpsest are reshaped and each Edward is erased in turn to make a room for the next Edward, where both the manuscript and his body are re-inscribed with a new agenda.

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<sup>29</sup> Paul Binski, 'Reflections on *La Estiore de Seint Aedward le rei*: hagiography and kingship in thirteenth century England', *Journal of Medieval History* 1990, 16, p. 344.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid, p. 344.

<sup>31</sup> Jocelyn Wogan-Browne, *Saints' Lives*, 2001, p.24.

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# LOVE'S ABILITY TO TRANSCEND TIME AND SPACE IN "THE ENGLISH PATIENT" AND "THE PAINTED VEIL" NOVELS

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**Abstract:** *In this article the authors examine one of the major philosophical problem – the problem of the transcendental love ability which can overcome time and space. Novel intertextuality, classical and non-classical understanding and manifestation of the transcendent are analyzed. On the basis of a detailed examination of these notions the authors make conclude that the transcendent lost its ontological and substantial features after the passage from classical to non-classical philosophy. Now the transcendent manifests itself as an important element of consciousness, because without it we can't deal with actuality that consists of both local and global perspectives, searching for global community which reflects the eternal human necessity of belonging.*

**Keywords:** *love ability, transcendent, glocalism, global community, belonging, time, space, intertextuality.*

## Introduction

The significance of such psychological and philosophical notions as *love* and *love ability* is undoubtedly of great interest for mankind of different epochs, still being considered to be one of the most controversial and insufficiently investigated problems of the interdisciplinary world

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studies. In this research, we are going to investigate transcendental love ability through the prism of its local and global perspectives.

The article focuses on the investigation of the ability of love to overcome different life obstacles and go through a transformation beyond time and space. The research is based on the novels *The English Patient* by Michael Ondaatje and *The Painted Veil* by W. Somerset Maugham. The aim of this thesis is to investigate the characters' sense of belonging, problematized in the novels. The idea is that all the characters have a sense of belonging which is wounded, and they are all in need of healing. To pursue this aim, we need to find out how the limits of their belonging are transcended and overcome in order to form new ties in a new reality. The historical events and world values presented in the novels seem to give the stories a global perspective, in addition to the local setting. In this respect, the characters' sense of belonging may also be represented in the idea of an imagined global community. The thematic relevance in *The English Patient* and *The Painted Veil* is of such interest that these novels may be read by a worldwide audience.

### **The analysis of the latest studies and publications**

Theoretical-methodological framework for studying love ability in this research encompasses such aspects as:

- transcendent and transcendental philosophy (Fedorov<sup>1</sup>, Gaidenko<sup>2</sup>, Tsyba<sup>3</sup>);
- the narrative strategies for local and global perspectives (Damrosch<sup>4</sup>);
- the idea of belonging to an imagined globalized community (Anderson<sup>5</sup>, Furuholm<sup>6</sup>, Madsen<sup>7</sup>);
- representation and identification in literature (Bussi<sup>8</sup>, Cook<sup>9</sup>);

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<sup>1</sup> L. Fedoriv, „Features of the mind and appearance of the transcendent in the classical and non-classical philosophy”, *National University “Lviv Polytechnic”*, 2008.

<sup>2</sup> P.P. Gaydenko, „Breakthrough to the transcendental”, *New ontology of the twentieth century*, Moscow, 1997, p. 10.

<sup>3</sup> V.M. Tsyba, „Transcendental argument and the problem of objectivity”, *Scientific notes of NaUKMA*, 2011, Vol. (115), pp. 31–35.

<sup>4</sup> D., Damrosch, „How to Read World Literature”, *Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell*, 2009, p. 109.

<sup>5</sup> B. Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, London: Verso, 1992.

<sup>6</sup> M. Furuholm, *Belonging in Michael Ondaatje's The English Patient*, Representalen, University of Oslo, 2012.

<sup>7</sup> P. Madsen, „World Literature and World Thoughts: Brandes / Auerbach”, in *Debating World Literature* [ed. Prendergast, C.]. London: Verso, 2004, pp. 54-75.

- the problem of time and space (Bache<sup>10</sup>, Foucault<sup>11</sup>);
- intertextuality (Bache, Komarov<sup>12</sup>)
- novel poetics and problematic study (Drozdovsky<sup>13</sup>, Ovcharenko<sup>14</sup>).

### **Database and methodology**

In *How to Read World Literature*, Damrosch mentions a narrative strategy called a ‘glocal’ narrative: “In literature, glocalism takes two primary forms: writers can treat local matters for a global audience – working outward from their particular location – or they can emphasize a movement from the outside world in, presenting their locality as a microcosm of global exchange.”<sup>15</sup> The first form of glocalism, where local issues are presented to a worldwide audience, is, in this case, of lesser relevance. The second form, on the contrary, is of particular interest as it presents global issues in a local setting, making the local setting a smaller representation of the world. To support and explain the novels’ relevance as world literature, we are going to investigate how the narrative presents the second form of glocalism in this thesis.

The novel’s position as a work of world literature can be further supported by Madsen’s definition of globalization. Madsen notes that the globalization process is ambiguous in that it has both negative and positive effects on a globalized community. The negative effects may appear as the exclusion of certain cultural traits in favour of shared values. The positive effects, however, may include shared values and the promotion of these as a common aim for all nations.<sup>16</sup> Madsen’s definition forms the basis for our arguments for opening up a global perspective on the theme of belonging.

<sup>8</sup> M. Bussi, „Reconstructing Identities and Escaping Trauma” in Michael Ondaatje’s *The English Patient*, University of North Carolina Wilmington, 2002.

<sup>9</sup> R. Cook, „Being and Representation in Michael Ondaatje’s <<The English Patient>>”, *ARIEL: A Review of International English Literature*, October, 1999.

<sup>10</sup> Nina C., Bache, *Space in The English Patient*, Oslo: University of Oslo, 2004.

<sup>11</sup> M. Foucault, „Of Other Spaces / in *Visual Culture (Critical Concepts in Media and Cultural Studies)*, [eds. Joanne Morra and Marquard Smith] *Spaces of Visual Culture Volume III London: Routledge*, 2006. pp. 93–101.

<sup>12</sup> S.A. Komarov, „Intertextuality of M. Ondaatje’s novel *The English Patient*”, *Scientific notes KhNPU named after H. S. Skovorody*, Vol. 2(86), 2017, pp. 153–165.

<sup>13</sup> D. Drozdovskyi, “The English Patient” - the best Booker novel of the last 50 years. *Vsesvit*, (7/8), 2018, pp. 138–139.

<sup>14</sup> N. Ovcharenko, „Michael Ondaatje’s Polyphonic World and the novel-film <<The English Patient>>”, *Slovo i chas*, (4), 2003, pp. 46–55.

<sup>15</sup> D. Damrosch, „How to Read World Literature”, Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009, p. 109.

<sup>16</sup> P. Madsen, „World Literature and World Thoughts: Brandes / Auerbach”, in *Debating World Literature* [ed. Prendergast, C.], London: Verso, 2004. pp. 54–75.

### **The purpose of the article**

The purpose of the article is to investigate the ability of love to overcome obstacles and transcend time and space in the novels *The English Patient*<sup>17</sup> by Michael Ondaatje and *The Painted Veil*<sup>18</sup> by W. Somerset Maugham. The research reflects the characters' sense of belonging represented in the idea of a global community.

### **Presentation of basic material of the research**

According to Lubomir Fedoriv, "all human life, the way of being in the world, is his appeal to the transcendent, which is the main ontological characteristic of a man and the origin of his existence"<sup>19</sup>. The problem of a man's relation to the transcendent acquires its greatest urgency nowadays, in modern anthropological studies: "A man by nature is an imperfect being, who can become perfect only in the world of transcendent values"<sup>20</sup>. Modern multidimensional cultural tradition has posed the problem of transcendence. Is a man able to overcome one's imperfection in transcendental dimensions, or is he doomed? This is one of the main questions of modern anthropology. A human is the only being for whom his own existence is the problem that he must solve and from which he cannot escape: "A man always wants to be something great and different and he has the ability to rise above himself, to depart from his empirical nature and while rising he may transcend beyond the limits through understanding his personal existence"<sup>21</sup>. Thus, the transcendent appeal to the transcendental is an important characteristic of human existence, and therefore the actualization and analysis of this issue opens up new opportunities and horizons for modern anthropological research.

### **Love's ability in "The Painted Veil" novel**

It is E. M. Forster who differentiates a story from a plot in his book on the art of fiction "Aspects of the Novel" (1927). Forster defines the story "as a narrative of events arranged in their time-sequence" but, according to him, "A plot is also a narrative of events, the emphasis falling on causality. 'The king died and then the queen died,' is a story.' The king died and then

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<sup>17</sup> M. Ondaatje, „The English Patient”, *New York: Random House*, 1992.

<sup>18</sup> S. Maugham, *The Painted Veil*, L.: Allen, 2004.

<sup>19</sup> L. Fedoriv, *Features of the mind and appearance of the transcendent in the classical and non-classical philosophy*, *op.cit.*, 2008.

<sup>20</sup> P.P. Gaydenko, *Breakthrough to the transcendental*, *op.cit.*, p. 10.

<sup>21</sup> Ibidem.

the queen died of grief' is a plot. Thus, the time sequence is preserved but the sense of causality overshadows it."<sup>22</sup>

*The Painted Veil* (1925) is a novel of story, says the author himself. "I think this is the only novel I have written in which I started from a story rather than from a character. It is difficult to explain the relation between character and plot. You cannot very well think of a character in the void; the moment you think of him, you think of him in some situation, doing something; so that the character and at least his principal action seem to be the result of a simultaneous act of the imagination. But in this case the characters were chosen to fit the story I gradually evolved; they were constructed from persons I had long known in different circumstances."<sup>23</sup>

Thus plot is the dominating or main element of the novel. *The Painted Veil* has its origin in plot and action. Maugham took the main idea for the story from Dante, as he writes in the Preface to the novel. The story by Dante can be summarized like this: A gentle woman of Siena was suspected of adultery by her husband. He wanted to kill her but being afraid of her family he put her into a castle full of poisonous vapours so that she might be exposed to them and die. But finally he got her thrown out of the window as she did not die soon and he grew impatient. Maugham read Dante when he was very young, but for nearly thirty years the story brewed in his mind and finally got the expression in *The Painted Veil*. The ideas of adultery and suspicion are there but the rest of the story is different.

The novel is the story of a spoilt pretty girl, Kitty, who marries a bacteriologist, Walter Fane, not out of love but because of the fear of remaining a maid throughout her life. Being an attractive girl she is loved by her ambitious mother more than her simple looking younger sister, but unfortunately for her the younger sister gets engaged and Kitty becomes the object of her mother's wrath. Walter is not as handsome and rich as Kitty would have liked her husband to be. But to avoid becoming a bride's maid, Kitty accepts Walter's offer although. After marriage the couple leaves for Hong-Kong where Walter is stationed. Since Kitty does not love Walter, she is easily taken in by the handsome but lecherous Assistant Colonial Secretary, Charles Townsend. When Walter comes to know of their affair, he decides to take a terrible and strange revenge. He puts an alternative before Kitty: either she should accompany him to Mei-tan-fu where cholera has broken out or her lover should divorce his first wife to marry her. Kitty has full confidence in Charles but she is completely

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<sup>22</sup> E.M. Forster, *The Aspects of the Novel*, England: Pelican Books Ltd, 1970, pp. 93–94.

<sup>23</sup> W.S. Maugham, *Preface to The Painted Veil* (1925), London: Pan Books, 1978, p. 9.



disillusioned when he frankly refuses to oblige. So Kitty goes to Mei-tan-fu with Walter.

At Mei-tan-fu Kitty's character undergoes a complete transformation. She realizes the futility of the London social life in which she has been brought up. In her loneliness she thinks of the other sides of human life: sorrow, pain, death, poverty. And she starts helping the Catholic nuns with the children, when she understands their readiness to self-sacrifice. Walter works there also very hard to save the people and becomes very popular. Kitty begins to notice the real values of her husband and falls in love with him, but she has to do a lot of efforts to make Walter forgive her and return his love. At the end he himself dies of cholera but, as Kitty herself says, he in fact dies of 'broken heart'. When Kitty returns to Hong-Kong and then to England, she is completely disillusioned about life and decides to bring up her small son, named Walter like her husband, in a different manner from the way she herself was brought up.

The story of *The Painted Veil* illustrates the themes of illusion and reality and bondage and freedom. Kitty at first lives in the world of illusions created by her mother that she is beautiful and so she will get a rich and handsome husband. But she fails to get one and she has to compromise with life by marrying Walter. Again she falls as a victim to the illusion that Charles Townsend loves her, and again she is disillusioned. This time, however, though she suffers pain, she becomes wiser. She realizes the difference between the appearance and the reality. The handsome Townsend turns out to be shallow-minded whereas the unattractive Walter is affectionate and loving.

The theme of bondage and freedom is presented through the story of Kitty's pride which is a binding on her free and right thinking. The snobbery and the artificial conventions of the society in which she lives cripple her power of thinking. But when she goes away from that society, she grows strong enough to break the bondage of her pride. She is enslaved by the looks and passion of Townsend because she is a product of the restricted middle-class London society, but finally she becomes free from all these bondages.

From the structural point of view *The Painted Veil* is considered to be Maugham's perfect novel. There are no digressions. Every thought, every incident and episode is contributory to the effect of unity. There is a single plot, so the attention does not waver. M. C. Kuner observes regarding the structure of this novel: more than any of Maugham's previous novels *The Painted Veil* suggested, because of its tight structure and its incisive dialogue, that this was a playwright's book. The dramatic opening is a case in point: Kitty locked in her bedroom with her lover, fancies she hears someone tattling the knob of her door. Instantly Maugham creates a

tension which never relaxes, so anxious was he to speed the narrative of *The Painted Veil*, so determined to make the reader finish it at a single sitting, as though in a playhouse, that he had the book printed in a way which would minimize the space between each chapter. No detail of his craft has ever escaped him in his desire to achieve a calculated effect.<sup>24</sup>

From the artistic point of view *The Painted Veil* is Maugham's best novel. The episodes and incidents unitedly take the story towards the climax when Kitty and Walter go to Mei-tan-fu. Then the resolution follows. Their decision to go to the cholera-stricken city is the climax of the story because up to this time the tension has been increasing and then it starts to relax. At this point Kitty's transformation starts as the illusions of life begin to disappear. She comes to face the reality, finally to emerge a free and disillusioned person.

Thus, the story has a "beginning, a middle and an end". The interest is "aroused, prolonged and then satisfied". Its design is, as Maugham would say, a "lovely crescent that begins down here and makes an upward curve and finally descends to the level of its starting point."

All other elements of the novel, character, background both social and natural, dialogue, literary technique and style contribute to the development of the plot. There is not a single character that has nothing to do with the story. Every character, even the insignificant dying beggar, exerts his or her influence on Kitty's life. The gay and pretentious social background of London where Kitty has been brought up, the mysterious strange atmosphere of Hong-Kong where Kitty's unfortunate illusions take shape and then the background of pestilence-stricken Chinese city with the horror of death and with the small convent as an oasis having all the purity of Christian virtues, add life to the story. Then the dialogues are also suitable to the characters as well as to the situations in which they are spoken. The dialogues show Maugham's skill in writing the dialogues of a play. Finally the narrative technique and the literary style are also complementary to the plot. Maugham has used the technique of flash-back to tell the story of Kitty's past life and the technique of the narrative at first remove to tell the story of the Mother Superior. The point of view is the restricted point of view. The world is seen and presented through Kitty's eyes. The style is simple and to hold the reader's attention the narrative is divided into small chapters. Though the novel is artistically perfect, some critics say it provides only intellectual entertainment. As to L. Brander, it fails to give an aesthetic thrill which integrates the intellectual and the spiritual with emotional involvement. He points out what it lacks in the following words: "The ingredients are of the highest quality, but something

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<sup>24</sup> M. Kuner, *Maugham and The West: The Human Condition: Bondage, The World of Somerset Maugham*, 1959, p. 78.

is missing in the result. What that is, seems perfectly plain. Maugham was not sufficiently interested and he was not personally engaged. He had no deep feelings about Hong-Kong or anywhere else in China.”<sup>25</sup>

### **Love’s ability to transcend time and space in “The English Patient” novel**

*The English Patient* is a novel that is both seemingly universal in its themes, and local in its setting. Set in a small villa in post-war Italy, the novel develops themes such as love, friendship and healing, themes which may be related to all peoples of the world. This puts the novel firmly within the field of world literature. According to David Damrosch, a leading theorist of world literature, a novel “can enter world literature by embodying what are taken to be universal themes and values, so that local cultural detail can be considered secondary or even irrelevant.”<sup>26</sup> In our opinion, this is certainly the case with *The English Patient*. Through its development of themes of general relevance, the importance of the locality of the narration is diminished. The locality is not crucial for the story to convey its universality.

“Intertextuality can be understood as a kind of echo, an echo of already existing texts, in the sense that any literary text is influenced by texts written before it. Even words are marked by previous interpretations and contexts. Words already have a meaning” (Bakhtin). And *The English Patient* can be seen as an example of intertextuality, as it is made up of a mosaic of quotations. Any text is the “absorption and transformation of another” (Kristeva). *The English Patient* contains many different types of texts. We read bomb disposal manuscripts; we learn about winds of the Saharan desert and the history of the ancient people who used to live there; we read parts of Herodotus’ *The Histories*; we read references to and extracts from Leo Tolstoy’s *Anna Karenina*; Rudyard Kipling’s *Kim*, James Fenimore Cooper’s *The Last of the Mohicans*, and so forth. Just like Almásy’s commonplace book it is a text invaded and deterritorialized by other texts. The commonplace book and *The English Patient* become meeting-points where contact is made between different types of texts. We do not just read fragments of different texts mingled together; the narrative can also be seen as intertextual due to the fact that we are not just presented with one narration. As we read, Kip informs us of his past as a trainee of bomb disposal in England, Caravaggio tells of his adventures and why he has lost his thumbs, and Hana lets the reader get an insight of her past, of the time she nursed dying soldiers, and her relationship with

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<sup>25</sup> S. Maugham, *Guide*, London: Oliver and Boyd, 1963, p. 72.

<sup>26</sup> D. Damrosch, *How to Read World Literature*, Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009. p. 109.

Kip. Simultaneously, Almásy slowly reveals his life in the desert and his intense love affair with Katharine. *The English Patient* is a very complex book as it uses features and characteristics from several genres. It is interesting for the common reader because of its use of popular and well-known features from different genres. Yet it is also interesting for the academic reader as it includes different levels of meaning that may not be available to all readers according to their background and knowledge. So, as readers of *The English Patient* we are explorers of the text. We are explorers with perspectives in continuous movement according to whoever is narrating.<sup>27</sup>

The philosophy of visions and situations are the specific of M. Ondaatje “English patient” novel (1992). The most flamboyant part of the novel 1996 became the part of a film by the American film director Anthony Minghella. His film is considered to be a melodrama shot on a highly professional level. The storytelling in the novel is more oriented on the lifeline of four people whose life is destroyed by the negative impact of war. Spiritually broken and disappointed Hana, handicapped Caravaggio (his thumbs were cut by Germans), military sapper Kip, the mysterious “English patient”, whose memories about the past passion and betray in the name of love (what actually became the essence of the plot for the fantastic film) – this considered to be the bright beams of unmerciful flame of humans memory and unhuman suffering. The writer has a fantastic ability to predict the touchy soul emotions of the characters. The love ability to overcome time is shown more in the book version as the reader discovered earlier about Almashi’s death long before he actually passed away, which gave the ability to concentrate more on character’s past. Kip long after coming back to India is staying in love trap to Hanna, and Caravaggio, coming back to Canada thinks about Kip. So, in life and death the transparent chains connect characters with one another. The reader has to interpret it all by himself.

*The English Patient* is considered to be a remarkable novel. The author majestically describes the world during the World War II, the changes of the civilization. The geopolitics of the military and postmilitary events has to do with the personal story of the “English patient” - the British who survived after the plane crash. So, in front of us is the most successful technique in the world literature: the interconnection of the personal and historical lines. The author showed his characters so exact and psychologically deep that it is impossible not to fall in love with them. The readers go through the same story simultaneously with the “English patient” as if witnessing by themselves. The novel is fulfilled with the special form of vitality. M. Ondaatje is the master of “mimetic” writing. He

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<sup>27</sup> C. Nina Bache, *op.cit.*, p. 64.

worked with archives in order to approach the topography of the novel to exact historical places and exotic locations. “Exotics” is another trait which provides success. The Sahara is recollected in the novel and the African sounds have a special characteristic in the literature of the Anglo-Saxon world. Romantic locations always attracted reader’s attention. The names of the characters in the novel have intertextual connection with the art world (Caravaggio).

“We die containing a richness of lovers and tribes; tastes we have swallowed, bodies we have plunged into and swum up as if rivers of wisdom, characters we have climbed into as if trees”<sup>28</sup>.

*The English patient* describes human beings as “communal histories, communal books”. Hana’s body is said to be “full of sentences and moments” as she emerges from reading one of her novels, and “full of stories and situations” as she lies in bed each night reviewing the experiences of the past day. These “moments before sleep” in particular, are periods of “involuntary recollection” and assimilation for Hana, as she “leap[s] across the fragments of the day, bringing each moment into the bed with her like a child with schoolbooks and pencils”. The identification of the body as a text is carried to its furthest extent in the case of Katharine Clifton. The English patient is said to have “translated” her figuratively into the “text of the desert” that he works on in Cairo. Before leaving her behind in the Cave of Swimmers, the English patient ornaments Katharine’s body with the ceremonial saffrons, ochres, and blues that he copies from the “one cave painting”: “Herbs and stones and light and ash of acacia to make her eternal”. Her “disappearance into landscape” completed, her body is now “totally imprinted by history”<sup>29</sup>. If the characters in *The English Patient* are cumulatively inscribed by “stories and situations” from the past, so also, of course, is the body of the text itself.<sup>30</sup>

In contrast to Katharine, the English patient regards distinctions of race and class as “walls” or “barriers”, as a source of distrust and conflict. His main goal in life is “to erase [his] name and the place [he] had come from” he wants “not to belong to anyone, to any nation”. The question, of course, is whether any individual can ever succeed in becoming, purely and simply, “his own invention”. Of all the characters, the English patient has the most extensive knowledge of history, geography, literature, religion, and anthropology. So extensive is his learning that he seems to transcend time, place, and ethnic origin; he feels equally at home among the English,

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<sup>28</sup> M. Ondaatje, *op.cit.*, p. 261.

<sup>29</sup> M. Foucault, *Of Other Spaces*. In *Visual Culture: Critical Concepts in Media and Cultural Studies*. *Spaces of Visual Culture*, London: Routledge, 2006, Vol (3), p. 148.

<sup>30</sup> R. Cook, *op.cit.*, 1999.

the Bedouin, and the ancient Greeks or Egyptians. When he concludes, at the end of his last torturous narrative sequence, that human beings are in fact “communal histories, communal books”, he is thinking of his own composite personality and cultural identity. If then we accept the traditional Aristotelian view that equates, being with knowledge, understanding, and increased consciousness, the English patient is the character who has most completely developed his human potentialities. According to Caravaggio, that is why the other characters are so strongly attracted to the English patient: like him, they are driven by an instinctive need “to know things”. And yet, despite being so fully developed and actualized in the Aristotelian sense, the English patient is also the most thoroughly negated or nullified character in the novel. He has been stripped of his memory, of his sense of personal identity, of his distinguishing physical features. In “eras[ing] [his] name and the place [he] had come from” the English patient has simultaneously erased every other spatial or temporal coordinate, freeing himself completely from the constrictions of a phenomenal, time-bound existence. If Kip, Hana, and Caravaggio remain trapped in “the long, meaningless attrition of time”<sup>31</sup>, how is it that the English patient has succeeded in escaping? His own explanation is that the desert, like a “trompe l’oeil of time and water”, gradually erodes a person’s sense of temporal or spatial “demarcation”, his sense of national, cultural, or ethnic distinction. On his long, solitary treks, the English patient tells us, he would come to feel “as if he had walked under the millimeter of haze just above the inked fibres of a map” entering “that pure zone between land chart between distances and legend between nature and storyteller”. In this strange intermediate space, it was possible to become “unconscious of ancestry” at last, to forget one’s determinate, timebound, phenomenal self and become “one’s own invention”.<sup>32</sup>

One of the main attractions of narrative, in Kermode’s view, is its power of “temporal integration”, its capacity to “charge the present moment with the intangible powers of past and future”. In contrast to the depleting, fragmenting mode of time that holds sway in the phenomenal world, a narrative allows access to a “time-defeating” or “time-redeeming” mode of duration<sup>33</sup>, “a mode in which things can be perpetual without being eternal”<sup>34</sup>.

Genevieve Lloyd associates this mode with novels such as *The English Patient*, in which past experiences are repeatedly superimposed on those

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<sup>31</sup> F. Kermode, *The Sense of an Ending: Studies in the Theory of Fiction*, London: Oxford UP, 1966, p. 169.

<sup>32</sup> R. Cook, *op.cit.*, p. 48.

<sup>33</sup> F. Kermode, *op.cit.*, p. 52.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 72.

of the narrative present, thereby short-circuiting the linear, chronological sequence. Lloyd maintains that such novels re-create in the reader a sense of being “situated outside time” with “no fear of the future, no fear of death”. In short, such a novel takes us into the realm which Edward Said associates with “demonic artists” such as Adrian Leverkühn, a realm in which “the beginning and the end are finally one”.

By breaking through to this “time-defeating” narrative mode of experience, the English patient escapes the constrictions of a phenomenal existence. He can then immerse himself in the atemporal, archetypal world of Homer, Herodotus, and Kipling, and in the non-sequential, ceremonial time of Bedouin ritual and myth. He also plunges over and over again into his “well of memory” dredging up fragment after fragment of his obsessive, doom-ridden romance with Katharine. It is in the process of reclaiming these memories, of circling back again and again to certain “timeless” moments in their relationship, that the English patient gradually frees himself from his specific time-bound identity and comes to identify instead with the self that narrates, the self that incorporates in one simultaneous space all the cumulative experiences of lost time. In this capacity as “the watcher, the listener, the “he”, the English patient is to be identified, not with the determinate historical personality of Almásy, but with an indeterminate, archetypal figure such as “the jackal with one eye that looks back and one eye that regards the path you consider taking”. In this capacity, he symbolizes precisely “what stands outside verbal temporality” (Said), putting an end to the “infinite regression and progression” of time (Miller)<sup>35</sup>.

Bakhtin sees genre as something necessary for human interaction. We write and speak according to conventional genres, suitable for the specific situation. We adapt our speech to the context we are placed within (as in a business meeting, at home, with friends, and so forth). And we conduct ourselves according to the current genre to express ourselves and to be understood. “Genre can be seen as a pair of glasses we look through in order to interpret the situation right and act accordingly”<sup>36</sup>. It is a way of expression and understanding. According to Bakhtin, genre is a tool used by any readers of a text. A text is not just made by an author, but also interpreted by a reader. The text becomes a meeting point for the author and reader, and both have as much influence on the text as the other. There are always two voices in a text. No one owns the words. Yes, the author has placed them where they are and he/she has a message to convey, but it is important not to forget that words do not have one

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<sup>35</sup> C. Nina, Bache, *op.cit.*

<sup>36</sup> M. Bakhtin, *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*, Texas: University of Texas Press, (1986), p. 47.

interpretation or one owner. The author always has to create a space of understanding. He/she writes with the intended reader in mind. In this respect, a text, or an utterance, becomes a meeting point (or perhaps a battle ground) between different participants on each end of the scale of the reading and writing process<sup>37</sup>.

“The novel seems to reflect upon literature. It claims that a ‘novel is a mirror walking down a road’. People interpret things differently and analyze through experience and cultural background. Life in general is a tool which makes it possible for people to recognize and understand actions and thoughts of fictional characters. Just as the text of the novel echoes a mosaic of other texts, interpretations of the novel vary along with the diversity of its readers. In other words, what we see in a novel and our interpretations vary according to whose eyes we are looking through as we observe the ‘mirror’ of the novel. The novel is also self-conscious in the way it reflects upon its form as a literary text, creating a discourse space.”<sup>38</sup>

Almásy’s life in the desert plays an important part of the film and the book. The nomadic aspect of the desert proved to be closely associated with his character. Almásy is a wandering character who does not approve of human-made rules of borders and nations. He has a passion towards the desert. He has learned its nature, gotten acquainted with the indigenous people of the area, and to a certain extent he also adapted their lifestyle. The nomads save him as they see him as a resourceful and knowledgeable person. He can even speak the local language. Almásy’s way of life is derailed as he lets Katharine enter his world. She makes him realize that belonging and ownership are a natural part of human life. The free and borderless understanding he has of the desert, and which he has adopted as a lifestyle, becomes a huge contrast to these new rules and norms introduced to him by Katharine. His relationship to her makes him realize that the ideological concept of a world free of nations and ownership is not applicable to the real world. The never-ending landscape of the desert makes it logical to include the theme of borders. There are numerous elements that represent borders in the novel. The characters at the villa are restricted by the aftermath of war; there is a constant threat of mines, and they lack food and water. Yet there are also various boundary-braking elements that can be found throughout the novel and the film. Images of water and metaphors that break down borders flow into every part of the story. The commonplace book and Ondaatje’s novel; *The English Patient*, represent literary self-consciousness. They are both complex works with several textual features in common. They both contain narrative variants

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<sup>37</sup> C. Nina, Bache, *op.cit.*

<sup>38</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 66.



as analepsis and prolepsis, resulting in a space of the past and a space of the future. It is a tool that easily binds location and time together.<sup>39</sup>

As to Nina Bache, both the novel and the film use space to mirror the condition of the characters. Identity proved to be highly relevant when examining space. The characters seem to seek a space where they can heal their traumas and move on. The desert too is a significant space relevant to *The English Patient*. Its nomadic aspect and lack of borders are highly relevant issues of the book and film. Boundary-braking elements are found throughout the two works. The commonplace book is a metaphorical space that also seems to lack borders as it has undergone a process of deterritorialization. It contains innumerable fragments and its inclusion of several genres makes it a symbol of intertextuality. It is also literary self-conscious in the way it reflects upon literature and includes narrative features such as ellipsis, analepsis, and prolepsis. Space, in Minghella's adaptation, is created in a number of different ways. As topographical spaces within the novel have been transferred to the film, depth cues have been used in order to translate these spaces into film language. This has resulted in necessary cinematic solutions; hence the film is not just a faithful echo to the original novel. The commonplace book perfectly fulfils the role of an item that links the changing of scenes. By having multiple people read in and from the book, and at the same time shuffle the background back and forth, the commonplace book becomes a tool that interlinks the different spaces and underlines the parallels of both time and space. So, "an examination of the novel and the film will never be complete. It can be compared to a kaleidoscope: the reflections of its colored glass will change and create innumerable patterns as one responds to and aims to understand *The English Patient* and its adaptation from different angles."<sup>40</sup>

Ondaatje describes the characters in his novel *The English Patient* as wanting a sense of belonging: "Those migrants don't belong here [in the villa] but want to belong here and find a new home.' This belonging, though, is wounded and they are all in need of healing. The healing process seems to start as they relate to each other in the villa and begin to form new ties. Like Ondaatje, who found a new home in Canada, the characters are looking for a home for themselves in a strange place far away from their home countries. As part of their reading experience, other readers of the novel may relate to this and perhaps find parallels to their own situations in life.<sup>41</sup> 'In *The English Patient* everyone is fearful of going home. Hana's fearful, and the Patient hates the idea of home and nations,

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<sup>39</sup> Ibidem, p. 102.

<sup>40</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>41</sup> M. Furuholm, *op.cit.*, p. 3.

and Kirpal Singh has been befriended and is enamoured of certain English things for a while. They don't want to go back to where they were from.' The characters' sense of belonging is, in other words, confused to begin with. They are wounded after the war and either not ready to go home, or not willing to acknowledge that they have a home.

The characters' relationships to each other, however, take on primary importance. These relationships embody and hint at world issues that may be relevant for readers of world literature. The story is centered on the enigma of the English patient whose identity is unknown. Hana, a Canadian nurse, stayed with him in the villa after he was left behind by the Allies since he was too weak to move. They are joined by Caravaggio, a Canadian-Italian thief and spy for the Allies and an old friend of Hana's father, and Kip, an Indian Sikh who is a sapper in the British army. They all come from different places with different national backgrounds, and they all have wounds to heal from the war, but together they interact and form relations similar to those of a family towards the end broken by the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. This event reopens wounds that may have healed in the villa and the characters' relations to each other become tense.

The overall aim of the article has been to examine the characters' ability to love in *The English Patient* and *The Painted Veil*. Through our analysis we found that each of the characters had, in various degrees, a wounded sense of belonging.

As part of their healing process, the characters formed ties of belonging to each other in a way reminiscent of a family, thus transcending the limits of belonging to their nations. However, each individual's sense of belonging was in the end not easily healed. The community in the villa also seemed to convey a global perspective. In this perspective, the representations of East and West, and a hope of reconciliation after the war, seem to be indications of a belonging that transcends mere nationality and builds an image of global unity. To return, then, to our initial question: *how is the characters' sense of belonging problematized in the novel and how does it affect the various levels of community?*

This investigation showed that the characters' belonging is problematized through the showing up of a lack of direction, or meaning, in their lives. This is, perhaps, most visible in the case of Hana. Her vagrancy in the villa and her sense of alienation in Kip's tent suggest that she is at a loss of direction. Although she longs for Canada at times, she has an aversion against going home. Therefore, she moves around in the villa in search of her own place. Though she finds it to a certain degree in her relationship with Kip, she feels, even in his tent, that she is intruding upon someone else's world. At the same time, she seems to have a sense of

belonging in her caring for the patient. He has become the meaning in her life and caring for him eases the pain she suffered from losing her husband on the war. Her belonging to the patient seems absolute, and her disinterest in his identity forms the background for her own philosophy, one in which the past is not important. It is the present and the future that matter. Only in the present may the characters find healing and reclaim their future, not in the past. Her refusal to give in to Caravaggio's insistence on the identity of the patient, may confirm this, and, in the end, even Caravaggio comes to see the meaninglessness of his obsession. One of Caravaggio's motives for his interrogation of the patient was his sense of belonging to Hana. His loyalty to her, supported perhaps by his sense of justice, created his need to find out the patient's identity. Caravaggio's sense of belonging seems, in other words, to be problematized through his need to find out about the identity and belonging of other people. By focusing on others, he may forget his own troubles for a time.

In our analysis of Kip's sense of belonging we found a complex cultural identity where his belonging appears to be problematized in his relation to two nations at the same time. His suppression of his Indian identity in favour of an English one results in a colonial hybrid of the two. However, he does not completely forget that he also belongs to India. He still keeps to his own faith and remains an outsider, an 'Other', in the company of the British. Kip's tent may, in this respect, function as a visible marker of his sense of 'Otherness' and his wish to stay separated from the rest. We found the distance Kip keeps to the other characters and the fact that he frequently uses his rifle sights to observe Western culture, to be similar to the role of an observer. He observes the other characters, and their culture, in order to make up his own mind. This, along with his sense of belonging to both India and England, establishes the idea of Kip as a mediator between East and West.

The idea of Kip as mediator seems to be further implied in his relation to the English patient. Through his extensive knowledge and his projection of his self onto the book *The Histories* by Herodotus, the patient seems to become a representation of the West, both as Western civilization and as its idea of humanism. This appears to be strengthened by his lack of national identity and his aversion against nations in general. Almásy's wish to be nationless seems to be his personal solution to his loss of belonging to a specific country. During his explorations in the desert, and his experiences with the restrictions imposed by national borders, he has come to hate nations. He talks of this aversion against nations to the other characters, instead advocating ideas of Western humanism.

The formation of a family in the villa would for a while seem to have given the characters the direction and sense of meaning they needed in

order to heal their wounds from the war. This notion of family could, in addition, be projected onto a global perspective of unity between nations. Still, though the characters were all committed to each other to some degree, their sense of belonging to the community of the villa did not survive the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. This event affected both the local level of community, and in turn the idea of a community at a global level. The 'family' became scattered as Kip left for India and consequently the global unity became dissolved by the withdrawal of the East and the mediating function represented by Kip. The dissolving of the community in the villa and the characters' return to their home countries in the end only leave them with the memory of what once had been. The relations and possibilities represented in the community came to naught as world events caught up with them and tested their belonging with fatal consequences. This memory of their belonging haunts Kip and Hana at the end of the novel, hinting at new possibilities and signs of a better future represented in Kip's daughter. It is now up to the younger generations to heal the wounds left by their parents in the aftermath of a devastating world war and, hopefully, to form new ties of belonging and reconciliation across borders.

### **Conclusions**

The first year of marriage is called "paper marriage" ("*The English Patient*") and that is not accidental. As we can see in both novels, different temptations may happen to test the strength of feelings inside a couple. And "red wind for new lovers which smashes everything on its way" ("*The English Patient*") is one of the most dangerous tests. Sometimes people confuse love and passion and it can cause a lot of troubles for them and for their families. Thus, it is told in "*The English Patient*" that love may be of different kinds. And we can observe in this novel that real love has no limits, neither social, nor moral, it is beyond time, space or any other restrictions. Should we judge betrayal of a husband or of the whole nation in the name of real love which is so transcendental that is more than just one life or one body, discovering that "in lovemaking there can be a whole civilization, a whole country ahead of them"<sup>42</sup> ?... Is everyone able to feel something like this or just appreciate those who are close to us?... Is love an ability, a gift or crime?... Maybe people are really "more complicated than bacteria, they may be mistaken, unpredictable and hurt each other because they are not ideal, they are just human beings" ("*The Painted Veil*"). So maybe each of us has the right for making one's own mistakes in search of real love to become genuinely happy. And a novel can be a drop

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<sup>42</sup> M. Ondaatje, *op.cit.*, p. 225.

reflecting the whole life like a local story which is able to show a global perspective.

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<sup>i</sup> National Strategy for the Development of the Information Society, Digital Moldova 2020”. Available at: [https://mei.gov.md/sites/default/files/strategia\\_moldova\\_digitala\\_2020\\_857.pdf](https://mei.gov.md/sites/default/files/strategia_moldova_digitala_2020_857.pdf)