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Editorial

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Learning is a process that practically never stops and human life should be linked to this noble goal. There are two important days in a person's life, namely the day he was born and the day he becomes aware of why. Throughout this journey in which we manage to identify what is the source and what is the purpose of our life, we practically add with each new thing learned, with each new lived experience, we add something and we build a building.

When man comes into the world, he is at his maximum capacity to be able to gather and capitalize on everything he will learn. Practically from that moment man learns, from breathing, from smiling, from enjoying the little things, then he keeps accumulating and accumulating in a rhythm that is constantly increasing, but which also has moments of stopping, standing on certain platforms, also in order to accumulate, as in a climb on a mountain with certain challenges and which will lead you to an extremely beautiful goal and which will show why you have reached a certain place in life and what exactly you need to you do with everything you have accumulated until you become aware of your purpose. It can happen that the person does not realize these things and the importance of dedication to learn and to accumulate information only very late. It may happen that during the period when the person should assimilate a lot of information to consider that it is a shield for him.

Lifelong learning is a process that somehow takes place unconsciously, because it begins the moment the child opens his eyes to the world. The learning process begins first with imitation. The joy of discovery is always

extraordinary, but at every stage of life, man discovers differently and discovers in a certain way that changes him as a man, that changes him in the way he perceives things, but also in the way he relates. he to those new things discovered. Thus, the learning process must not stop and must diversify. In order for man to evolve, he needs to get out of his comfort zone and move towards challenges and not comfort. Comfort could be compared to those platforms on which you stop after making some accumulations, without continuing the accumulation path further, which will lead to capping and convenience without reaching the maximum potential.

If you have a good attitude and you want to not limit yourself, in terms of information, only to what educational institutions offer and discover you and if you want to know more about yourself, you will surely find resources within you to discover a multitude of new things.

Knowledge-based Management of IT Projects with Methods of Artificial Intelligence to Increase Efficiency

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ABSTRACT: The success of IT projects in companies is increasingly becoming a competitive factor. This study aims to analyze whether selected artificial intelligence (AI) methods and knowledge-based management (KBM) can provide benefits in the management of IT projects. The approach of knowledge management is of particular importance for companies, as the continuous and unpredictable changes are nowadays the standard in many business sectors. Consequently, knowledge has become an essential corporate resource. The deductive research approach in this paper has a qualitative exploratory design based on semi-structured interviews followed by Qualitative Data Analysis (QDA). The categories and coding used within the QDA were generated through an interview guide. The participants surveyed are proven experts in their field and hold high-ranking positions in industry, retail, consulting, and the public sector. This study shows that using artificial intelligence in conjunction with knowledge management is neglected in companies. AI is perceived and pursued, but knowledge management approaches are not consistently carried out. The limitation of this study is not limited to a specific type of IT project but focuses on classic project procedure models that are frequently found in practice. The study results can aid organizations in making their project management processes more efficient while benefiting from the resource of available implicit

and explicit knowledge inside their organizations. No comprehensive framework for using AI methods and knowledge management in IT projects was found in the existing literature. Therefore, this study fills the research gap.

KEY WORDS: Artificial intelligence, Knowledge management, Project management

Introduction

The ability to recognize and conduct transformations in their own organization is one of the most important for companies nowadays. Knowing about the requests from their markets with their participants and the need to offer the right products to the right place, at the right time and quality is essential for the survival of a company.

Problem definition

The pressure on IT departments to implement projects that contribute to the success of the company remains high to reach their goals in the dimensions of time, quality and effort. For the question what project management is about, Reich, Geminio and Sauer (2008, 4–14) describe it “as an arena in which action is paramount and in which tasks, budgets, people and schedules must be managed and controlled to achieve expected results.” But the achievement of the project objectives is not an end in itself. In a research study in 2019 from Capgemini Germany, only 15% of the interviewed companies will decrease their IT budget comparing the previous year. 50% of them will have an increased budget, and nearly 35% will have the same budget level than last year. In fact, the main target of the IT budget of 72% will be the digitization of the processes and increasing the efficiency of the organization. (Dumslaff und Heimann 2018). The main issue for these companies is very often the fact that there is no sufficient manpower working in the IT and project departments to manage the upcoming demands. Also, the need to handle the knowledge of the employees is an increasingly serious topic where companies are fully aware of this circumstance. A 2021 study examined how and when project manager frustration and anxiety affects the behavior of project team members in an organization (Wang et al. 2021). One result of this study is that the

satisfaction of the project managers is directly reflected in the project team and the project outcome. With these challenges, it is becoming increasingly difficult to achieve the stated goals of IT projects. This result is supported by The Standish Group International from 2015 which shows that only 6% of all grand projects were completed as planned and only 11% of all large projects were completed as planned. (The Standish Group International, Inc 2015, 3). Project management in the context of other methods or technical trends has already been studied. In this context, Ning and Shang (2021) explored quality management approaches based on resilience theory using innovative construction projects as examples. Another study aims to determine how Big Data has a positive impact on project performance or how this impacts improving the quality of construction projects. As a result, it was found that it facilitated the development of technological capabilities, leading to significant quality performance (Sang et al. 2021). A quality feature that could become increasingly important in the future is to be able to achieve the required quality with principles of sustainability. Ershadi and Goodarzi (2021) studied this circumstance in more detail in the context of construction projects in 2021. An important part of planning and conducting project management is the part of knowledge management (KM). That is also valuable to examine as already Gemino, Lee and Reich mentioned (Gemino et al. 2007, 9–44; Lee und Lee 2000, 281–288; Reich, B.H., Gemino, A, Sauer, C. 2008, 2–14. As Want et al. (2007, 200–212) point out that projects are knowledge-intensive but IT projects in a particular way. This could be justified by the fact that IT projects often aim at developing new software which is an imaginary product. On the other hand, the number of IT trends with knowledge-intensive skills requirements is growing rapidly. Independent from the type of IT project or the selected procedure model often there are the following parameters given to hit the project goals. Lech (2014, 554) uses the knowledge taxonomy of project knowledge in order to describe the parameters of resources, time and cost to reaching the target of a specific project, schedules and milestones. In projects, all forms of knowledge are used in many places and someone in projects must be aware of it. Hanisch et al. (2009, 148–160) also refer to the need that managing knowledge in projects is one of the most important tasks of a project manager and the necessity to focus research in the field

of project-based companies is growing. Hanisch et al. also refer to the need that managing knowledge in projects is one of the most important tasks of a project manager and the necessity to focus research in the field of project-based companies is growing (Hanisch et al. 2009, 148–160). Lech mentions that there are two types of knowledge that an project manager must have at his disposal. One is the generic project management knowledge available in the body of knowledge guides like PMI Project Management Institution, and the other is the product-related project management knowledge. This includes best practices for performing projects involving the implementation of a specific system or topic (Lech 2014, 570). Judging by these facts, it should also be in the project manager's interest to manage the knowledge in the projects as efficiently as possible. This will also be noticeable in IT controlling. IT controlling can be seen as a system for preparing decisions within the framework of the deployment and use of IT resources (Gadatsch 2021, 1). The issue regarding knowledge or rather the management of knowledge in projects is well-known and there are a lot of frameworks and modelling e.g. from Gasik or the examinations from Lech but, nevertheless, the question of whether selected artificial intelligence (AI) methods and knowledge-based management (KBM) can provide benefits in the management of IT projects is still unanswered. For the ability to perform knowledge management in IT projects, emotional intelligence is also necessary. In this context, Khosravi et al. (2020) studied how emotional intelligence among project members affects performance and project outcomes.

Methodology

Empirical social research is research that examines a specific part of the social world in order to facilitate the further development of theories. Gläser and Laudel point out that although the research process can be described as empirical, it is based on the theory that considers social reality and draws theoretical conclusions from it. Empirical social studies are usually divided into quantitative and qualitative studies. However, qualitative social research is criticized because it would be conducted without theoretical references and arbitrary processes and therefore is not subject to methodological control

(Gläser und Laudel 2010, 24–25). According to Mayring, the goal of content analysis is to analyze material that comes from any source of communication. He further points out that it is about the communication content and formal aspects of the communication. As a further challenge, Mayring points out that the results of qualitative content analysis can strongly reflect the author's definitions and are thus too specific to be evaluated as generally valid (Mayring 2015, 11). According to Kuckartz (2014, 15), the quality of the information depends on the selection of the interview participants who take part in the expert interviews or whose answers are subsequently evaluated. Chreswell (2009, 18), on the other hand, points out that if a concept or phenomenon needs to be understood because little research has been performed on it, then it merits a qualitative approach. Therefore, the research has a qualitative exploratory design based on semi-structured interviews with proven experts, followed by qualitative data analysis (QDA). The QDA is conducted using MAXQDA, software for qualitative data analysis (MAXQDA - Software für qualitative Datenanalyse 1989 - 2022).

Following Kuckartz, Figure 1 illustrates the process of answering the research questions presented in the follow-up. After the interviews have been conducted, a deductive approach is used to form the categories. In the third and fourth steps, the corresponding categories are coded to the text passages of the interviews and then analyzed, and in the final step, the results are presented.

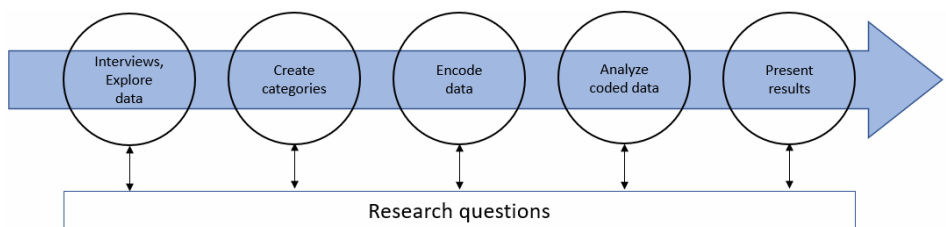


Figure 1. Process of deductive QDA following Kuckartz

This paper focuses on the last two steps of analyzing the coded data and presenting the results. The results are examined according to their content and within variables, which are the assignment of occupations and roles in

this study. Possible distinctions in the experts' answers could be explained by their different roles in everyday professional life. This circumstance is thus taken into account.

Selection of the experts

A basic breakdown of experts can be divided into three areas. On the one hand, there are those experts who have technical know-how. Secondly, there are experts who have process knowledge, which goes hand in hand with informal or hidden knowledge. The third group of experts consists of the interpretive knowledge, which has ideas, ideologies and explanatory patterns (Kruse et al. 2015, 176). In selecting the experts, care was taken to select all three types of experts described by Kruse et al. All of the participants interviewed are proven experts in their field and hold high-ranking positions in industry, commerce, consulting, and the general public sector. The persons with whom the interviews were conducted are now presented in the following.

Expert 1 (Financial expert): Senior Professional in the SAP Finance environment of one of the largest retail groups in Europe based in Cologne. Initially expert in preparing and analyzing balance sheets and experienced in national and international finance projects.

Expert 2 (Senior Project Manager): IT Project Manager and Scrum Master with many years of experience in planning and implementing various IT projects in national and international company. Many years of experience in planning and execution of various IT projects in national and international companies. Consulting experience in a variety of industries including consumer goods, electronics manufacturing, public sector and management consulting.

Expert 3 (Managing Director): Years of IT project experience, starting as an IT consultant and project manager until taking over the team leader position. For about eight years member of the management and for two years managing director of a medium-sized IT and management consultancy. Very high expertise in all aspects of project management.

Expert 4 (Senior Project Manager): Decades of experience managing IT departments and executing major projects in a technical auditing group. Pervasive experience in the SAP area and deep technical understanding of artificial intelligence methods.

Expert 5 (Senior Project Manager): Currently working as a freelance IT Manager / CIO / CTO with years of experience in leading IT positions, including CIO of one of the largest hotel portals in Germany and Vice President IT of a large energy company. Extensive experience in implementing and supervising all kinds of large-scale IT projects.

Expert 6 (Senior Project Manager): Certified project manager (IPMA) with extensive experience in managing IT and organizational projects in various industries such as a tourism group, logistics company, and the energy industry.

Expert 7 (Financial expert): Senior Commercial Expert with a lot of experience in finance and controlling across different sectors such as service and industry as well as in public sector. Specialized also in the implementation of projects focusing on IT systems in the environment of corporate finance.

Expert 8 (Senior Project Manager): IT Program and Project Manager focused on IT infrastructure projects with decades of experience with a technical testing services provider. National and international project assignments in all aspects of IT infrastructure.

Expert 9 (Senior Project Manager): Senior Manager at one of the world's largest accounting firms, working in the Consulting Public Sector division. Deep and long experience in SAP Analytics, Business Intelligence, and Artificial Intelligence and in leading project teams and departments.

Expert 10 (Managing Director): Director and therefore responsible for the SAP portfolio for the public sector at one of the largest auditing companies in the consulting sector. Decades of professional experience in the planning and implementation of IT projects in the area of SAP as well as in the management of teams and departments.

Results and discussions

According to Creswell, “in a qualitative study, researchers formulate research questions, not objectives or hypotheses” (Creswell 2009, 129). Therefore, the following research questions (RQ) were posted:

RQ1: Are methods of artificial intelligence and knowledge management capable of achieving monetary benefits in the planning and control of IT projects?

RQ2: What are the prerequisites for the use of these methods?

RQ3: What are the limitations of using artificial intelligence methods in project management?

Before the previously mentioned research questions can be answered with the help of QDA, the presentation of the code configuration is necessary. After conducting the interviews, this is the second step in the process, according to Kuckartz, which was already clarified in Figure 1 in advance. The actual codes were developed using a deductive research approach based on the text under investigation. During the investigation, however, supplementary and for the answer to the research questions, relevant further codings occurred so that these correspond to the inductive approach. A corresponding coding and overview can be found in the table 1.

Table 1. Code configuration system

Main-code	Sub-code	Code Frequency in all documents	Inductive/ deductive
Competitive advantage	without limitations	14	deductive
Competitive advantage	with limitations	9	deductive
Limitations	Individual interests	1	inductive
Limitations	Historically grown structures	2	inductive
Limitations	Complete new tasks	2	deductive
Limitations	No final decision-making power	2	inductive
Limitations	No limitation	4	inductive

Limitations	Tasks with human interaction	10	deductive
Monetary benefit	No	0	deductive
Monetary benefit	Partial	3	inductive
Monetary benefit	Yes	13	deductive
Prerequisites	Approach for improvement	3	inductive
Prerequisites	Technical infrastructure	4	deductive
Prerequisites	Stakeholder / employees management	5	deductive
Prerequisites	Knowledge transfer	10	deductive
Prerequisites	Complete data	12	deductive
Total:		94	

Table 1 already shows that most of the codes were created by deductive methods. The deductive codes were assigned 10 times, whereas the inductive codes were derived six times.

Investigation of the research questions

The research questions will be investigated using the coded segments from the interview. Therefore, each answer to the respective research question is based on the experts' exploratory summaries of the assigned codes, presented in Table 1. The summary of the statements thus leads to answering the research questions. In the following step, the individual experts and their roles are compared with each other. In the following step, the individual experts and their roles are compared with each other.

Single-based expert analysis

RQ1: Are methods of artificial intelligence and knowledge management capable of achieving monetary benefits in the planning and control of IT projects?

The following table 2 will show the summarized answers of each expert in regards of research question 1 (RQ1).

Table 2. Summary table for RQ1

Expert	Sub-Code: Partial	Sub-Code: Yes
Expert 1 (FE)		Yes, the use of AI in project management has a monetary benefit mainly caused by the accompanying time savings.
Expert 2 (SPM)		Yes, the use of AI in project management has monetary benefits. The use of AI can extend to multiple application scenarios in PM.
Expert 3 (MD)	In part, there could be a financial benefit, but it all depends on the data set.	
Expert 4 (SPM)	There could be a financial benefit but at the moment companies are not ready to use it.	Yes, there is a monetary benefit to using AI in project management. The use of AI can extend to multiple application scenarios in PM, which are repeated repeatedly. It also leads to a reduction in the workload of employees.
Expert 5 (SPM)		Yes, there is a monetary benefit to using AI in project management.
Expert 6 (SPM)	There could be a financial benefit but in the agile environment it is difficult and even if the company is not even ready organizationally.	Yes, there is a monetary benefit to using AI in project management.
Expert 7 (FE)		Yes, there is a monetary benefit to using AI in project management. The example from various functionalities in the SAP Finance area, i.e. from accounting.
Expert 8 (SPM)		Yes, the use of AI in project management has a financial benefit in terms of processes.
Expert 9 (SPM)		Yes, the use of AI in project management has in terms of recurring tasks.
Expert 10 (MD)		Yes, the use of AI in project management has in terms of recurring tasks that we also already use today.

Answering Research Question 1 (RQ1): The statements of the experts surveyed provide a clear picture that they believe the methods of artificial intelligence and knowledge management have the potential to possess a monetary advantage in project management. However, it is striking that three experts answered the question in the affirmative but at the same time saw significant limitations, such as the fact that companies are not yet ready to use these methods present. In addition, no expert answered the research question in the negative.

RQ2: *What are the prerequisites for the use of these methods?*

The following table 3 will show the summarized answers of each expert in regards of research question 2 (RQ2).

Table 3. Summary table for RQ2

Expert	Sub-Code: Complete data	Sub-Code: Knowledge transfer	Sub-Code: Approach for improve- ment and Stakeholder / employees manage- ment
Expert 1 (FE)	All information and parameters must be completely available to AI.	comprehensive and continuous know-how transfer.	
Expert 2 (SPM)	Precise structured and up-to-date data	Comprehensive and continuous know-how transfer and the possibility to learn in a playful way	That AI and knowl- edge management can bring about a clear im- provement in projects
Expert 3 (MD)	Technical setting and solid qualitative database necessary.		
Expert 4 (SPM)	Data quality and the right AI method	Build knowledge and make it centrally avail- able to all employees	The employees must be informed about the possibilities and take away the fear that they will lose their jobs.

Expert 5 (SPM)	Data quality and the right AI method		
Expert 6 (SPM)	Historical and current data to forecast future scenarios		
Expert 7 (FE)			Nevertheless create added value due to investment costs
Expert 8 (SPM)		Employees must be trained, knowledge must be made available	Employees must be prepared for the topic and their fears taken seriously.
Expert 9 (SPM)		Knowing what you can do with an AI in the first place.	
Expert 10 (MD)		To have the possibility to try out the knowledge and to learn in a playful way. Training courses and starting with small projects and then increasing.	Regular communication with employees is important.

Answering Research Question 2 (RQ2): The vast majority of experts see data availability and high data quality as prerequisites for using AI and KM. This involves the use of current and historical information to forecast future scenarios. The experts see essential prerequisite in communication with the employees. On the one hand, any fears of job loss must be taken seriously and responded to appropriately, and on the other, employees must be trained. This includes content-related training but also knowledge of what AI can do and where its limits are.

RQ3: What are the limitations of using artificial intelligence methods in project management?

The following table 4 will show the summarized answers of each expert in regards of research question 3 (RQ3).

Table 4. Summary table for RQ 3

Expert	Sub-Code: Tasks with human interaction and No final decision-making power	Sub-Code: Completely new tasks	Sub-Code: No limitation
Expert 1 (FE)			In principle no limitation
Expert 2 (SPM)	Tasks in which empathy, compassion and social skills are important.		
Expert 3 (MD)	Decisions made by the AI should be questioned		
Expert 4 (SPM)	No personnel decisions - indications yes but no decisions		In principle no limitation
Expert 5 (SPM)		Completely new tasks	
Expert 6 (SPM)			In principle no limitation
Expert 7 (FE)	Basically, applicable everywhere but still no contacts to important stakeholders		In principle no limitation
Expert 8 (SPM)	What cannot replace is the empathic interpersonal conversation	Fulfillment of spontaneous requests	
Expert 9 (SPM)	When it comes to togetherness and especially when it comes to escalations		In principle no limitation
Expert 10 (MD)	when it comes to the assessment of people		

Answering Research Question 3 (RQ3): In general, the experts hardly see any restrictions regarding the technical functionalities of an AI method in project management. However, they are critical of entirely new tasks since the AI usually has to be trained for them and spontaneous requests, which can also lead to problems with the AI. One technically possible implementation that

the experts in project management do not recommend is in connection with human interaction. The AI should not perform corresponding tasks where intuition, compassion, and social and emotional intelligence are required. In addition, some experts see the individual interests of individual departments or segments in a company as an obstacle, which either covertly or openly position themselves against the use of AI in project management.

Role-based expert analysis using cross tabulation analysis

In the following, the frequency of the codes for the respective roles of the experts is examined. This reveals possible overlaps and deviations in the number of responses, suggesting a conclusion about the importance of the topic for each role. Since research question 1 was answered positively by all experts, a role-based evaluation is not performed at this point, since all roles consequently show the same result.

Role-based expert analysis for research question 2:

What are the prerequisites for the use of these methods?

Table 5 shows the role-based expert analysis for research question 2. In particular, the role of the Senior Project Manager is to see the requirements in the completeness of the data and the knowledge transfer. On the other hand, the Managing Directors' role sees the prerequisites in a similar criticality as the financial experts. One explanation could be that the Senior Project Managers encounter a more comprehensive range of essential prerequisites in their day-to-day work than the other two roles.

Table 5. Role-based expert analysis RQ 2

Sub-codes	Managing Director	Senior Project Manager	Financial expert
Complete data	1	4	1
Knowledge transfer	1	4	1
Approach for improvement Approach for improvement and Stakeholder / employees management	1	3	2

*Role-based expert analysis for research question 3:
What are the prerequisites for the use of these methods?*

Table 6 shows the role-based expert analysis for research question 3. It is striking that the opinion that AI should not take over tasks in which social and emotional intelligence is necessary is mentioned by all three roles. This shows the importance of this fact. Beyond this, however, no significant similarities between the roles can be identified.

Table 6. Role-based expert analysis RQ 3

Sub-codes	Managing Director	Senior Project Manager	Financial expert
Complete new tasks	0	2	0
No limitation	0	3	1
Tasks with human interaction	1	4	1
No final decision-making power	1	0	0

Conclusions

The experts’ statements agree on all points concerning the monetary benefits. Nevertheless, some experts express reservations about the skills of companies. They believe that most companies are not yet ready to implement such projects in reality. Nevertheless, it can be observed that these experts also see a monetary advantage if AI and KM were to be used in IT projects. As a prerequisite, in addition to the willingness of companies, it is evident from the study that the underlying quality of data that AI must use is an essential prerequisite. Current and historical data must be available in quantity and of the appropriate quality for an AI to make forward-looking predictions. Likewise, communication with employees is crucial. Particularly noteworthy is the possible fear of employees losing their jobs and being replaced by AI. Also, the necessary knowledge transfer at this point is an essential prerequisite for successfully using AI in project management. Knowledge management modules have the most significant overlap with AI use here. This includes content training and knowledge of what AI can do and where its limits lie.

Middle and top management confidence in AI and potential failures at the outset must be present in companies. Spontaneous tasks that still need to be learned by the AI, especially tasks in which human social intelligence is necessary, should not be done by the AI. These can be escalation talks or criticism talks and communication with essential project stakeholders.

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The Influence of the Concept of “Noble Savage” in Political Philosophy. Freedom and Social Organization from the Perspective of the Utopia of Primitive Society

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ABSTRACT: The perception of primitive society as a positive one, based on freedom, natural law and virtue, has been the subject of humanities since Antiquity. Although the myth of the “Noble Savage” crystallized only in the Age of Enlightenment, the same fundamental ideas continue to arouse interest in the field of ethics or political philosophy. This paper focuses on the writings of two prominent philosophers who lived and created in different periods of human development, but who saw the distant past of mankind in the light of idealism: Lucius Annaeus Seneca and Jean-Jacques Rousseau.

KEY WORDS: noble savage, political philosophy, social organization, limits of freedom

Thinkers from different areas of the humanities (political sciences, social sciences, etc.) have tried over time to imagine how mankind was organized before the existence of the current forms of government and social structuring, trying to explain how the forms of political and social organization appeared as we know them today, with all the intermediate forms, from emergence to the present. What were the circumstances that made these things possible?

Often, ethics and political philosophy go hand in hand for some authors; the two cannot be clearly separated. If political philosophy says how society should be organized from a political point of view, so that the purpose of this organization consists in providing a good life for citizens, ethics establishes codes of moral conduct for people living in society, correlated with the axiological universe existing at that time. Also, another characteristic connected to human behavior, in relation to the form organization of the state, but also as a member of society among its fellows refers to legality, to the appearance of and compliance with the laws. However, one of the main issues that both ethics and political philosophy address is freedom. Theories of freedom have undergone changes, just as the values or ideologies of different eras have changed. Some of these theories refer to how human life was organized in the early days, when there was no form of government, nor state, and there were no laws that constrained the behavior of human beings. So as to be able to provide patterns of behavior and organization, it was necessary for the journey of these disciplines to probe, therefore, the beginnings of mankind.

The myth of the “noble savage” is found in literature, being specific to the Modern Age, characterized by the great geographical discoveries made possible by explorers, but also marked by the emergence and expansion of colonialism. Several authors suggest that at the basis of this concept is the Romantic Movement, which influenced the art and literature of the 18th century. A special role in conceptualizing this myth was played by Jean-Jacques Rousseau, the French philosopher and writer who lived in the Age of Enlightenment (Cro 1990, 1-8). This concept is found not only in literature or art, but it will also help several ethnologists or sociologists in developing theories on primitive cultures. Within this myth, the primitive society is seen as a utopian society, in close connection with nature and its laws. Savages are endowed with noble feelings, displaying virtuous behaviors in everyday life. They were not corrupted by the European civilization (www.merriam-webster.com).

Although, according to specialists, the concept of “noble savage” came into being in modern times, it also existed in the works of the great ancient thinkers. A telling example of this is Lucius Annaeus Seneca, with his “Letters to Lucilius”. As is known, Roman philosophy was largely influenced by the

currents of philosophical thought that shaped ancient Greece. Seneca is no exception to this, as he finds inspiration in Plato's philosophy, but also in the philosophy of the Stoics (Coplestone 2008, 383). In Seneca's mentioned work one can see the philosopher's interest in ethics, but the social organization in the era in which he lived can also be observed.

In his writings, the teacher of the Roman Emperor Nero refers to three periods in the history of mankind:

- ✦ the golden age or the primitive period, when society was not well structured or organized politically and socially.
- ✦ the time of the right reason or the time of the wise men, characterized by the emergence of the main philosophical ideas aimed at orienting man towards the cultivation of virtues, towards the exercise of spiritual development.
- ✦ the period represented by the time in which the philosopher lived, characterized by greed and the desire for a luxurious life.

The three epochs are presented antithetically, to highlight the qualities that certain ways of living had, more precisely the good things that mankind had and lost forever, because of the appearance of vices. The positive example in this case is the golden age, that period in the history of humanity when people lived in collectivities, in accordance with the laws of nature, like brothers. At that time, he says, "men and their offspring obeyed innocently the laws of nature, which were both their guide and their law, allowing themselves to be led by the best of them" (Seneca 1967, 306). As in Plato, primitive society is ruled by the wise - that is by the worthy, chosen for their spiritual attributes, which is why the holding of power by these persons did not lead to a leadership based on tyranny. Power was given only to the people considered to be the most suitable for this role; for they made sure that the weak were defended against the strong, thus not putting anyone in danger and preventing possible conflicts. The leader also had the quality of being foresighted, as he made sure that the other members of the community lacked nothing. He also showed his subjects what was useful or useless (Seneca 1967, 306).

Plato's influence is clear, because even in the 'Republic' (his main work on political philosophy), society is ruled by philosophers, according to the

principle of *oikeiopragia*, which stipulates that each person must do what he does best, what suits him, what is his own (Platon 1986, 218). This way the justice will reign in the city because the philosopher is a lover of truth, of wisdom and learning, he hates lies and can devote himself to the rule of the city (state), as he is temperate and can give up the bodily pleasures (Platon 1986, 267, 276 – 278).

Seneca's wise man shows the community what is necessary and what is not, the emphasis falling on functionality, utility, and practice. This is because the life of people in the golden age is based on empiricism, that is, people learned through experience. The primitive period is considered by the philosopher as a time when humanity knew happiness, because people did not have many worries, living in the midst of the elements, closer to nature, which brought them joy. There was no private property, people living from what nature offered them. At the time nature was more generous, "the goods of nature were sitting together close by, within the reach of anyone" (Seneca 1967, 314). The goods were used in common, they belonged to the community.

In addition to foresight, courage and wisdom, the ruler possessed other virtues, such as kindness. The virtues presented are not chosen at random, among them being the four cardinal virtues of Plato's philosophy: justice, temperance, wisdom, and prudence. For the Greek philosopher, prudence lies in the ability of the wise to know what is good for man and how that good can be achieved (Coplestone 2008, 197). Or, to prevent possible conflicts and anticipate the needs of the community so that it does not lack the necessary, Seneca's leader also appeals to foresight. Being a society that lacked conflicts, the whole collectivity obeyed the leader. Weapons, therefore, were not necessary - people did not fight each other, there was no homicide. They defended themselves only from wild beasts.

To live according to the laws of nature means that other virtues inspired by Greek philosophy were considered: generosity (which for Aristotle is situated in the middle, between vice by deficiency – stinginess, and vice by excess – waste) (Coplestone 2008, 307), but also temperance. As for temperance, it existed in all aspects of life, "for the measure in everything was

as the need required” (Seneca 1967, 310). Whoever lives by this principle leads a moderate life in which the balance between needs and the resources is preserved. This prevents waste, for nature makes available to man everything he needs, and he will take from nature only as much as he needs. It is to such a life that Seneca urges our fellows: we must be content with what is enough for our basic needs, with what is useful to us, for “we can have everything we need, if we will be content with what the earth has put at our fingertips” (Seneca 1967, 309). As the author states, the limitation of desires according to the necessary means, that is, the desire to live in moderation is seen in his contemporaneity as a gross behavior, contrary to what is valued in his society: luxury, opulence, and abundance.

Guided by the principles mentioned above, the primitive man had a free life, without great constraints, leading a happy life, for there was no social segregation between the poor and rich. People were modest, content with simple things, and lived without fear, taking care of their peers. Livelihoods were adapted to the basic needs of the human being. This happy age ended, however, with the advent of a great vice: greed, accompanied by poverty, luxury, fornication, division, and frivolity.

In the dichotomy between the natural life - living in the age of happiness and the artificial, lush life that Seneca’s contemporaries live, life according to the laws of nature is preferable. For, with the advent of greed, man turned away from nature, from what was simple, easy to procure, carefree. Nature is generous; through it one can easily obtain everything that the human being needs, for nothing. The resources we need are easy to get. Instead, man gave up living lightly; we complicated our own lives, creating artificial needs for us. The luxurious life and abundance tire the man and create additional worries and fears - man has come to struggle in hardships. The philosopher explains how luxury was born: first, man “began to desire vain things, then inappropriate things, and eventually he enslaved the soul to the body, and commanded it to do all its lusts” (Seneca 1967, 310). It all started from the fact that man gave excessive importance to the body and its needs, which, if he (the body) was once treated like a slave, now came to be treated like a master, pleasure becoming more important than virtues or reason. Greed and luxury are the consequences of a life based on hedonism.

Seneca's description gives us a picture of how the two societies are reflected, similarly: "The reed housed free people. Under marble and gold dwells slavery" (Seneca 1967, 308).

The flourishing of crafts is also due to the fact that we complicate our existence, the Roman thinker criticizes the abundance of workshops and crafts in his current era, many of which are superfluous, because they do not take into account the ascension of the soul or the means necessary for life. Although they are still the result of reason, of the skill of men, they do not come from temperance or wisdom. Crafts came into being because they were necessary for man, but their multiplication is also due to the artificial need for luxury - for virtue has come to serve pleasure. Natural man does not need so many crafts or art to live his simple life. Constructions and architecture initially followed simple lines; they were not based on ornaments, but on functionality.

The connection between the two periods mentioned is made by the period of the right reason, when true sages made known to man the principles by which he should be guided, according to reason, which is his main attribute. Thanks to this period, the contemporary man (of Seneca) could distinguish what is right and what is wrong for himself. The higher activity to which one can indulge is the training of the soul by cultivating virtues. The true sages revealed the truth, they made possible the transition of the human being from the stage of being similar to animals, who did not know the gods, to that of a being that lives in accordance with the divinity, which he imitates and which he obeys. Thus, people learned the law of life, which they applied in everything and came to accept "all that chance brings, as they receive that which is decided" (Seneca 1967, 314). Boundaries and delimitation appeared in human society with the advent of greed, when man coveted more than he had, taking possession of the land, and making it his property. Greed, "wanting to pull something to her side and to appropriate it, she alienates everything, and from the boundlessness before, reached the strait. Greed brought poverty: wanting too much, it lost everything" (Seneca 1967, 315). Decision-making can, however, be interpreted in another way: once the wise man brought knowledge and made the gods known, man came to know the law of life, that is, also what was restricted by the gods. And the

man owes it to himself to obey them. Boundary establishes certain limits - physical, geographical, and behavioral: those boundaries that restrict the freedom of the individual.

The influence of Stoicism on Roman philosophy, and in this case on Seneca's philosophy, is also observed in other parts of the Letters. The attitude of accepting fortuitous events to the same extent as those whose appearance can be anticipated, which are delimited, is the acceptance due to the law of life. It will materialize in the ease of accepting everything that life brings. A similar recommendation is also found in the urge for detachment, a practice characteristic of the Stoics, aimed at obtaining a state of tranquility by avoiding the disturbance of the soul:

"But that's not why I'm advising you to be detached. Beware of all the evils you fear, expect everything that wisdom urges you to wait for, watch and remove from you anything that can harm you, long before it is fulfilled. For this, your confidence in yourself and a spirit ready to endure any misfortune will be of great benefit to you. The one who is able to bear it can be protected from fate; of course, a man reconciled does not allow himself to be troubled" (Seneca 2018, 35).

The period in which the principles of true reason were made known was highlighted by the focus on rational thinking, which makes the difference between what is right and what is wrong, is focused on eternal good, on true happiness, on the grounds and definition of truth, and, finally, on virtue. The right reason is about true greatness, the things that last forever; the wise man would not have been concerned with the crafts of men, but with things worthy of perpetual use. The happiest man is not the one who seeks fleeting happiness, but he who does not need happiness, just as the most powerful man is "he who has power over himself" (Seneca 1967, 314). Virtue (Seneca 1967, 314), like freedom, cannot be bought. It is in everyone's power to give themselves freedom, but also to demand it from themselves. Freedom can be achieved through abandoning fear: fear of death and fear of poverty (Seneca 2018, 28).

In the description of the primitive period, the Roman philosopher does not compromise on praise, appreciating the characteristics that mankind lost with the advent of vices, and displaying nostalgia for its origins. He also

mentions that although to be admired, this specific period was not the home for a perfect society. Primitives acted as if a wise man should act, but they did so without being wise (Seneca 1967, 314). They did not know virtue and did not know how to become virtuous people, which is only possible by practicing virtues. Unlike Seneca's contemporaries, they were stronger by nature and more trained to overcome hardships, but spiritually they were less perfect, due to their ignorance. The fact that they did not have many vices is due to their ignorance, their simple way of living, not to the fact that the right reason would have guided them how to lead their lives. Virtues can only be found in those who are aware of them and have trained themselves to reach perfection. As human beings, we have a propensity to virtue, we can cultivate it through uninterrupted exercise, but not all people follow this path of wisdom.

Another important philosopher, this time representative of the Modern Era who made use of the image of the "natural man" is Jean-Jacques Rousseau. He is one of the philosophers who developed the social contract theory in political philosophy. This time, however, we can talk about a different perception regarding the idea of "noble savage": the birth of the state took place based on the model of the family. Therefore, Rousseau uses both the theory of social contract, which stipulates that the state was born naturally, based on an unwritten contract between the subjects and the government, and the patriarchal theory (from Latin, *pater* = father) to explain the emergence of the state according to the model of the family. The way in which the "noble savage" is portrayed by the French in his main work, "The Social Contract" considers how the state organization of society imitates the family: led by the father or husband, who is the head of the family. According to the philosopher, men are naturally free. If in their early life the children live with the father, being forced to stay with the family until they grow up, once they mature, both they and their parents regain their independence. When children choose to continue living with their parents, this is due to a convention, they do not do this naturally, but make use of their own will. Rousseau states that "the family is the oldest of the societies and the only natural one" (Rousseau 2007, 24), and the state is organized according to its image, the role of the head of the family being taken by the leader, and

that of the children is taken by the people. Both the leader and the people give up their freedom only for their own benefit, just as they do in the family. People are born equal, slavery is not a natural state of the human being, but is contrary to nature, slaves losing everything in chains, even the desire for freedom (Rousseau 2007, 25). From the principle of equality, it follows that no man can have natural authority over his fellows, nor even a father can alienate his children, just as a people cannot alienate themselves. Freedom is a human right (Rotaru 2019, 201-215), but it is also part of its essence: "to give up one's own freedom is to give up the quality of man, to rights and even to human duties" (Rousseau 2007, 28).

Government must not be based on physical strength, on force. Strength must be replaced by the just (the law), for only in this way can there be legitimacy to rule. Force, which is a physical power, requires obedience out of necessity, because the life of the least powerful can be endangered. But with the replacement of force with the just, it leads to willing obedience to the leader, an act that involves will, consent given rationally. For the just is the legitimate power. And in the face of physical power people are not obliged to obey. Legitimate power, however, ensures obedience, for it is based on conventions. As no one can have authority over one's fellow human beings naturally, at the core of human society remain the conventions on which legitimate authorities rely. Several rights are respected in these conventions: no perfect authority or boundless submission can be attributed to any party (Rousseau 2007, 28).

Another feature of the primitive society envisioned by Rousseau is the state of independence, which comes to complete equality and freedom. Primitive men are not enemies of each other naturally, as this would involve different relationships. In the type of family-oriented organization, relationships between people are simple, personal. The links between them are not so precise as to allow the appearance of the state of war. This fact is also possible due to the lack of ownership. Even though there may still be fleeting conflicts, war does not constitute a natural state in the primitive society. The existence of wars in human history is due to abuses by feudal-type government. Relations between people are different from relations between states; therefore, in the case of the establishment of a state of war, it is not

justified to kill the enemy soldiers if they give up their weapons, or to enslave the enemy people.” In the case of war, there is a relationship from state to state, in which the citizens of the two enemy states end up being enemies by chance, since their role changes, from that of a citizen, to that of a soldier or defender of the country, which involves other rights and obligations. The conflict is not based on the interhuman relationship, which is why one state can have as its enemy only another state, not a group of citizens, because states and people have different natures. When the soldiers drop their weapons, their role returns to the original one, that of a citizen, the enemy state having no right over their lives. Following the same pattern, the enslavement by slavery of a people is illegitimate (Rousseau 2007, 29-30).

The need for a social pact arises when people can no longer remain in the state of nature, because obstacles appear in their path that cannot be removed, such as the vicissitudes of nature or the difficulty of obtaining the necessary food. There is a question of establishing conventional freedom and renouncing natural freedom. For the people not to perish, they must join forces, which they must direct to the same purpose. Through association, individuals and their property can be protected from danger, even if this involves giving up full individual freedom. The social contract is based on the union of several individuals, who agree on tacitly admitted, universally recognized causes. If the pact is violated, each member of the association “immediately regains his original rights and resumes his natural freedom” (Rousseau 2007, 33). Through the social pact, the public person is born, formed by the union of all private persons. If in the past this form of organization made up the city (state), in the present, it is the basis for the founding of the republic. The French philosopher sums up the nature of the social pact as follows: “each of us pools all our person and power under the supreme leadership of the general will and then we receive each member as an indivisible part of the whole” (Rousseau 2007, 33-34). Although it restricts individual freedom, the social pact does not destroy it, but replaces the physical inequality that exists between people with moral and legitimate equality. Their natural equality is replaced by moral and legitimate equality, that is, by the convention for which they have given their consent and by the right guaranteeing legitimacy (Rousseau 2007, 40).

The Rousselian work aroused great interest in the epoch, exerting influence on literary, ethnological, or philosophical studies. It is believed that Rousseau created and popularized the concept of “noble savage” (Ellingson 2001, 100), presenting the myth to highlight the fact that the only viable alternative to feudal ordering, tyranny or despotism lies in social organization through the social contract/pact. This can be achieved due to the willingness of individuals to associate, thanks to their freedom to decide how to act jointly to ensure their own existence and avoid dangers.

Ideal society, with free, equal, independent people, neither good nor bad - the natural state of human beings leads to the spontaneous emergence of the state, out of necessity. Man is perfectible; he can better himself and organize himself in his own interest, by creating “positive mutual relations” (Drago and Boroli 2004, 949). With all the satisfactory characteristics, the human society can still be corrupted; inequality appears due to development (people do not have equal attributes, some are stronger than others or, over time, end up owning more property). The problems arising in the organized society after the appearance of the social contract, the fact that man gets to live according to the law of the general will in civil society, his corruption by society can be repaired by a behavior that leads to liberation from the harmful influence of society and by regaining freedom.

While it was easier for Rousseau to rely on the work that appeared at the time in connection with the way in which recently discovered primitive societies were organized, being influenced by the research and literature specific to his time, Seneca was not equally familiar with the life of those societies. The writings that influenced him belonged to the Greek philosophers, who, like him, made an exercise in rational imagination, by which they tried to justify why primitive societies were in one way or another and what they had the best. It cannot be said that the Roman philosopher was influenced by the concept of “noble savage”, this concept appearing much later, but he also presented an idealized perspective of primitive society, occupying through his work an important place in the political philosophy of late antiquity (Rotaru 2005, 204-205).

The paradisiacal vision of life in primitive societies still arouses the imagination. Its influence is observed even today, through the more visible orientation towards a living as close as possible to that of traditional societies,

in harmony with the rhythms of nature, based on sustenance. There is a tendency of young families to migrate from urban areas to rural ones, able to offer a more satisfying life on the spiritual level, stress-free, more oriented towards the spirit of economy and avoiding waste, and more attentive to protecting the environment. The return to origins is the reason for the social change that began to grow in Romanian society as well.

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A Historical Perspective on the Work and Rest Dynamic in the Romanian Ethos

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ABSTRACT: For Romanians the work-rest dynamic is a product of historical forces unique to this population. Therefore, the factors that have influenced the relation of Romanians to the work and rest dynamic and fatigue were examined. The factors are the turbulent medieval history of the Romanian people, the Orthodox Church, whose teachings have played an essential part in the development of the Romanians' relation to work and rest, as well as the communist regime and the social and economical dynamics specific to the post-1989 era.

KEY WORDS: work, rest, exhaustion, history, Romania, Comunism

Medieval History and Its Impact on the Romanian Work Ethic and Rest Habits

“Rest is a historical, cultural, political an social concept” (Sharpe 2017, 912) and as such, it cannot be understood without the examination of its multiple formative influences. Similarly, although “there is no doubt that the increased preoccupation with exhaustion coincided with the rise of modern capitalism (...) exhaustion and its various symptoms have also been a serious concern in other historical periods” (Schaffner 2016, 9). Over the centuries, due to its geographical position, the population of Romania has been faced with countless invasions born out of the ambitions of the great powers and

empires that have been established around it. From the Roman Empire to the Ottoman Empire, the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and the position of Romania during the two World Wars, there have always been external forces that exerted pressure on the Romanian people. Successive waves of invasions, especially in the south of Romania, had a very important impact not only on the historical course of the Romanian provinces, but also on the society on the whole, and on the Romanian ethos.

The need to cope with these pressures and invasions has created a feeling of anxiety in the psyche of the Romanian people. Granted, the wars and countless invasions have not been the only factors responsible for the formation of the Romanian collective psyche; after all, every European nation had their share of wars, conflict, and calamities. However, in the case of the Romanian people, these things happened when the structure of the collective psyche was immature, thus relatively underdeveloped. As the adverse life experiences have a greater impact earlier in life, in the same way, centuries of turbulent history had a powerful impact on the Romanian identity, which was still in the development process at that time. Thus, an incursion in the history sources beginning with the 15th century until the 19th century depicts a portrait of the Romanian in full process of metamorphosis.

It must be mentioned here that, when the texts refer to Romanians between 15th and 19th century, they have in view mostly Romanian peasants (in most cases, merchants and craftsmen were foreigners). This is an important aspect, since in general, the Romanian peasant's life was trapped in a poverty cycle that was subjected to the conditions imposed by his relation with the nobility (*boieri*). Although the relationship between the peasant and the noble took different forms over time, this factor controlled almost exclusively (sometimes, totally) the way the peasant worked. If we look at the Romanian peasant's situation over the centuries through contemporary lens, it could be said that they experienced a total lack of control in their relation with their work, which is a burnout factor in relation to work (Maslach 2017, 57) as well as a trauma generating factor.

Therefore, the Romanian work and rest related ethos was formed in a context of adversities and lack of control, which guarantees the presence of exhaustion to a certain degree. Moreover, it seems that these adverse

contexts have led to the gradual degradation of the Romanian attitude towards work. For example, sources from the 15th to the 17th century describe the inhabitants of the Romanian Countries as being hardworking, clean, interested in the hygiene of their close habitat, hospitable and cheerful, party lovers and good soldiers. In addition, we are told that “the Romanians’ native intelligence is remarkable and, although the people is uneducated, they are rather cunning than simple” (Tighiliu 1995, 127). It seems that “in a country where everything is marked by instability, the mentally dominant feeling is that of insecurity, which is seen in every layer of society, from peasant to the noble. This general insecurity, capable of generating existential terrors, reaches its peak in the 17th century. (...) The ever-increasing taxes have led to the most extreme poverty, pushed people to hopelessness, depression, on the verge of despair. As despair leads to carelessness, they give themselves to an intemperate life of eating and drinking” (Tighiliu 1995, 128).

In 15th to 17th century a portrait takes shape of the Romanian people as hardworking people, initially, but one that was crashed by waves of adversities. Under the burden of this trauma, people began to focus exclusively on survival, trying to manage their collective trauma by means of the only coping behavior at hand – food and drink, and even so, only when these were available.

Unfortunately, because of these difficult circumstances and with strong feeling of lack of control over his work and his life, the Romanian individual seemed to relinquish his diligence as a virtue of his culture. This is why he began to be described in not quite laudatory terms by foreign travelers who visited the Romanian provinces. Bartolomeo Geymet, who was an Italian traveler, wrote in 1838 that, “the peasant is an uncivilized, stubborn species, who only works for fear of bludgeoning” (Geymet 1838, 737). Raoul Perrin, a French traveler from the same period, despite the fact that he praised the landscapes, the resources, and even the inhabitants of the Romanian Countries, also added that “there is nothing Romanians delight more in than the intoxicating *dolce far niente*” (Perrin 1839, 753).

That said, these observations need to be understood taking into consideration the larger context of poverty and difficulties caused by political and economic unfavorable dynamics, which oftentimes have been even abusive towards the peasants. This state of affairs has lasted for centuries

and led to a profound feeling of hopelessness. The lack of proportion or connection between the quality and the amount of work, on one side, and personal prosperity, on the other, forced the Romanian peasant to be set in a perpetual struggle for survival, even when it could have been different. Charles Lemerrier, another French traveler who described the Romanian men as being lazy, also said about Romanian women that they “would not be lacking in beauty if their appearance were not so spoiled by excessive fatigue” (Lemerrier 1839, 778).

Under these circumstances, there is not a straightforward correlation between work and an improvement of the standard of living, because there are external factors – the nobles, the high taxes, invasions, wars – that come between the work done and the reaping of the fruits of one’s labor. Thus, it should not come as a surprise that there is at least an ambivalent attitude towards work in the Romanian ethos. Work was necessary for survival, but the efforts of doing more than was strictly necessary proved to be useless, and thus they were often abandoned. This discrepancy between work and its results would only amplify during the communist regime.

Between 15th and 17th century, rest was considered a physiological need that is met by sleep, but also as a recurring period (weekly or annually), when work stops and it is replaced by social and recreational events. In addition, rest has different significance for the Romanian peasant and for the nobles.

For the Romanian peasant, over time, sleep has been the main method to regain one’s strength, especially for those who did demanding physical work. It is difficult to recreate an image of sleep among the Romanian peasants from classic sources, because this was not a topic worthy of the interest of the writers of those times. This is why, in order to understand this topic, researchers have used ethnographic sources. The peasant’s sleep seems to be fragmented by various elements of rural life,

(...) Romanian peasants, as well as other traditional population subjected to this kind of study, do not sleep uninterrupted for a number of hours every night. Their sleep, including the night sleep, is always fragmented by various events and activities. The peasant must avoid falling into a deep sleep, because he needs to be able to hear the babies crying, the noise made by the animals, the singing of the rooster, and many other noises that can be heard at night. He keeps the fire on, gets up to feed the animals (especially

in winter), goes back to bed, uses the backyard toilet, makes love. He falls asleep again and again, learning to sleep with interruptions, and to sleep with one eye open, so that he could “steal a nap” (Mitu 2014, 31).

It is worth noting that the existential anxiety mentioned earlier, as a result of a turbulent course of history, does not leave the Romanian peasant, not even in his sleep. In order to enter a state of deep sleep, one needs a feeling of safety, both immediate and general safety, a feeling that was absent from the most part of the Romanian peasant's experience over the centuries.

The Influence of the Orthodox Tradition on the Attitude towards Work and Rest

The Romanian ethos cannot be discussed without mentioning the Orthodox tradition as an important formative factor. It is through the Orthodox Church that the tendency to accentuate the eastern characteristics permeate the Romanian spirit, this including the relaxed way of relating to work. The words of Priest Antonie Plamadeala, found in his book, *Tradition and Freedom in Orthodox Spirituality*, are representative of this idea. During a discussion about the Western (Roman-Catholic, Anglican, Protestant) and the Orthodox Eastern spirituality, he says, “among us, the Romanians, we have never made a big deal out of obeying the Rules. (...) The explanation for this lack of interest in the Rules in the East may be given, mainly, by the more independent and relaxed spirit of the oriental Orthodoxy, for sure this is the case with the Romanian one (...)” (Plamadeala 2010, 19). Romanians, as almost all the easterners, are rather emotional than rational, more used to let themselves be guided by their own feelings than by a firm set of laws or rules, whether they are written or not. This contrast between the eastern and western spirituality illustrates well the way the Romanians relate to work, rather with a certain relaxation than with the tension that is necessary for work done with excellence.

Actually, he is also the one who states that, “in every day Orthodoxy, what is exceptional is precisely the absence of the exceptional, that is, there is balance on the way, in everyday life” (Plamadeala 2010, 26). The Romanian spirit in Orthodoxy is not defined as an endeavor to reach excellence, even less

the excellence in work. Work must not be left undone, laziness is sometimes sanctioned, at least verbally, but there is no such thing as a culture of excellence in work, in Orthodoxy (whether we talk about manual or intellectual work).

By contrast, for the Western work ethic, especially that of the Protestants, excellence is the main value, based on and preserving the rigorous principles of the Puritans, according to Max Weber. The Protestant approach to work tends to be different from the Orthodox, and these two influences can be found in the minority evangelical population of Romania.

It may be said that the contribution of the Orthodox Church to the Romanian ethos was to place a greater emphasis on rest than on work, judging by the seriousness in dealing with the violation, through work, of the rest days stipulated in the Church calendar. Indeed, this cannot be blamed solely on the Orthodox Church, but it should rather be attributed to an eclectic mix of orthodox faith and pagan superstitions, a combination that is a characteristic of the Romanian religious life.

Thus, in Romanian mentality, it is considered a “great sin”, even today, to work on Sunday or other days of religious holidays. Moreover, in popular legends, Sunday is “a holy woman, so sacred that instantly kills the women who knead bread on a Sunday” (Anghel 2001, 81). Similar punishments await those who, according to popular Romanian beliefs, spurn other religious holidays. For example, all the Thursdays between Easter and Pentecost are sacred days, and it is strictly forbidden to do any kind of work then. “If anyone disregards Thursdays and goes plowing on the field, or does any other work in the field, in summer, that work will be ruined by hailstone” (Pamfile 2018, 21). As for the rest days or holidays during the whole year, Romanians celebrate days according to the Church calendar – Sunday, saints days, Christmas, Easter etc. – and they also have holidays from the popular calendar, such as Dragobetele, for example (Ghinoiu 2003, 1).

Over the centuries, in the mainly rural and agricultural Romanian society, rest on a feast day meant not only avoiding doing any work, but also spending time in community or with the family. Relatives in a larger family would go and visit other members of the family who lived in the neighboring villages. In most cases, though, the local community – the village – would celebrate together. On feast days, “many householders gather together, relatives and neighbors, and celebrate in the most pleasant way.” (Pamfile

2018, 22). On feast days, locals went to special traditional gatherings (*șezătoare*) with music, jokes, crafts, and danced a folk dance called *hora*. It is important to note that, according to Romanian mentality, individual rest means only sleep (and even this takes place together with family members). Besides that, any other time without work – whether it is time spent in religious activities or celebrations – means time spent in community, with the others. By definition, rest for the Romanians is community rest, not individual rest, at least as long as they live mainly in rural areas.

With the arrival of the 19th century (surely in the 20th century, with its urbanistic expansion), Romanians who live in towns begin to have leisure activities more and more similar with those of the people in Occident, as a reflection of the interest and new loyalty of the society that distances itself from Turkish and Greek influences, showing an increased interest for the West.

In his short history of Bucharest, Constantin Moisil describes the end of the 18th century and the beginning of the 19th century as a moment of change,

(...) new habits began to be introduced, along with the Parisian fashion, and thus life and social conventions were changing, little by little. When at a party given by the French consul, the Romanian nobles came accompanied by their wives – which was unheard of before – and when the ladies showed up at soirees with dresses like those in Paris, and danced European dances, that was the first signal that the society began to be transformed and take on Western spirit. (Moisil 1932, 34).

The construction of the National Theater (Scurtu 2003, 170) was a result of the growing interest demonstrated by the Bucharest inhabitants for the theater performances, which increased in number. Gradually, Romanians began to refer to Bucharest by the name of “little Paris”, and this reflected in the way they choose to spend their free time. The urban areas had been different from the rural areas anyway, as far as the question of rest and leisure is concerned, but now rest and leisure gain an even more pronounced individual character, becoming more and more distinct than the traditions of spending the free time collectively. Going to the theater, or for a walk, having a cake in a sweets shop, even the visits to family and friends were not completely individual and devoid of the presence of the community, but they surely prepared the way for the almost exclusively individual leisure activities that were to come in a few decades. „Since the Second World War

the importance and roles of traditional social communities and networks such as the church, the neighbourhood, and the family have gradually been eroded” (Schaufeli 2017, 110)

The First World War brought along great changes in the structure of the Romanian society. Between the two great wars, free time was spent differently even in villages,

the feast day were observed; most peasants used to go to church on Sunday mornings. In the afternoon they would meet in front of the town hall or in the pub and they would discuss matters related to the life of the village, county, or even country, political parties of political people. In some villages there were community cultural centers where children, talented people or artistic groups and bands from the city would come and perform for the villagers. (Scurtu 2003, 170).

The changes in leisure time habits that began taking place in the beginning of the 18th century are well grounded in the interwar period. An evolution could be noticed regarding the way Romanians related to work and rest. Adversities had fractured the connection between the quality and the amount of the peasant’s work and the fruit of his labor, which in turn led to an ambivalent mentality regarding work, marked by discouragement. Rest, on the other hand, became a more pronounced individual activity in urban areas, especially in Bucharest, as opposed to the collective activity centered in community, in the rural areas.

Work, Rest and Exhaustion During and After the Communist Regime

With the arrival of communism, particularly of Ceaușescu’s rule, the mentality of Romanians in matters of work, rest and fatigue, changes significantly. “After the second World War, Romania went through the most rapid and most visible change, especially in terms of people’s relation with property, which indirectly led to a change in work relations” (Pisica 2018, 59). The dissolution of private property, collectivization and the “patriotic” activities of forced labor, as well as the almost total control exerted by the State over the individual work options have once again fractured the connection between the work done and its results. The communist politics have also a

great impact on the leisure activities. This was realized by limiting the hours of free time and a drastic censorship of entertainment resources.

During the communist regime, work was declared to be one of the core values. In the very first article of the Socialist Republic of Romania Constitution it was stated that, "The Socialist Republic of Romania is a state belonging to the working people, both in towns and villages" (The Constitution 1965, 1). It is relevant to mention that, "during the communism regime, unemployment was not recognized, nor allowed. Consequently, in the official records, the active population equaled the employed population" (Pisica 2018, 54).

Nevertheless, in real life, people's relation with work in those years was marked by the same ambivalence due to the effort to maintain a balance between elements at opposite poles of the spectrum: the public discourse image about work versus the real work situation; the image of work as means for individual growth and work as means for punishment and re-education; and lastly, the reward promised for the work done (a generalized good for the whole society) versus the actual reward that was received (extremely limited buying options and a precarious standard of living). In addition, there was also a tension between paid work and domestic work, the latter being used in an effort to compensate for the shortages caused by the general economic situation.

In order to better understand this process, it is important to consider these aspects in the larger context of the economic and political situation during, and immediately after, the two World Wars. In 1944, Romania was a country deeply affected by war, with scarce resources, with external debts, and a population psychologically marked by all the losses, but at the same time, willing (and forced by necessity) to work in order to change the current state of things. The following years, 1945-1950, are years of intense work for the Romanians, and as a result, "it is almost unanimously admitted that the relaunching of the Romanian economy was achieved between 1945-1950" (Tismaneanu 2006, 411).

However, 1951-1989 were years marked by the policies of industrialization and urbanization, when Romania had to make the transition from a mainly rural and agricultural state to a state where the majority of the

population lived in towns and worked in factories and industrial plants. There appeared the need for these towns and industrial plants to be built, and to this end, the population had to work hard. Unlike the post-war period, when the population was willing to make efforts to rebuild the country, under the influence of the growing control exerted by the State, under the pressure of the propaganda that accompanied the unrealistic five-year plans, along with the official system abuse, Romanians would no longer engage with these ideals.

This is where the ambivalence of the Romanian towards work was formed. On one hand, the reshaping of industry and the relocation of the population from the rural to the urban areas involved strenuous work. On the other hand, there was a generalized attitude of resentment and lack of trust caused by the work directives and the five-year production plans. In addition, Romanians experienced an acute lack of control in everything related to their work, their options being limited, not only when it came to choosing a particular job, but even the town where they were to work. Moreover, the personal benefits received for the work done (salary, career mobility) did not reflect the work done, and did not proved to be a good enough incentive for the individual to continue investing in his work.

Under these circumstances, both time and quality of rest suffer, despite the fact that the Communist Party tried to elaborate on a work-rest ratio more favorable to the working class.

After 1948, the establishment of the communist regime in Romania was followed by a series of social protection measures for the working class, such as, increased number of days for the paid annual leave, free medical assistance and sick leave, the introduction of union-subsidized leisure and treatment tickets (subsidy ranging from 30% to 100%). (Banu 2013, 22)

Nevertheless, the low standard of living – limited access to food, endless queues, frequent power cuts, shortage of hot water and gas – leads to an increased amount of work done by the citizens in order to survive. The free time is spent waiting in queue. Summers are spent in the countryside, helping elderly parents to cultivate the little land they still had, so that in the fall they could supplement their food resources with canned food for the winter.

Free time was actually limited and the way it was spent was directly or indirectly controlled. If initially the working week was six days of eight hours each, in 1977 the process was set into motion to transition to a reduced working week. The reduced working week increased leisure time only to the minimum, and even this could only happen if the production plans were fulfilled. This fulfillment of the production plan of the employment institution did not guarantee, however, that the employees were given free time. It was possible for them to be called to do “voluntary” work and to participate in other Party ordered activities.

Under these circumstances, the assertion could be made that, generally speaking, rest was not a priority for the Romanians, as they were mainly focused on survival. The feeling of security and having the basic need met are precursors necessary for rest, and more often than not, they were absent in communist years. In this context, the preexisting influence of Orthodox spirituality was helpful, and determined many people to avoid working on Sundays or on religious feast days, if and when the work schedule allowed them to do it. Although less people attended church, for fear of negative consequences (at least in urban areas), it was not unusual for many to secretly continue to observe elements of their religious faith, and avoiding work on Sundays was one of the actions that they could take.

Apart from the absence of work on the rare occasions when they had this option, Romanians during the communist period use their free time to connect relationally. Reciprocal home visits, as well as small parties organized on the occasion of anniversaries, are frequent ways of spending free time. This trend is fueled by the absence of other forms of entertainment of an individual rather than community nature, such as television programs or even access to fiction, which were significantly censored at the time.

In the absence of other more sophisticated ways of recreation, during the communist period, Romanians also focus on the time spent in nature. When the weather allowed it, people would go on a picnic. Through this, the Romanians tried to make the most out of the shorter periods of free time; longer periods, such as paid holidays or annual leaves, were reserved for either returning to one's home village to help with household chores or, (for the few who could afford it) tourism.

Obviously, in these conditions, the level of fatigue in communist Romania seemed to be high, both physically and mentally. Physical fatigue was due not only to the extended work schedule of both workers and intellectuals, but also to the fact that the hours spent at work were added to hours spent in queues, or, especially for the inhabitants of Bucharest, hours spent on the way to and from the place of work. Domestic work, such as doing laundry or cooking, also took longer than would be necessary, when electricity, hot water, or gas were often cut off, motivating people to find creative solutions.

There were also a number of factors that contributed to fatigue from a mental point of view. Among these there was the constant fear that a joke or a comment that would be taken out of context could come to the attention of members of Securitate, the feeling of lack of control regarding the most important aspects of life, as well as the discrepancy between the official discourse of the Party and the grim reality of day to day life in Romania.

The revolution of 1989 revealed a people that was eager to exercise personal autonomy in terms of both work and rest. "Autonomy first emerged as a collective aspiration in Western societies between the end of the Second World War and the 1970s: it entailed liberty of choice, based on self-ownership, and thus normative diversity regarding life- styles and achievements" (Ehrenberg, 2017, 160). However, the population of Romania was inexperienced in making such decisions and it was also placed in an extremely unstable economic context. The power vacuum created after the abrupt fall of the communist regime destabilized all national structures, including the economic ones - industry and agriculture - which provided jobs for the majority of the population. It should be noted that the long duration of the communist regime meant that, in 1989, the entire working population was one that was formed in relation to the communist system, which not only provided jobs, but it also chose them for the working people, and punished those who dodged work tasks.

In the first years after the revolution in 1989, Romanians experienced a sharp devaluation of the national currency and mass job losses. This scenario inspired a new-found respect and appreciation, among Romanians, for the ability to work, as well as timid attempts at entrepreneurship – the so-called

“bisnitari”. This did not mean that the work ethic had undergone a radical transformation – Romania continued to be the country of the “anything goes”, and the nepotism system went on being valid many years after the revolution. However, in the absence of a collective system that made room for everyone in the workforce, Romanians were forced to take ownership of their relationship with the workplace on an individual level.

This new dynamic led to two new trends: the phenomenon of emigration (temporary or permanent) and the growing interest in acquiring higher education as a gateway to better paid jobs. Thus in the 90’s the phenomenon of “strawberries pickers” appeared. Romanians, often college educated ones, or students, who would go to perform various agricultural work in Western Europe – Spain, Italy, England. In the following decades, the workforce exodus would continue, through the emigration of higher education professionals – doctors, accountants, computer specialists – as well as qualified workers or craftsmen.

The interest in higher education led to the emergence of many private higher education institutions, thus dissolving the monopoly that state universities had on higher education and allowing a much larger number of college graduates to enter the labor market.

This factor, added to that of the foreign investment stimulus policies and especially after Romania joined the European Union made it possible, two decades after the revolution, for many foreign corporations to come to Romania in search of well-trained and cheaper workforce than in Western Europe. This has created a new employee profile in the big cities – the corporate. The appearance of corporations on the labor market scene in the big cities (and specifically in Bucharest) has had a strong impact on life in the city. Better paid jobs attracted professionals from other cities, or retained those who had come to study. This increase in income and population has led to the development of services to the benefit of the growing number of residents of large cities, especially Bucharest and Cluj.

Conclusions

It is difficult to talk about the Romanian perspective on work and rest as a unitary concept, because the concepts of work and rest in Romanians have

had different valences not only throughout history but also in different communities.

In general, there is an ambivalence towards work in the Romanian ethos. This ambivalence is due to the lack of continuity between the quantity and quality of work, on one hand, and its results, on the other, as elements pertaining to the political situation of the time come between the two. This is how a defeatist attitude of the Romanians towards work is formed, being generated by the futility of their efforts. However, in the Romanian ethos, this attitude coexists with an appreciation of work and hardworking people.

Thus, different systems of political organization were interposed between the average Romanian and the results of his work. Those systems were represented initially by the nobility, then by the foreign administrations (Turkish, Greek) and, in more recent times, by the communist regime. The latter, through the close control over individual work, suffocated personal initiative in the work process.

The post-communist era set into motion a series of changes that caused Romanians to own their own relationship to work, since, for the first time in centuries there was a direct connection between the quality and quantity of work and results. Especially in big cities, work became not only a value, but also a means to acquire social and economic capital.

In terms of rest, this has always been an integral part of Romanian culture, both due to the more eastern spirit, eager to enjoy life, and also due to the influence of the Orthodox Church. For the average Romanian, observing Sunday as a day of rest, as well as religious holidays by avoiding work, was a way to exercise their faith, even if sometimes it had a superstitious touch. Caught between traditional approaches to rest – time spent not working and in community – and modern leisure activities, the Romanian perspective on rest seems to have shifted, and it has yet to be chrystallized in a new form.

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Major Donations Fundraising in German Hospitals – Donation Potential of High-Net-Worth Individuals for Top-Quality Medicine and Research

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ABSTRACT: Due to financial constraints, urgent investments or even top-quality medicine and research projects with high financial requirements cannot be realized. Acquiring major donations as an additional funding source can contribute to this. Crucial here is the knowledge of the most potential donor target group - the high-net-worth individuals (HNWIs = financial assets of at least \$1 million, UHNWIs = financial assets of at least \$30 million) as major donors. However, there is no comprehensive empirical data on rich people as donors for medical projects in top-quality medicine in Germany. Thus, for the first time in Germany, the study investigates the extent to which the annual financing gap of the bilingual financing system of hospitals can be reduced with the help of UHNWIs and HNWIs. Furthermore, the focus is on how this target group can support specific medical funding projects in cutting-edge medicine and research to derive practical recommendations for action. This scientifically sound knowledge, obtained for the first time through the study, is indispensable for successful systematic fundraising for hospitals and clinics in the healthcare sector. The study follows a mixed-methods approach. First, splitting the study

into two separate sub-studies, each with different target groups (hospital directors and (ultra)-high-net-worth individuals), examining the research question from two different perspectives. The first sub-study with the hospital directors has started, and the interviews' initial results are already available.

KEY WORDS: Fundraising, funding, top quality medicine, wealthy donors, ultra-high-net-worth-individuals (UHNWI), high-net-worth-individuals (HNWIs)

Introduction

The economic situation of hospitals and clinics in Germany is increasingly deteriorating. Problems are coming to a head - more than half of the clinics will continue to be in the red in the future. As a result, urgently needed investments or even projects in cutting-edge medicine cannot be realized due to financial bottlenecks (Berger 2020). Acquiring donations as an additional funding source to reduce the ever-widening financial gap of hospitals in the healthcare sector can contribute to this. Furthermore, it can be essential to implementing specific funding projects in cutting-edge medicine and research with high financial requirements. Income from donations is already an additional funding source for many hospitals, as both the donor potential and the volume of donations are high in Germany. In recent years, the volume of donations in Germany has been between 5 and 10 billion euros (Deutscher Spendenrat e.V. & GfK 2021; Gricevic, Schulz-sandhof, and Schupp 2020a; 2020b). However, compared to the American fundraising market, the donation volume has not yet been fully exploited (Probst 2019). Crucial here is the knowledge of the most potential donor target group - the (Ultra-)high-net-worth individuals (UHNWIs & HNWIs as major donors. However, there has been no comprehensive research on either the donor potential or the donor behavior of this specific target group in the medical field.

In this paper, the focus will be on the study's methodology and the mapping of the status quo of the topic based on a detailed literature analysis. Due to the long-term nature of the study, the results of the mixed-methods study are not yet fully available. However, in this paper, results of the conducted literature analysis can already be presented, which are not to be found to this extent in any other study so far.

The objective of the study

The study “*Major Donor Fundraising in German Hospitals - Donation Potential of Highly Wealthy People for Cutting-Edge Medicine and Research*” examines for the first time the donation potential of highly wealthy people as major donors for specific medical funding projects in cutting-edge medicine and research in German hospitals and clinics that have very high financial requirements. In addition, the donor behavior of UHNWIs and HNWIs is analyzed, and how they can contribute to the realization of these funding projects. Another research focus is to investigate whether and how the annual funding gap at hospitals and clinics in Germany can be closed or significantly reduced with the help of German HNWIs/UHNWIs.

The research question presented above results in the following research objectives of the project:

- ✦ To examine the status quo of German hospitals and clinics in terms of major gift fundraising
- ✦ Examination of the potential willingness of German UHNWIs and HNWIs to financially support German hospitals and clinics, primarily to financially support specific medical funding projects with high financial needs
- ✦ Deriving normative recommendations for action for German hospitals and clinics that want to use wealthy individuals as donors to implement specific funding projects with high financial needs or to reduce the annual funding gap
- ✦ Activation and enhancement of the potential of high-net-worth donors as an essential source of revenue, which has hardly been used in Germany so far: to implement specific medical funding projects with high financial requirements and/or to reduce debt in hospitals and clinics.

Research Design

The in-depth literature review conducted first provides a deep insight into the current difficult situation of hospitals, shows a comparison of fundraising from Germany to America, and exposes the potential of wealthy people as major donors for cutting-edge medical projects in the health sector. In addition, the study follows a mixed-methods approach. By dividing the study

into two separate sub-studies, each with different target groups, the research question is examined and illuminated from two different perspectives. The first sub-study initially focuses only on the specific target group of hospital and nursing directors as well as senior staff of fundraising departments in hospitals, clinics, and foundations. To this end, a preliminary qualitative study will first be conducted, and then quantitative research will be carried out to test the hypotheses that have been formulated. The aim is to determine the status quo in German hospitals and clinics on major-donor fundraising with high-net-worth individuals to close the funding gap and realize medical funding projects in cutting-edge medicine. These findings will be incorporated into the second part of the study, which will focus on the specific target group of high-net-worth individuals - UHNWIs and HNWIs. In particular, the motives of high-net-worth donors for making a large donation and the potential willingness to provide financial support for targeted funding projects with a high financial outlay in the medical field will be investigated.

Research Methods

The methodological approach of the first sub-study focuses on the semi-structured guided interview in the form of expert interviews. The selected subjects are assigned a corresponding expert status based on defined criteria (Döring and Bortz 2016). Experts were defined as senior staff and responsible persons from the fundraising sector of hospitals, clinics, foundations, and hospital and nursing directors. To gain access to hospital and nursing directors and responsible persons from the fundraising area of hospitals, clinics, and foundations, a call was launched via LinkedIn to recruit subjects from all over Germany for the study. In addition to a brief description of the study and its objectives, a detailed description of the interview participants sought for an expert interview was listed. Looking at the scope, it can be stated that seven interviews were conducted during the current data period. These were realized online via Zoom. The goal is to interview 20 subjects who meet the quota plan for the study. The subjects included medical directors, hospital fundraisers, hospital marketing directors, health and hospital fundraisers, nursing directors, hospital and foundation executive directors, and hospital and foundation fundraising department directors. Explicit attention was paid

to the nationwide distribution of interview partners. The following interview guide (Tab.1) was created using the SPSS method according to Helfferich (2019) and contains a total of five bundles, each with a narrative prompt, various checkup questions, and pure factual queries.

Table 1. Interview guide for the first sub-study

Subsuming (narrative prompt)	Check (was that mentioned?)	Concrete question (fact check)
Basic theoretical knowledge and opinions of the contact persons on the topic		
What knowledge do you personally have in general about fundraising for very wealthy people in the hospital sector? Please address potential challenges, alternative funding sources, attracting donors, and a comparison with the U.S.	Basic potential	What percentage of your revenue would you be willing to invest in professional major-donor fundraising?
	Cf. Germany/USA	
	ROI	Do you think it is realistic to close existing funding gaps in your hospital through wealthy donors/major donors?
	Challenges for the hospital	Would you be willing to budget for fundraising consulting regarding high net worth donors?
	Wealthy people as the most crucial donor group	Do you have an idea of the return on investment that professional fundraising offers?
	Providing a budget for fundraising;	
Past handling/experience of the issue by the hospital/clinic		
What has been your experience with high-net-worth donors regarding donation volume, donor acquisition strategies, challenges, donor behavior, input you have provided, etc.?	Applied strategies in fundraising	As a hospital/clinic in your immediate vicinity (50 km), have you ever done a potential analysis on wealthy people as donors?
	Professional operation of major donations	What's stopping you from doing major gifts fundraising professionally so far?
	Typical Donation Volume	Do you think your clinic would be doing better today if you had started professional major gift fundraising ten years ago?
	Previous input into fundraising for high-net-worth individuals	
	Why has nothing been done in this direction so far?	

Current situation		
How would you describe the current situation regarding your organization's approach to fundraising among the very wealthy?	Occupation with the topic is sensible.	What's your donor structure?
	General attractiveness as a donation object.	Do you generally communicate investment plans to the public?
	The mental attitude of the employees to the topic.	Do you rate your home as attractive to wealthy donors, and why?
	Presentation and content of possible sponsorship projects, which motives should be addressed among donors	What funding projects related to cutting-edge medicine and research can you think of spontaneously for which you currently need donations?
Plans for the future regarding fundraising with high-net-worth individuals		
What are the goals for the future in establishing fundraising for high-net-worth individuals, and what would perfect fundraising for high-net-worth individuals look like to you in this regard?	Positive and negative aspects of fundraising with high-net-worth individuals. Are there things that are holding you back? Professional advice on the subject	Have you thought about getting professional advice on fundraising for high-net-worth individuals?

In addition, a preliminary system of categories has already been developed, taking into account the theoretical framework and the analysis of selected literature for their transfer to the subject area of this study. According to a deductive procedure, main and subcategories were formed, listed in tabular form below. It should be noted that only a preliminary category system can be listed due to the still ongoing study. In creating this deductive category system, explicit care was taken to ensure that the main categories encompassed all aspects and contents of the literature analysis conducted in full in advance and the detailed contents of the SPSS method conducted. The main categories can be justified by the research question and the study's main objectives and are listed together with their subcategories in the following table (Tab.2).

Table 2. Main and subcategories of the deductive category system

Main categories	Subcategories
1 General experience/knowledge	
2 Past	2.1 Donation volume 2.2 Donor acquisition/ donor approach 2.3 Challenges
3 Status Quo	
4 Future plans	4.1 Perfect fundraising 4.2 Budget allocation
5 Funding projects	
6 Donor target group potential	6.1 Closing the funding gap 6.2 Cutting-edge medicine 6.3 Potential analysis
7 Banks & Foundations	

In addition, anchor examples were identified for the respective categories. In this regard, concrete examples are listed for a category to be able to describe it in the best possible way. Furthermore, coding rules were defined since assigning a category is not always possible. This approach made it possible to create a corresponding coding guideline to ensure a rule-guided procedure. An excerpt from the introductory coding guide is presented below.

Table 3. Excerpt from the preliminary coding guide

K2: Past This category describes how the hospital has previously experienced major gift fundraising with high-net-worth individuals. The focus here is mainly on the challenges experienced to date. Of particular importance are other aspects such as donation volume and donor approach.			
Category	Definition	Anchor examples	Coding rules
K2.1 Donation volume	Text passages depict or describe the volume of donations generated by high-net-worth donors to date.	Zu dem Verein kann ich sagen, wie gesagt, es gibt einzelne Großspender. Erinnere mich sogar noch an eine weitere Person, die in der Nachbarschaft lebte,	To be classified are statements on large donations received from wealthy people. No specific figures need to be given.

		keine Angehörigen hat und uns 50.000 Euro für die Kinderklinik auch zur Verfügung gestellt hat. Wie gesagt da ist keiner mehr der irgendetwas erben könnte. Das sind Einzelpersonen in dieser Größenordnung, fünfstellig. (Interview1_B.M., Pos. 31)	A general idea is sufficient.
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Building on the preliminary qualitative study, the next step is to send out questionnaires to hospitals and clinics to test the hypotheses that have been established. This will be done with the same target group of hospital and nursing directors as well as experts from the fundraising area of hospitals, clinics, and the associated foundations. There will also be a call via LinkedIn, as this network offers an optimal platform to find this target group for the first sub-study.

The methodological approach of the second part of the study also focuses on semi-structured guided interviews in the form of expert interviews. Wealthy individuals who belong either to the HNWI group or the UHNWIS group are regarded as experts. Accordingly, they must have financial assets of either at least one million or at least 30 million U.S. dollars (cf. Capgemini 2021). The qualitative guided interviews are conducted as individual interviews by an interviewer with a respondent either online or in a face-to-face situation. Access to high-net-worth individuals in Germany is a challenge for this study. Establishing direct personal contact with the respondents is very difficult due to various security measures. Therefore, we cooperate with a bank that is the largest provider of wealth management services for high-net-worth individuals worldwide. The bank approaches its wealthy clients, introduces the study, and allows the clients to voluntarily participate in the study as subjects if they are interested. Again, the SPSS method will be used to create the guide. There will be no quantitative study in the second sub-study due to general sufficiency, as a sufficient sample size for this target group cannot be achieved.

Findings – Status Quo

The results presented below are based on an extensive literature review that offers the following relevant topics together for the first time in this study.

The current situation in hospitals

Due to the COVID pandemic, German hospitals are not only facing significant changes but also challenges. Looking at all clinics in the German healthcare system, we currently see poor annual results, revenue problems due to low case numbers, and a general downward trend. At 44%, almost every second clinic in Germany is in the red. Many factors in combination lead to the economically strained situation. Above all, the current COVID pandemic has intensified this effect. According to the German Hospital Association, a wave of insolvencies will spread across Germany by 2022, endangering clinics in need. Current developments indicate a future trend for the German hospital landscape: toward fewer and larger specialized clinics, new network structures, and networking with e-health. Development of the German hospital landscape is necessary to ensure the economic survival of the respective institution and to secure the nationwide care of the German population (Augurzky et al. 2019; Berger 2016; 2020; Deutsche Krankenhausgesellschaft, n.d.; 2019; 2020b; 2020a; 2021a; 2021b).

Fundraising in German hospitals

Due to the financial pressure hospitals and clinics in Germany are facing, additional sources of financing are considered to be of high economic importance to cover the annual investment needs. Therefore, the increasingly positive development of fundraising as a financing instrument in the German healthcare system, which could be observed in recent years, is regarded as promising. Already 60% of German hospitals use fundraising - especially hospitals in small towns want to follow suit. Nevertheless, fundraising in the German healthcare system is still in its infancy compared to the US fundraising market. This is due to the very different structure of the healthcare system. A direct comparison shows that the foundation sector in America is much stronger than in Germany. Foundation assets in the U.S. system amount to almost 1.2 trillion U.S. dollars, whereas German foundations,

have total assets of 110 billion euros. Due to the historical development in America, health care is more important as a donation purpose. On the other hand, there is a clear difference in the use of Capital Campaign as an intensive, structured fundraising program in the healthcare system between America and Germany. Studies show that capital campaigning is the least used fundraising tool in German hospitals and clinics but still achieves the most remarkable success (Berger 2016; Bundesverband Deutscher Stiftungen e. V. 2020; Buntrock 2020; Candid 2021; Haibach 2019; Heuser and Manhart 2018; Steiner and Fischer 2012; Urselmann 2020).

Hospitals and clinics receive the most significant volume of donations from private individuals. Inherited donations also play an essential role and significantly increase donation income. Wealthy donors are particularly relevant as a donor target group and should be given more attention. This is because significant assets have an incredibly positive influence on donation behavior. There is a general willingness to donate among wealthy people and inheritance donations. In addition, regional factors play a decisive role in donor behavior in the healthcare sector—strong ties to the region shape support for hospitals and clinics in the home country. Therefore, donors' regional connections to hospitals and clinics should be leveraged. Furthermore, the gratitude for the medical treatment received is sometimes a solid motivating factor among healthcare donors. Overall, the effective middle line sentence acts as the primary donation motivator among healthcare donors. Accordingly, it makes sense to consider gratitude a key donation motive in this field. Although fundraising is already practiced in German clinics and hospitals, there are currently no studies on the potential of the donor profile of high-net-worth donors nor on the donor behavior of this target group for this area of healthcare (Giving USA Foundation 2020; W. Lauterbach and Kramer 2009; Stiftung Universitätsmedizin Essen 2020; Störing 2015).

Major donation – UHWNI/HNWI

A significant deficit in the general volume of donations is evident in Germany. However, because it has not been fully exploited to date, there is enormous potential, particularly in the commitment to Germany's high-net-worth (Orosz et al. 2021; Probst 2019). In recent years, the volume of

donations in Germany has been between 5 and 10 billion euros. Thereby, positive development of the donation volume could be recorded (Deutscher Spendenrat e.V. & GfK 2021; Gricevic, Schulz-Sandhof, and Schupp 2020b; 2020a; Knight 2021).

Interestingly, around 1.5 million HNWI's (\$1m+), as well as about 15,400 UHNWI's (\$30m+), live in Germany (as of 2020) (Capgemini 2021). According to its projections, Germany could generate a total of €1.266 trillion in additional donations if all HNWI's in Germany donated 1% of their wealth annually. In this context, 1 million US dollars corresponds to approximately 844,000 euros. If this were calculated for the 15,400 UHNWI's, an additional donation volume of around 3.6 billion euros¹ would be possible for Germany. Thirty million US dollars corresponds to approximately 25 million euros in this context. This clearly shows enormous potential for donations among wealthy people in Germany, who need to be professionally persuaded to donate to just causes in the health sector.

It is a fact that wealthy people in Germany show great interest and a consequent willingness to make a large donation. In this context, it is essential to express encouragement and appreciation to promote the increase of large donations and give philanthropy a more excellent voice in the public sphere (Haibach and Uekermann 2021). Major donors also tend to have higher incomes or wealth than the general population. Wealth is essential for philanthropic engagement, as increasing wealth positively influences philanthropic action (Bundesministerium für Arbeit und Soziales 2016; Störing 2015).

It is also essential to know that, due to the donor culture in Germany, most large donors prefer to enjoy complete anonymity and consequently do not want to be honored for their commitment. "Charitable engagement by wealthy people in this country tends to be viewed with suspicion" (Schramm 2009). In general, wealthy people in Germany act from both altruistic and self-interested motives. Yet these two motives are not in conflict. The most relevant reasons for wealthy donors are responsibility and participation within society. In this respect, professional independence and a high degree of self-actualization as motives for action strongly influence the philanthropic activities of wealthy people. Helping a specific target group, compassion, and the fun of helping are further reasons wealthy individuals are particularly

committed. In Germany, rich people mainly fulfill social responsibility through financial contributions (Störing 2015).

Top-quality medicine and research

Philanthropy in the healthcare sector has contributed to many critical medical projects, especially in cutting-edge medicine and research. It represents a legitimate source of support whose importance will increase in the coming years. Fundraising income is used by hospitals and clinics in Germany for strategically important projects. Investing in meaningful, high-impact projects is essential for many major donors to give. Major donations are generally used to provide start-up funding or implement innovations and improvements (DeMaria 2006; Neitzsch 2017; Plescia 2021a; 2021b; Stumpf 2018).

Large donations by major donors, such as a single donation to the University Hospital in Munich of 17 million euros or a patron's contribution of 11 million euros for the construction of the new children's hospital in Hamburg, show that wealthy people in Germany are willing to donate to critical medical projects (Stumpf 2018). In this context, several rich people in Germany can be listed who have made various donations in the millions in recent years. One positive example is the major donor, Michael Otto. In 2015, he donated 10 million euros to construct the new Children's UKE in Hamburg. However, this represents small donations compared to major American donors. Worthy of particular mention here is the contribution by billionaire MacKenzie Scott, ex-wife of Amazon founder Jeff Bezos, who has donated \$2.7 billion to charity (BBC 2021).

Conclusion

The study presented here is intended to show the extent to which high-net-worth individuals, due to their attitude toward giving and their available assets, represent an up-and-coming target group in the fundraising of German hospitals and clinics to be able to realize medical projects in cutting-edge medicine on the one hand and to influence debt reduction on the other positively. A significant literature analysis has already been carried out to cover the status quo best. It has emerged that, due to the economically strained situation in German hospitals and clinics, a development of the hospital

landscape is necessary to ensure the economic survival of the respective institution and secure the nationwide care of the German population. Furthermore, the analysis shows that in addition to the high willingness of high-net-worth individuals to engage in philanthropy, the potential of high-net-worth individuals as major donors is also impressive and should be addressed professionally by hospitals. One of the decisive factors is the degree of impact that high-net-worth individuals can achieve by donating to medical projects. Furthermore, initial results are available in the preliminary qualitative study of the first sub-study. Because interviews are still pending, it is not yet possible to present the results. Based on this, in the second step of the first sub-study, a quantitative study with the same target group will be set up to test the hypotheses that have been established. In the subsequent second sub-study, wealthy people will be interviewed as a second group of experts. All results will be analyzed together in an overall interpretation.

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Madagascar: Shaping a People's Identity through Its History

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ABSTRACT: The specificity, uniqueness, and authenticity of a people is given by their social identity. This social identity is related to his history, the good and bad events the people went through, cultural accommodation, to the internal relations established within the people or groups, to experiences and international relationships. In this article, we defined the identity of the Malagasy people in relation to their history. The Malagasy people and their history are linked today to the Republic of Madagascar, located in the Indian Ocean in southeastern Africa. The Malagasy people are made up of twenty different ethnic groups settled in Madagascar over two major migrations over the last two thousand years. These groups of Malays from Kalimantan, Bantu, and Swahili tribes from East Africa, Muslims and Arab traders from the Arabian Peninsula, and Gujarati people from the west coast of India were forced to live and share a history together. Although some of the groups that came along have retained elements of their original identity, throughout history, all these groups have managed to create a common identity, called the Malagasy identity.

KEY WORDS: social identity, Malagasy history, Malagasy identity, Malagasy kingdoms, Imperial Merina, French colonialism, Malagasization

1. Introduction

Every person has a personal identity and a social identity. If *personal identity* gives uniqueness, specificity and authenticity to him personally, *social identity*

gives belonging and similarity in relation to the group to which he belongs. This identity, both personal and social, is related to the history, experiences, relationships, and social roles the person plays in life. Sociologist Peter Covington defines personal or group identity in terms of the qualities, beliefs, personality traits, appearance and expressions which describe a person or a group (Covington 2008, 12). According to Peter Burke, “identities tell us who we are and they inform others of who we are” (Burke 2020, 63-78). Furthermore, identities later guide behavior, making ‘parents’ to behave like ‘parents’ and ‘nurses’ to behave like ‘nurses’ (Burke 2020, 63-78). Social identity is additional to personal identity, according to Ole Jakob Filtvedt, a theologian specializing in biblical sociology (Filtvedt 2015, 31). Social identity refers to that part of a person’s identity which is derived from their adherence to a certain social group. A statement concerning social identity can therefore include a specific name and information about the social identity of that person. For example, saying ‘Paul of Tarsus is/was a Pharisee’ is both a statement of personal identity, and a statement about Paul’s collective identity: of the Pharisee group, he lived part of his life or was born in Tarsus (Filtvedt 2015, 31). In sociology, the emphasis is on collective identity, where the identity of individuals is strongly connected to role behavior or the collection or group memberships which define them, says Burke (2020, 63-78).

In this article, we want to sketch the image or the identity of the Malagasy people through its history. This identity is certainly incomplete, because it does not include all the elements like culture, religious or spiritual life, geography, and relations with the external environment, except in passing. The space devoted to this article cannot include all these elements to be able to describe a people in all its complexity. However, we can draw some eloquent conclusions about the identity of the people settled in the territory of postmodern Madagascar, addressing the historical-political context in a period of two thousand years from its genesis. Therefore, in this study we will recreate the identity of this wonderful people settled in the Indian Ocean, southeast of continental Africa, looking at five historical stages which were defining for its forming as a people: its genesis, the period of forming the Malagasy kingdoms, the growth of imperial power in Madagascar, its colonization by the French administration and the period of the republics,

which formed and deformed it in the contemporary period. At the end of this article, we will make a short summary of the Malagasy national identity as shown in this research.

2. The proto-Malagasy stage and the birth of a multicultural and multireligious people

The proto-Malagasy stage is connected to the settlement of the first inhabitants on the territory of the island in the Indian Ocean. The most important questions that the researchers tried to answer had to do with the time of the settling of the first people in these places and who they were.

Philip M. Allen and Maureen Covell believe that the first inhabitants came to the island on the commercial routes which connected the south of Asia to northeast Africa and the Comoro Islands, and settled along the shores around 400 AD (Allen and Covell 2005, xxvii). This idea of an early settlement has been the most popular until recently, when new archeological and paleontological research seems to offer earlier dates of the first people settling in Madagascar. There are some sites, like Ambatovy, Anadrahame, Andranosoa, Behove, Itampolo, Taolambiby, and Anjolibé, which confirm the existence of populations of African origin who settled on the north and northwest coasts, having come to these territories about 2400 years before Christ, but who eventually disappeared (Goodman and Jungers 2014, 87-93). Paleontological research revealed animal bones with 'intelligent' markings on them, in the shape of a V, made with knives or axes, which only intelligent beings could have made. We are talking about communities that would have eaten monkey meat the bones of which would have been chopped with the V sign on them (Goodman and Jungers 2014, 87-93; Campbell 2016, 197-204).

Regarding the origin of these people, there have been two hypotheses (Domenichini 1993, 15-17). The first hypothesis claims that the inhabitants were *Austronesian*. This was largely supported by Alfred Grandidier, a French naturalist and explorer (Grandidier 1901, 180). This hypothesis is detailed by researcher Gwyn Campbell in the *Encyclopedia of African History*. He says the Austronesians left their territories in Indonesia-Pacific because they were flooded, and ventured to the west in their double-outrigger canoes on the warm currents of the Indian Ocean, first reaching Sri Lanka, then southern

India and finally the unknown territories of Madagascar, which they found uninhabited and similar to the habitat they had left in Indonesia (Campbell 2005, 872-73).

The second hypothesis is that the Malagasy people are made up of *Bantu tribes* from East Africa. Gabriel Ferrand, researcher of Orientalist studies, was especially in favor of this hypothesis after the 1970s. Gabriel Ferrand states that it was not the Malaysian-Indonesian people who settled first in Madagascar, but the *Bantu tribes* coming from East Africa. Moreover, he states that the migration of the Bantu tribes would have taken place before our era, and when they came to the territory of the Island, they found a pre-Bantu population (Ferrand 1909, 33). He brings linguistic and anthropological arguments that the native people on the west coast of Madagascar speak Bantu, and they are black with curly hair, while in the other parts of the island people are straight-haired and fair-skinned mulattoes who speak 'buki', meaning Malagasy, of Malayo-Polynesian origin (Ferrand 1909, 27).

Otto Christian Dahl, a missionary and linguist researcher, confirms that Madagascar's linguistic background is of Malayo-Polynesian origin, which includes loanwords from Sanskrit, Bantu and Swahili, and later from French and English. This Malayo-Polynesian language background is similar to the Indonesian language of Kalimantan Island (Borneo), attesting to the strong connection between the two regions of the globe (Randriamasimanana 1999, 26-43; Dahl 1951, 299-355).

Today, Madagascar is inhabited by people who come from all these migrations and cultures: Austronesian, East-African, Arab, Indian, over which Jewish, Chinese, Portuguese, French and British influences have settled throughout history in different parts of the island, especially in the coastal areas, through various migrations, the most influential culture coming from France, along with protectionism, and then, French colonialism (Oberlé 1979, 13). As the culture of different groups is naturally expressed by the religious imaginary, going hand in hand with one another, *from a religious point of view*, there are several layers of different religions: animism, or ancestral faith, Islam, Christianity, and to a lesser extent a few other religions (International Religious Freedom Report for 2015, U.S. Department of State).

3. The kingdoms stage and the formation of united and strong communities in development

The second distinct period in the history of Madagascar is the consolidation of Malagasy families and tribes in the form of independent kingdoms, with their own organization, autonomy, defense and forms of trade with the outside and with other ethnic groups located in the same geographical area. The formation of the Malagasy kingdoms is framed between the 14th and 19th centuries, and the climax of this period, Campbell concludes, is given by the development breadth of the Merina kingdom as an imperial power that wants to extend its domination over the other kingdoms of the Red Island (Campbell 2005, 873).

But how did the idea of royalty and kingdom develop? Did it exist in the identity of the groups located on the island territory from the beginning? It seems not. Aidan W. Southall and Maureen A. Covell point out that the approximately 20 ethnic groups that came to Madagascar settled in the first millennium along the shores of Madagascar because of the warm climate, which is favorable to dark-skinned populations, but also because of agricultural considerations, this soil being easier to work and more accessible than the mountain plateau of about 1600 km that crosses Madagascar from north to south and is infertile and with a temperate climate. They were ruled by tribal chiefs, but they did not claim the title of kings, they were only heads of families, and whose power was limited to their families (Southall and Covell, n.d.). Then, in the second millennium, Campbell points out, a second migration of peoples to Madagascar took place, forcing some coastal populations to go up to the mountain plateau, especially in the 12th-14th centuries (Campbell 2005, 873).

The idea of kingdom comes from the Arab period, with the rise of the Islamic caliphates in the 7th century. Muslim traders end up dominating the main trade routes in the Indian Ocean, from the east coast of Africa to the Indonesian Archipelago. Due to the battles within the Muslim caliphates, groups of Arab and Islamic origin are beginning to seek refuge elsewhere, especially in east and southeast Africa. During these settling invasions of new favorable territories, Arab and Muslim groups are beginning to settle on the coasts of Madagascar, either by integrating into already formed communities

on the north and southeast coasts or by forming communities themselves (Campbell 2005, 873-874). One of these groups of Arab origin that settled in Madagascar is the *Antalaotra group*, which brought with it the idea of royalty, of land division, of labor management, of Arabic writing and arithmetic, and of the holy writings, called *sorabe* (Campbell 2005, 874).

This group is considered by Gwyn R. Campbell to be the catalyst for the idea of kingdom, a fact visible in the 14th century in the southern *Betsileo kingdom*, made up of ethnic groups gathered together from southeastern Madagascar, and in the 15th century in the *Sakalava kingdoms* in the west, and the *Amongo and Iboina kingdoms* in the north. As kingdoms, the tribes were stronger, they could negotiate more easily with the great imperial powers (Portuguese, Dutch, British and French), they could sell their products (rice, corn, animals) on the goods market in the Indian Ocean circuit and they could have access to international products, especially coming from India and China (Campbell 2005, 874). This development of the kingdoms continued even in the age of the great discoveries, the 15th-17th centuries, when the great European powers were seeking new territories in the Indian Ocean, which they could conquer and exploit (Malotet 1898, 6; 28-34).

4. The imperial stage and the desire of the Merina kingdom to expand and dominate over the other kingdoms

In the 18th century, one of the Malagasy kingdoms, the Merina, from the interior of the country, located in the central plateau, began to detach itself as an imperial power. The Merina kingdom, with the city of Tananarive as its capital, created a good relationship with the imperial European powers, Great Britain and France, which favored it in its development (Covell n.d.). In order to gain access to the supply of goods, slaves, and the purchase of weapons and products brought from these colonial empires, the Merina kingdom sought to have an outlet to the Indian Ocean. The nearest port was Toamasina, which was part of the Betsimisaraka Kingdom. So they conquered parts of this kingdom and created their access to the sea (Campbell 2018, 55-56).

The Merina Kingdom was developing more strongly than the other kingdoms, both agriculturally and industrially, its rice production being much improved due to innovations, due to the creation of channels through which

water could be transported to places which water could not reach, and due to the system of terraces they created through which they collected water from a spring and transported it to all the rice paddies in the terraces, from terrace to terrace (Campbell 2018, 55-56). The Merina Kingdom became one of the strongest suppliers of slaves in the Indian Ocean, which was very well received by the great colonial powers, who sought cheap labor for all the conquered colonies, offering them military equipment in exchange, especially cannons, and military training (Campbell 2005, 875).

The strongest desire of the Merina kings was to conquer all other kingdoms and assimilate them. One of the Malagasy rulers of the Merina kingdom, Ramboasalama, had as his life mission the conquering of the entire island territory as far as the Mozambique Sea and the Indian Ocean, as seen in his motto: "Ny ranomasina no valamparihiko", translated literally "The sea is the limit of my rice field" (Mairie d'Antananarivo, 2001). Due to the conquest battles for the expansion of the Merina kingdom, he was able to change his name from Ramboasalama to Andrianampoinimerina, which means 'Prince wanted by Imerina', taking the title of 'PRINCE'. Based on this title, the first Merina king was his son, *Radama I* (1810-1828), who proclaimed himself 'King of Madagascar' (Covell n.d.), setting up his capital in Antananarivo and modernizing the kingdom, introducing an educational system similar to the European one, offering Christian missionaries the possibility to spread the Christian principles, to translate the Bible into Malagasy, and to write the Malagasy language using the Latin alphabet (Oliver 1886, 46).

One of the things that caused the Merina kingdom to be frowned upon by the other Malagasy kingdoms and even made them often rebel was the social constraint of a labor tax by law, called *fanampoana*. This was free forced labor of all free citizens, along with the slaves of those times, to support the industrial and agricultural revolution in the country. A man had to work unpaid in factories in the capital for almost two months a year, building bridges or ports in the country, while his family barely made a living from one day to the next (Campbell 1988, 466-67).

The Merina imperial power took *the line of a royal dynasty*, although those who were part of the dynasty were only from the extended royal family, not always the legal heirs. King Radama I died in 1828, quite young (only 36 years old), and one of his wives, Ranavalona I (1828-1861) succeeded him

to the throne, developing the monarchy and the capital (Oliver 1886, 43-46). She followed a dictatorial and authoritarian direction, fighting against Christianity, opposing western ideas and promoting the ancestral religion followed by most Malagasy families, earning the title of modern day 'Bloody Mary' (Townsend 1835, 112). One of her sons, Radama II, was enthroned after her death, but was assassinated by a political group who did not agree with the very open direction towards the West during his first two years of reign, and who were also tired of his rather bold decisions made because of psychological problems (Townsend 1835, 129; Oliver 1886, 88-105). The opposition group that assassinated the king suggested to his widowed wife, Rasoherina, that she rule under certain conditions that they demanded, and she agreed (Townsend 1835, 130). So, she was enthroned as queen and laid the foundation of a constitutional government on the Island, in which the power and decisions were not entirely in her hands, but she was to rule with a number of nobles and representatives of the people (Townsend 1835, 130). After Queen Rasoherina, her niece Ramoma ruled, who took the royal name Ranavalona II. She married the Prime Minister, Rainilaiarivony (1864-1895), who had been the consort of her aunt, Queen Rasoherina, her consort and then, after her, the consort of the third queen, Ranavalona III (Nandrianina 2016, 61-63).

From a social point of view, during the Merina royalty we see a quite clearly outlined division into three classes: the nobility and the aristocracy (Andriana) in leadership; a second class were the poor but free people (Hova), who had to pay the fanompoana, the forced labor for the imperial power of about two months for nothing every year; the third class were the slaves (Andevo), who were forced to work for nothing for the nobles or for the Merina kingdom and were a commodity for sale on the international colonial market (Covell n.d.).

5. The colonial stage and the presupposition of French cultural superiority: 'colonize and civilize'

The reign of the last queen, Ranavalona III (1883-1897) was abruptly ended by France's entry into Madagascar, which it occupied in 1895. After first entering Madagascar as a protectorate in 1882, on January 14, 1895

they disembarked with troops in the northwestern port of Majunga and reached the capital Antananarivo in the same year, taking over its governance (Ranaivoson 2016, 17; Ellis 1990, 20).

Due to the huge revolts of the population, called the *Menalamba Revolt* (Red Shirt Revolt), which took place between 1895-1897, the French general Joseph-Simon Gallieni was sent to Madagascar as governor to restore order, with a battalion of legionaries (Cahisa 2019). He dissolved the monarchy in February 1897 and sent queen Ranavalona III and her husband, Prime Minister Rainilaiarivony, to France, after which they were sent into exile in Algiers by the French government (Deschamps 1961, 237-238). Thus, Madagascar entered another stage, the colonial stage, for about seventy years (Ellis 1990, 67).

French colonialism offered both negative and positive aspects to the Malagasy society impoverished by the Merina imperial period. On the positive side, Faranirina Rajaonah claims that slavery was abolished, benefiting more than 50,000 people on the island (Campbell 2005, 879). Then a national system of internal and external transport was created, consisting of roads, railways and ports, so that goods could move in and out of the country, especially coffee, vanilla and other spices. On the educational level, improvements were made by encouraging education and creating schools and training teachers. The health system was developed nationwide, one of the struggles being to eradicate diseases caused by poverty and the tropical climate. There was an increase in the birth rate in Madagascar. Trade unions were being set up to defend workers' rights. The first production cooperatives were created (Rajaonah 2005, 881).

The downside of French colonialism was the further exploitation of the people, using the structure already formed by the Merina power through poorly paid forced labor and the harsh regime. All those with access to education were forced to learn French. Although the creation of production cooperatives was encouraged, the export of Malagasy products to the foreign market would favor France, not Madagascar, which eventually led to the *1947-1948 insurrection*. This insurrection was harshly rejected and poorly managed by the French colonial authorities, leading to a huge loss of lives, especially among the Malagasy, who were tortured, executed and starved (Cole 2005,

880). Jennifer Cole, a historian who investigated these two events of Malagasy rebellion that took place under French colonial rule - the Menalamba Revolt (1895-1897) and the Malagasy Insurrection (1947-1948), estimates that the Malagasy price was more than 100,000 lives (Cole 2005, 880).

The *Carta Atlantica*, an agreement signed on August 14, 1941 between the United States and Britain, laid the groundwork for cooperation between the great powers that led to the process of decolonization of countries under world imperial powers in Africa, America, and Asia, so countries like Britain, France, Spain, Germany, Italy, Portugal and Belgium were forced to find solutions to give the conquered countries autonomy or protection through various partnerships (Wikipedia 2022).

Madagascar chose a peaceful way to work with the French colonial administration for the progressive transfer of power in the decolonization process. France chose its own favorites from Malagasy parties, preferring deputy Philibert Tsiranana as the future president of the future Malagasy autonomous country. He, at the head of the PSD party (Social Democratic Party), officially proclaimed the establishment of the Republic of Madagascar on October 14, 1958, a new state, with its own flag and its own national anthem (Rajaonah 2005, 882).

6. The Republican stage and the idea that the strongest decides the direction of the country

With the withdrawal of the French administration from Madagascar in 1959, the young Malagasy state and its leaders had almost all the levers to make this a thriving and prosperous country. But the following 60 years showed that the transition from a foreign colony to an autonomous and prosperous country was not easy for the presidents and governments that would have to run the country. Madagascar went through several major crises, huge strikes, four transitional periods, coups, and the Constitution was changed four times, each change producing a new Republic.

Some of the presidents who had a strong influence on the direction the country took were: Philibert Tsiranana, Didier Ratsiraka, Albert Zafy, Marc Ravalomanana, Hery Martial Rakotoarimanana Rajaonarimampianina

and Andry Rajoelina, the current president of the Democratic Republic of Madagascar.

Philibert Tsiranana was the first president of the Republic of Madagascar, establishing the First Republic (1960-1972). Leading the country for 12 years together with the PSD party, he established an autocratic regime, especially in the last two terms (Rajaonah 2005, 882). Internally, a process of Malagasization and homogenization began, trying to bring people from all ethnic groups into the administration, the army and education (Rajaonah 2005, 883). He moved away from France and moved closer to the socialist and communist bloc. He ignored rural poverty by practicing state interventionism, which led to riots by both peasants in 1970 and other groups, such as medical students who shortened his term, the country reaching a painful transition regime (Rajaonah 2005, 883).

A second prominent and influential president was the Commander of the Navy, *Didier Ratsiraka*, a very skilled politician who led the country for almost three terms, the second being interrupted by a strong popular movement against him (Wikipedia 2021). He continued Tsiranana's plan to move closer to the communist east, such as the USSR, North Korea and the communist countries of Eastern Europe (Rajaonah 2005, 885). He changed the Constitution through a referendum, establishing the Second Republic in 1975 (Democratic Republic of Madagascar) and, together with the AREMA (Vanguard of the Malagasy Socialist Revolution) party, failed to raise it to a better economic level in the so-called 'socialist revolution'. On the contrary, his government's leadership plunged Madagascar into poverty, chronic scarcity, food shortages, and a lack of infrastructure for product circulation. Faranirina Rajaonah, a Malagasy analyst, considers this period a difficult one for the Malagasy people, in which the Marxist and totalitarian policy promoted by the government proved to be a failure, leading to tension among the population (Rajaonah 2005, 885).

One of the presidents who proved to be a good administrator of the country was *Marc Ravalomanana*. He surprised the IMF and the World Bank by his ability to attract foreign investors to Madagascar, his tax reforms and the creation of a good infrastructure for transporting goods to the island (Deschamps and all. 2021). He steered the country towards the West, and many Malagasy people consider his period one of growth and

prosperity. Unfortunately, this upward trend did not last long. Although he was considered a good president, Ravalomanana allegedly abused his power on several occasions, with Malagasy and international newspapers publicly considering him a dictator or money launderer, and Malagasy public opinion turning against him (Covell et al. 2021). Pursuing a protectionist policy for certain political and business groups and a reductionist one for others (Savonnerie Tropicale, Le Quartz, Viva), he finally managed to come into conflict with certain influential public figures, such as the mayor of the capital, Andry Rajoelina, producing a wave of protests against him, such as the *Orange Revolution*, an event which led to him leaving the country and losing power during his second term (Randrianarimanana 2009).

7. The Malagasy identity seen through history

In conclusion, looking through the historical-political lens, the identity of the Malagasy people is not complete. But we can see certain things that are common throughout each historical stage that the Malagasy society has gone through and in this way, we can define quite accurately who the Malagasy people are.

The Malagasy society is a mixed one, encompassing a wide cultural and religious diversity, due to their origins, with roots in the Indonesian, East African, Indian, Arab, Muslim, and later European areas. This means that there is sufficient flexibility in relationships within society and a high degree of acceptability of others, tolerance of the different. Looking at the Malagasy society through the prism of the forming of the kingdoms stage we can draw the idea of unity and unification of different groups, of cohesion within different families who share the same ideas to become stronger and for all members of the group to benefit. The unification of families with similar cultural values in the kingdoms (Betsileo, Sakalava, Amongo, Iboina, Merina) gave everyone a commercial and military advantage and identity.

In general, people tend to be self-serving and often live on a competitive basis, rather than offering value or serving others, according to the Golden Rule. The rise of Merina imperial power stage demonstrates this, with a small part of society, kings, aristocracy and nobility assuming certain advantages and trying to enslave the weaker ones for their own interests or to weaken

their power in order to use them as slaves. For this purpose, the Merina imperial power used both *fanampoana* (forced labor) to increase its power, and military power to subdue the other ethnic groups by military force. During this stage, a part of society learned to be submissive and to have a docile approach, while others preferred the warrior approach, fighting against different authoritarian regimes.

The colonial period greatly influenced the Malagasy society, the colonial idea of 'civilization' being a powerful nail in the collective consciousness of poor people. Civilization is about money, personal and family happiness is about money, and money is about white skin and the western origins of foreigners. This implies a lack of creativity and a 'slave' mentality for many Malagasy individuals working with foreigners. They are waiting to be told what to do, they are waiting to be taken care of, which leads to a lack of personal responsibility. This collective thinking can be seen in the conversations with the people on the street: "We are not doing well because of the president!" "It is the government's fault; it is the political power's fault!" It is easier to blame those who carry power than to analyze your situation and try to improve your life where you are.

The social lesson we can draw from the republican stage is related to instability and the lack of a coherent, honest and ready-to-take-responsibility leadership in support of the common good, so that all people can enjoy security and improve their lives. Each president analyzed was the best solution for change for the better, the hope for a better future and the potential for a change for the better in daily life. But 'power' amplified something bad in some of the Malagasy presidents, and the style of democratic leadership with which they began was transformed over the last few terms into authoritarianism and personal gain. Instability in character and abuses of power eventually led to pain for society as a whole.

The Malagasy people are a wonderful people, but they must have self-confidence, taking personal and collective responsibility for the development of the country. They must find their roots in lasting moral values and continue to maintain the same open and tolerant inter-ethnic and religious attitude and, in unity, to seek to raise the level of this rich and beautiful country on the southern Tropic.

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Principles for Evaluating the Concept of Authority. The Tension Between the Christian-Conservative Perspective and Postmodernism

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ABSTRACT: In a society of globalization toward which the contemporary world is going, it has been noticed a certain tension between the old and the new, between what has already been consolidated as a Christian ideology, most of it conservative, and what has come after and has gained more and more territory in the contemporary culture. Identified as a culture or as an ideology of Postmodernism. Both ideologies disputed and assumed the claim of authority rather ultimate, from the beginning and even more when they came into contact with one another, trying thus to gain an advantage. From this point of view it has been noticed the need of evaluating this concept (of authority) from common grounds so that the results can be rightly appreciated and equidistant toward both ideologies. Thus, it is urgent to define well the notion of authority so that after this endeavor we are able to have a right appreciation of the validity of a certain ideology; "authority" is the concept that can bring a remarkable advantage on the field of ideas and values of life.

KEY WORDS: authority, Christian values, Postmodernism, principle, evaluation

Taking into account the ever widening discrepancy between the Postmodern ideology, with all its implications, in almost all the social and cultural spheres

of modern civilization, and the general Christian ideology, and especially the conservative side of it, there is an increasing need to have cogent approaches for analyzing the diversity of items that fall into the incidence of these lines of thinking; the purpose is to clear delineate their positive aspects from the negative ones or potentially destructive, especially on the medium or long term.

Thus, in the present article, our focus is to advance a few principles for evaluating the concept of authority, from the conservative Christian perspective as well as from the Postmodernism perspective, all the more present in culture and standing in opposition with the first one; the few principles that we advance must be present in the discourse of both ideologies. This present work will endeavor to stir an analysis and even an introspection far more honest than the opportunities or risks of assuming either one of the ideologies taken into consideration.

So, our approach is to analyze Postmodernism and Christianity according to the following four principles without pretending to have an exhaustive analysis:

- ✦ The source (origin) principle – we think that this is the most important principle because it is the decisive factor in assuming authority as a legitimate one by the community (Johnson 2007, 45); on this level, authority can be epistemic, deontic or both.
- ✦ The morality principle (competence and applicability) – is the icon of the excellence of an epistemic authority; it is an authority capable of articulating wishes, dogmas, and ideologies and supporting and materializing them.
- ✦ The stability (equilibrium) and continuity principle – stands for being able to maintain a community in a certain equilibrium, even if that means rearranging the power or influence centers in the community by assuming certain new values or concepts that will prove to be stable in time.
- ✦ The hierarchical principle – represents the manifestation of authority or the subordination before a higher authority; it is the principle that stands especially in cases of incertitude or of authority crisis, when an entity that assumes authority is not accepted.

1. Postmodernism Principles

Postmodernism is an intellectual, cultural and artistic epiphenomenon that does not necessarily represent a certain historical time, as it represents the present-day West, which gave up in some ways the euphoria of faith in progress that proved to be more wishful thinking that reality till now or in the present (Pop 2014, 277). It claims that morality, truth, beauty, social life, communities, families etc. do not have an objective or fixed existence; all there is a continuous flow of abstract models, conversations, representations or stories that can validate as true everyone of the personal appreciation toward the analyzed subject (Johnson 2007, 258-59).

Thus, the basic ideology of Postmodernism is total relativism, or rather the fact that there is no absolute or objective truth, the only absolute being that everything is relative, advancing in this way a subjective truth that denies the idea of metanarrative (all-inclusive assertions about the whole of reality), denning the concept of universal Truth (Noebel 2013, 153-54).

There is no sure date for the starting of Postmodernism, but most people that studied the phenomenon agree that it had "a long enough incubation period" (Dedu 2019, 65). So, the ideas embraced by thus new ideology have their roots in the writings of Karl Marx and Friedrich Nietzsche.

Karl Marx is the precursor of the ideas about the "new society" and the "new man", freed from economic exploitation and from the religious concept of a just God or of a better world in the eternal life to come (Henry 1999, 629). Marx claims that this life is the only one that needs to be taken into consideration, and for it to become a better one for the individual person, he must gain it through social violence and proletarian revolution, materialistic atheism being the basic ideology that must prepare the individual for such a violent change of society (Henry 1999, 629).

If Marx can be named the stepfather of Postmodernism, F. Nietzsche is its natural father. In respect to the economic Marxism supported by Marx, Nietzsche believes in cultural Marxism, attacking the supreme causality of morality, casting doubts on it, and suspecting it as a cause for "regress, some sort of peril, of deception, of a narcotic to live in the present based on the future" (Pop 2003, 154). In this logic, Nietzsche asserts that God is dead, and the

ideal of the man in the present is to become a superman - a god, himself being the morality and authority source and, also, he is the sufficiency of all things.

1.1. The Source (Origin) Principle

If Marx and Nietzsche created the frame of what will be named postmodern ideology about a half-century ago before its dawn, then the struggle between the classes, proletariat, and capitalists that have generated in Europa vast movements and social unrest represents the start of the new ideology. Going East toward Central Europe, the Marxist revolution generated real fears till the moment when it was halted by the Polish army in 1920.

This moment and this failure is used by a few Marxist intellectuals (Antonio Gramsci, Georg Lukács, Erich Fromm, Wilhelm Riech, Theodor Adorno, Herbert Marcuse), who moved the struggle from the economic field (the orientation given by Marx) to the cultural revolution (according to Nietzsche's philosophy), they founded in 1923 in Germany the Institute for Social Research in Frankfurt (known later as the School from Frankfurt), after the example of the soviet Institute Marx-Engels in Moscow (Raehn 2015, 27-31).

Thus, we think that the start and the origin of such an ideology lays in the intellectual, social, cultural, educational and artistic endeavors of the School from Frankfurt, even if these are based on older philosophical assertions from the XIX century, the growth of the phenomenon being the '60, the well known "cultural revolution" and from there it went "crescendo" till now.

So, according to the principle of the origins, the authority of the postmodern ideology is found in the intellectual endeavor of the great thinkers and philosophers of the XIX century, whose ideologies have been materialized by the intellectual from the School in Frankfurt, asserting its epistemic authority by the fact that it offered society a better and deeper understanding of the world view.

1.2. The Morality (Competence) Principle

With the failure of economic Marxism, the founders of the School in Frankfurt rightly identified the fact the present-day social man will not react according

to the expectations as long as his conscience will be bound to the Christian morality. Thus, the next logical step of the cultural Marxists was to deconstruct and to introduce a new literary hermeneutics (through the studies and research done by Jacques Derrida, the father of deconstructivism) meant to create a new mentality, a new morality and, implicitly, a new self consciousness (McDonald 2017, 57-69) because this is the only moral authority that the individual will never contest in himself (Pleșu 2017, 12-13).

The instrument used by the postmodernists to create or even impose a new morality on society is positively named "political correctness". In its name the fundamental entities of society are under attack and demolition: education, family, social and religious life, everything in order to rebuild new reference values to analyze the social ethos.

By resorting to the idea of the "free man" or of "man-god", they cancel the Christian ethic and morality, especially in the American-European sphere, building on the foundation of atheism a new ideology, based on the "omission of eternity" (Noebel 2013, 197-201). Continuing their endeavor, they deny then the existence of a universal moral reality, seeking to find a new standard for right and wrong, according to their world views.

Thus, through cultural deconstruction is induced the idea of a cultural relativism, in which morality is bound to smaller communities in which it works, being very dynamic, adapting and evolving, without a reference to the macro scale or to the meta-society, denning thus the direct relation between morality and Christian values. The result is the morals of marriage, abortion, sexual orientation or moral subordination to divinity, respectively God, are annihilated and in their place stands the complete relativism, ethical standards that are subjective and a limited morality (no individual or society can not decide what is good or bad for another individual or society (Noebel 2013, 197-201)).

1.3. The Stability and Continuity Principle

The present concept seeks to identify a better certainty for authority. The higher the level of certainty of the one who assume for oneself such an authority, the deeper is his belief in the legitimacy of the "Sovereign". As

such, an authority that succeeds to demonstrate or at least to convince with strong arguments the stability and continuity of its leadership system, has a bigger impact on the conscience of a cultural and social community in a given geographical area.

According to Paraschiva Pop, who does a complex radiography of Nietzsche (the precursor of Postmodernism), this ideological stream has defined itself a long time after its appearance *only* in opposition with the Christian morals, its key words being *demolition, violence, suspicion, denial, regress* (Pop 2003, 153-60). Finishing this idea, Valentin Dedu, analyzing the work of Arnold Toynbee, *Study of History*, takes on his conclusion that the decadent societies, that is, those who failed in staying stable and continuous in their values and authority system, are characterized by "escaping the social problems by running to the world of entertainment (Dedu 2019, 65-66).

Going even further, Nietzsche wishes an amoral super-man (defined in opposition with the classic morality, based on Christianity), imaging a new being with the innocence of the animals, beyond the idea of good or bad. As such, he emphasizes the supreme value of the new man: power, domination and continuous accrual of force (Pop 2014, 263-68). All these aspects taken and analyzed together give us an overview that not even the postmodernists themselves did not imagined: if they imagine the "global village" in which every culture or social group sets its own moral standards, then the "law of the jungle" imagined by the strategists of the Postmodernism will lead to complete chaos, a world in which every individual fights according to his own rules (not accepted by the others) for the *alfa* position in any given society.

As such, eliminating the Judeo-Christian values from the power equation of the present-day meta-society, breaking up this society in minuscule cultures, with their own rules and morality, down to the level of the individual, practically represents the "proclamation of the lordship of *nothingness* [emphasis our]" (Rose 2013, 104-16). By a minimal effort of imagination, one can identify two major scripts for the postmodern society:

- ♦ The first script is the optimistic one in which the members of all the communities affiliated to the "global village" will live with the perpetual illusion of a "new era" in the context in which the

hope of the human existence will end at the grave (as postulate the atheists, Marxists, nihilists and postmodernists).

- The second script is the pessimistic one in which the postmodern ideologies will seize the human mind, conscience, values and morality in a such a measure that the initial meta-society will be broken up in more and smaller social cells, down to the individual, that, according to the new ideology, will resort to more power using more and more violent mechanism and methods, that will lead to an inevitable chaos and then, implicitly, will give way to a dictatorship (of any form of manifestation).

1.4. The Hierarchical Principle

Postmodernism, even from its beginnings, knew the reality that it would have to deal with an audience and a society deeply impregnated with the moral values of Christianity, historically inherited up till the present. Even in the modern epoch, society does not recognize the intervention of the divine, and the Christian ethos that leads the way, has kept untouched the values, morality and absolutes that emanates from these (Pop 2014, 233). In order to have a complete success, the postmodernist had to attack and destroy the ultimate level of authority: God Himself.

By attacking the existence of God, the hierarchy of the authority, as it was inherited till now, was canceled and, as such, in the new moral postmodern order man will no answer to anyone superior to himself. He will only submit to his own Ego.

Thus, for eroding the cultural conscience of the society, beginning in the XIX century philosophers such as Auguste Comte (the founder of positivism) and Friedrich Nietzsche have asserted with boldness in their writings, appealing to huge persuasive efforts, that God does not exist or, in the best case, he is "dead" (Pop 2014, 234-49). The ideas are taken almost unaltered by the members of the School in Frankfurt and clever promoted by the new mechanism of intellectual and cultural manipulation (for example, the concept of „political correctness“) in the academics, where the illuminated minds of the new society were being formed (Cribb 2015, 47-48) and from there it have been easier and more credible to dissimulate them in the inferior "social classes".

Therefore, to satisfy the hierarchical principle, deep-seated in the cultural conscience of the initial meta-society, the concept of higher and ultimate divine authority has been destroyed, and the new generations are formed in a relative subordination to nothingness and, as such, not responsible to a real and present divinity. It is important to note that every philosophical, logical, scientific, or any other kind of discourse does not have the intrinsic capacity to modify in any way the reality of the universe. Consequently, any type of discourse Postmodernism would have about the existence of a Sovereign and Authoritative God, this fact does not change reality, and not taking into consideration this fact can be interpreted as complete ignorance, with a possible boomerang effect.

2. Christian Principles

Speaking of Christian principles, we note from the beginning that they are characterized by two great particularities. First, societies and cultures founded on Christian morals and values are intrinsically subordinated to divine authority. Any historical period, any particular denomination of Christian movement we may refer to, all of them recognize the divine sovereignty over them (the only aspects that differentiate them are in the way they understand this manifestation of divine authority).

Secondly, another important characteristic of the cultures that recognize Christian moral authority as a form of government over their conscience is the absolute and relative dimension of the truth communicated by divinity. It is important to emphasize this aspect because the postmodern ideology cancels the absolute dimension of any moral claim that are derived from the divine attributes, absolutes that are atemporal and universal.

2.1. The Source (Origin) Principle

From the point of view of the origin of authority in Christianity, this derives directly from divinity. This assertion is not only the claim or the witness of the Christians, but it represents what God asserts about Himself and in the Christian values system, this authority is manifested in full (Rotaru 2014, 207-209).

Thus, when we speak about divine authority as the primary origin or source in Christianity, we have to speak necessarily about the eternal character and attributes of divinity. As such, these are classified by the systematic theology as nontransmissible and transmissible attributes (Grudem 2004, 161-62).

The nontransmissible attributes of divinity are those divine traits that differentiate YHWH from humans. Because Grudem hesitates to categorically states that these are wholly nontransmissible (Grudem 2004, 161-62), the taxonomy and terminology employed by Ryrie are far more conclusive (Ryrie 1986, 36-44). So, the first and the most relevant of all these perfections of divinity is His *eternity*, respectively the fact that He is eternal by comparison with man who had a beginning and who, spiritually speaking, if he does not submit to His authority, will have an end (respectively, eternal death) (Grudem 2004, 1185-86). The next attributes are also labeled as absolute: liberty, immutability, holiness, omnipotence, omnipresence, omniscience, righteousness, simplicity, sovereignty and truth.

In the context of divine authority over the universe, and implicitly over human cultures and societies, the nontransmissible attributes or perfections of the Christian God are at His disposal, and they become communicable or transmissible only in a small measure and only them when He, in His sovereignty decides to impart them to people. All these divine qualities as absolutes represent a double dimension of His authority: a deontic and a epistemic one.

Thus, the perspective of the Christian values is that there is no other higher authority than God's authority, since one of His nontransmissible attribute is eternity, which, together with His omnipotence gives Him ultimate authority in universe and in the human culture and civilizations, therefore over all creation.

2.2. The Morality (Competence) Principle

Another classification of the qualities, from the Christian Perspective, is emphasized the category of moral attributes (besides the nonmoral ones). Ryrie says about those that they "spring from the very nature of God" (Ryrie 1986, 36). Qualities such as holiness, righteousness, love, and truth represent

ideals of morality having their origin in divinity, and, therefore, they become the basis for Christian morality and its moral compass.

In this context, the Christian ideology has its discourse the fingerprint of divine moral authority. Thus, it has the competence to define the absolutes that derive from God Himself and the quality and assertion that its message is always fresh and relevant for at least five areas that define our society: culture, politics, ethics, philosophy and theology. If it is analyzed apart from the prejudices, patterns and tradition (defined here as ideological clichés of different religious movements in history), it has the quality of tracing a way of living with integrity and respecting Christian values, of eliminating the ideological confusion and disorder in the present and of answering honestly to the existential questions of mankind of the postmodern man: Who are we? Why are we here? What is truth? (Wright 2016, 16-34).

For the Christian culture there is the concept of meta-society, defined usually as the "Kingdom of God", representing the totality of people in different historical times and spaces and geographical areas which are subordinated to the divine authority and for which the Christian values are the same anywhere in the respective meta-culture.

Consequently, the Christian culture appeals to the highest source of authority in the universe, The Primary Cause, for its ideological discourse and for the way in which it materializes the ideals in everyday living. As such, its moral creed is identified and follows the moral dimensions of divinity (that dimension in which the moral absolutes have atemporal character) and is subordinated to divine authority in the dimensions of His perfections (appealing to those for protection and guidance).

2.3. The Stability and Continuity Principle

The Christian principles and values even if they are constantly under attack by the deconstructivism of the postmodern ideology, seem to have an absolute character and time transcendent. As such, they have been summarily asserted in YHWH in the pre-Mosaic time, then very well structured in the Law of Moses, to be utilized then updated in the teachings and life of Jesus, and materialized in the lives of His disciples, many times with enthusiasm even in persecution, from the beginning till now.

It is important to note what the Christians think that God says about His principles and authority, if these are followed and lived. So, according to Christian values, God does a very precise synthesis about His authority through the sacred writings of the Judeo-Christian culture relating to the stability that comes from its fulfillment:

Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful. (Barker 1985, 292)

Thus, to respect the divine precepts, that is to accept His authority represents a firm condition to be happy, to find the real goal of life, of prosperity and success (Woudstra 1981, 62). So, this principle of continuity stands in direct relation with the previous principle, the morality one: to submit to God's authority, as it stands out from the sacred writings, gives stability and balance to people who practice it rigorously.

The second important passage in this sense is an affirmation of Christ:

Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light. (Barker 1985, 1458)

The affirmation of Jesus takes further the idea of the first quote. First, the passage reflects the continuity of the Christian principles and morality: there are absolute truths, respectively, His eternal authority for which it is desirable to exist a right approach of subordination. Then, the second passage comes with a plastic image about the way in which the authority of Christ must be used in the individual life and the life of the Christian community, in a rhetorical construction well made, as it is presented by Osborne (Osborne 2010, 442-44):

- *The mission or the responsibility of the Christian* – the idea of a yoke implies a lot of responsibility for the one who assumes it. The "yoke" is a metaphor for a relation master-submissive. In a positive sense, it means submission in worshipping the divinity through loyalty and obedience for the teachings of Christ (this is actually the meaning of real righteousness);
- *Motivation* – in order to materialize in his own life, the Christian or the community he is part of, must appeal to the character of

Christ. He and His love for mankind represent the motivation of submission to divinity.

- *The result*– the result of such an action with a permanent character in the live of a community of people represent, besides stability and continuity, "eternal rest", a direct reference to the new spiritual live in Christ, which transcends time into eternity.

Consequently, from the Perspective of the Christian values, obeisance and submission to the moral authority of God materialized in the individual life through the spiritual work of Christ and by appealing to His attributes, which are permanent, is the guarantee for every society present or future of stability and harmony in his endeavors and in the interhuman relations which he forms, and that is the surety as an element of continuity of such a community. Thus, the Christian promotes a community that aims to be secure, perpetual, and balanced and that can be built by a value system that submits to the divine will, with an ethic and morality according to the universal laws of God.

2.4. The Hierarchical Principle

When we presented the previous principles that characterize authority from the Christian Perspective, the hierarchical principle had an intrinsic presentation, especially through the origins or source principle.

As an additional argument, it is worth noticing and analyzing another passage from the Christian sacred writings. This is relevant, especially through emphasizing a dimension that has a general validity of the hierarchical principle.

Peter and the other apostles replied: "We must obey God rather than man!" (Barker 1985, 1653)

Thus, by analyzing this passage, we can note a few things that will complete the perspective already outlined in regard to the hierarchical principle:

- Hierarchically, when the authority of man comes into conflict with the divine authority, the priority belongs to the ultimate authority, the divine one (Bock 2007, 244);

- ♦ The way Luke formulates the answer of Peter from the previous passage, suggests a moral imperative for this obeisance (not political or social) (Bock 2007, 244);
- ♦ Any human authority, no matter how high, compared to the divine authority is always inferior (Bruce 1988, 111);
- ♦ No matter how dangerous it can be to confront a human instance of authority, that action must be done taking into account the universal sovereignty of God – truth must be proclaimed at any risk (Keener 2018, 400).

Therefore, it is important to emphasize that the facts deduced from the previous quoted passage are in total harmony with the universal principle of hierarchy from the point of view of authority. From the perspective of the Christian values, nobody can be above divinity, and every such attempt will be sooner or later drastically punished by YHWH. The precedent one was in the dawn of the human history, through the action of Lucifer, but his punishment was accordingly. So, the Christian ideology shows that the ultimate prerogatives regarding sovereignty and authority on the earth are attributed to divinity.

3. Conclusions

The analysis we endeavor to do in this article aims to bring out as honestly as possible the opportunities and risks that the two ideologies have, intrinsically or potentially, especially when we talk about the claims of authority, a concept asserted by both lines of thinking.

We notice that Postmodernism represents an actual trend in the Western world, not necessarily being an absolute evil. When we state this, we speak about the idea of progress that it promotes, at least in the discourse. Progress represents the evolution of society and culture from the low levels of the organization to the more complex ones, thus bringing something good to the intended civilization. However, there is a risk because of the fundamentals of this thinking and because it seems to define itself mostly by the opposition with the Christian ideology and values; this fact can lead to interminable fights that can affect the very progress it intends to build.

The mechanism used by the postmodern ideology to "produce" the new man, at least culturally and socially, is a mechanism that, at a closer look, can be suspected to potentially fail, especially when we bring into the discussion the concept of authority, because it does not hold true in a logical argument seen through the empirical character of history. We think that as such are under attack the very nature of things and the state of normality validated in time through all the historical adjacent processes, that puts in danger the idea of authority, leading inevitable to the discussion about the perspective about a certain degree of chaos (defined here as a reverse proportional with the quantity of the traditional authority that exists in a society).

In opposition, the Christian ideology and values, especially the conservative ones, have intrinsically on their side at least the test of time, implicitly that of stability and balance, from where spring more and more the qualities and competences acquired in history, thus learning that the idea of hierarchy in the concept of authority is not something pitiable, but the very essential quality for a certain society or civilization to make durable and healthy progress. When this concept of authority is rightly understood and applied the spiritual, cultural, social and even economic development of a society can be justified and common sense goals.

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The Relationship between Law and Morality

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ABSTRACT: This article deals with issues related to the historical process of the emergence of law, showing that law has gradually detached itself from religious prescriptions, moral norms, and customs. First of all, the legal concepts of law and morality were defined, specifying that law is perceived as an objective ethic that aims to assess the external facts of people in relation to other people, while morality is perceived as a subjective ethics whose object is the appreciation of the internal facts of consciousness of human intentions. Secondly, the particularities of law and morality were outlined, clearly emphasizing both the connection and the differences between them, and lastly, some conclusions necessary for the treatment of this topic were observed.

KEY WORDS: law, morality, legal order, moral order, custom

The Relationship between Law and Morality

During the primitive commune, there was no concept of law as a legal science, and the rule of legal norms appeared much later, by the gradual detachment from religious prescriptions, the rules of social coexistence and custom (custom of the place), necessary for human coexistence. In the absence of rules of social coexistence, chaos and anarchy would have been reached, so that the social order was restored through a system of social rules that emerged as an organic necessity of the primitive community. These morally normal social rules led to the maintenance of social order, the organization

of the activities of members of the primitive community, the procurement of food and necessities for common life, good order in the conduct of family life, but also the protection of their lands and defense against enemies from other cities, tribes or foreign people (Cernea & Molcuț 1996, 10).

Guy Durand, analyzing the subject of the relationship between law and morality, finds that law has evolved from evolutionary norms of morals and customs, so that in this sense, morality precedes law, serving as a proto-social legislation (Durand 1986, 285).

Momcilo Luburici claims that “the emergence of law is a historical necessity, a real social progress, because maintaining order could no longer be ensured with the system of rules in the gentile-tribal communities and it was necessary to establish other rules that sanctify social relations and ensure leadership of the society, the transformation of the social will into the will of the state, the obligatory general will” (Luburici 2005, 32).

It is important to note that Momcilo Luburici describes three essential phases of the formation of the law: (a) the adoption of habits (the custom being thus considered a source of law) which have lasted in ancient states and which have gradually been adapted to new social realities, being declared mandatory precisely because of its long, stable and perpetual practices, and in case of violation of these rules of social conduct, sanctions were provided from public disgrace, to the application of physical constraints; (2) the creation of written law and the establishment of normative acts that contained, in addition to old adapted customs, some new legal provisions, unknown to the primitive order, which established the rights and obligations of community members, the practice of religious cults, administrative-territorial organization, etc. ; (3) the formation of law through the solutions given by magistrates and courts, this in a period of time far superior to the other phases of state organization (Luburici 2005, 32-33).

Definition of legal concepts of law and morality according to the law in force (de lege lata)

The law includes elements of an ideological, relational and institutional nature. The influence of politics on law takes place precisely through the activity of state institutions, as the state plays a key role in creating law and

legal consciousness, so that politics establishes the concrete forms and means of fulfilling legal norms and ensures their education in the spirit of respecting the laws and the legal order.

According to the law in force (*de lege lata*), the law is defined as: “the system of norms established or recognized by the state, in order to regulate social relations according to the state will, whose obligatory observance is guaranteed by the coercive (constraint) force of the state” (Luburici 2005, 40).

The Roman jurists, Celsius and Ulpianus, considered „fathers of law” defined law in the following spheres of understanding: (1) Celsius: „Law is the art of good and equity” („*Jus est ars boni et aequi.*”); (2) Ulpianus: „these are the precepts of law: to live honestly, not to harm the other, to give to each his own, not to disturb the peace” („*Juris praecepta sunt haec: honeste vivere, alterum non laedere, suum cuique tribuere, cuieta non novere*”) (Stan 2017, 16).

Ulpianus also defines law as „*jurisprudencia est divinarum atque humanarum rerum notitia, justī quae injustī scientia*” („jurisprudence is the knowledge of divine and human things, the science of what is just or unjust”), so Ulpianus defines law as a reality perceived only in the situation in which it is related to a religious reality represented by divine norms and as a science of human reality, represented by human norms, appreciating what is just from what is unjust (Stan 2017, 16).

Socrates (469-399 BC) defined law as „conformity to the will of the gods or conformity to good, for there is no difference between doing harm to one or doing an injustice to him, and injustice is in any case an evil - to do an injustice is to do evil, and not to do it is to do good” (Stan 2017, 17).

Morality traces to people the conduct they must follow, indicating also the sanctions inherent in the violation of moral norms by the social environment, whether it is public reproach and, implicitly, rebukes of conscience, remorse or shame, or about physical constraints. Thus, Momcilo Luburici defines morality as representing “a set of concepts and rules regarding good or evil, right or wrong, allowed or not allowed. Moral norms are the creation of society or social groups. The notions of good and evil with which the norms of morality operate are not given once and for all, but vary from one order to another, from one people to another” (Luburici 2005, 40).

Peculiarities of law and morality

In the course of time, the legal doctrine has shown that the delimitation of the sphere of law from the moral sphere is a rather controversial subject and difficult to treat, appreciating this as a central problem of the philosophy of law.

In general, in the assessment of the relationship between law and morality, the legal doctrine is pronounced in two main directions: (1) the one that conceived the law as a minimum of morality. It is argued that in the vertical of history, the evolution of law has been closely related to that of morality, so that law and morality are perceived as two facets of a phenomenon: morality is subjective ethics, while law is objective ethics. Mircea Djuvara argues that morality has as its object the appreciation of the internal facts of consciousness of human intentions, and the law has as its object the appreciation of the external facts of people in relation to others (Djuvara 1930, 101); (2) the one that supports the legal positivism, so that the fact that the law is an independent construction, detached from any other reality, except the state, is promoted. Specific to this point of view is the opinion according to which the appearance of law in social life is a spontaneous one, derived from the influence of social, political and ideological factors. They exclude any connection between law and morality, oppose legal ethics, and the science of law must disregard the influence of morality when analyzing the law because moral values are relative and no one can determine what is right or absolutely just (Kelsen 1962, 90).

Renowned French lawyer Georges Ripert appreciated that, „there is no difference in scope, nature and purpose between the moral and the legal rule.” The moral rule enters into law in an easy way, through the moral convictions of the legislator or magistrate, and, moreover, the above-mentioned author unequivocally indicates that aspects of moral obligations are inserted in the sphere of civil law: civil liability, the prohibition of unjust enrichment, the execution of contracts and the balance of benefits, the exercise in good faith of the rights conferred by law (Ripert 1935, 35).

Morality is thus perceived as a criterion for assessing the conformity of law with the idea of justice, so that positive law (all legal norms in force in a state) must comply with moral principles, otherwise its legal norms

would be qualified as unfair. It is important to note that positive law also contains legal norms to which ethical principles are indifferent, having only a purely instrumental role (eg traffic rules, economic rules and civil procedures or criminal procedural rules and many other legal rules, of a technical, organizational nature).

According to the moralist view of law, the moral and legal order are perceived as two concentric spheres, the larger sphere being the moral order and the other being the legal order, so that the legal order is an integral part of the moral order, it's not outside of it, it is within it, being organically linked to it, which is why the norms that govern the moral order cannot but have an influence on the legal order. The moral order is a state of equilibrium, achieved between the elements that are limited to the moral life (reason, freedom and moral conscience) (Rotaru 2014, 210-215) and it is governed by the guiding principles of good, truth and justice, and the legal order that the law creates could be defined as „a state of balance, achieved, maintained and governed by law, between external, free and conscious human facts and relationships, having a social character” (Stan 2010, 257). Therefore, we cannot qualify a legal norm as part of the science of law that confers legal order, if it contradicts moral values such as good, truth or justice, so that law cannot be independent of good, truth or justice, nor the legal order is not outside the moral order, but within it, and law appears as part of good, truth, and justice (Stan 2010, 254-256).

In the following, we will identify some similarities, but also distinct features between law and morality. First of all, we will observe the following similarities: (1) both in the moral order and in the legal order the conformity to the law takes place on the basis of the human conscience, of the beliefs of the people that what they do is right and good; (2) any legal qualification is based on a prior moral qualification, so that there is a relationship of dependence between the legal and the moral order; (3) the goal pursued in both law and morality is to establish order in the world, ensuring the protection of moral values such as good, truth or justice (Stan 2017, 116).

For a clearer understanding of the relationship between law and morality, it is necessary to delimit them by outlining the following differences: (1) morality norms are not, as a rule, written norms and are not necessarily included in certain official acts, while the law rules take an official form and

are the result of the official activity of state institutions, so that in the legal order there is a clear code stipulated by legal norms, while in the moral order this code is invisible, being the human conscience; (2) the sphere of morality is wider than the sphere of law, so that the moral order affects all human facts and relations, both internal and external, while the legal order deals only with external facts, of a social nature; (3) the observance of the norms of law, if necessary, is guaranteed by the coercive force of the state, while the observance of the moral norms, as a rule, is not guaranteed by the coercive force of the state, but by the pressure of social factors such as public shame, shame, blame, etc. Therefore, in the legal order, the sanction is imposed from the outside, while in the moral one, the sanction is imposed internally (Luburici 2005, 47).

In conclusion, we mention that the law regulates those social relations that aim at the good development of the relations in society according to the state will, whose obligatory observance is guaranteed by the coercive force of the state, and the morality aims at the totality of the conceptions and rules regarding good or evil, right or wrong, true or false, allowed or not allowed. Regarding the connection between law and morality, it was observed that two major points of view were drawn in the legal doctrine: (1) the moralistic conception of law, which maintains a deep connection between law and morality, law coming from the norms of morality and custom and (2) the positivist conception of law which argues that the influence of morality must be disregarded in the search for law. As for us, according to the point of view of the famous Romanian jurist Mircea Djuvara, we appreciate that legal norms must be validated by the moral principles of good, truth and fairness, morality precedes law, and law and morality must be perceived as two facets of a phenomenon, namely, morality is the subjective ethic that aims at the inner world of the human being with inner intentions, beliefs and thoughts, while law is the objective ethics that aims at the external actions of people in relation to their fellows.

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Blockchain's Role in the Ontological Concepts Development

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ABSTRACT: Blockchain is a new technology based on the idea of decentralization, which means the impossibility of control by governments or any other centralized entity. Studying Blockchain from the viewpoints of the philosophy of politics, economics and the law shows significant changes in the nature of human concepts such as trust, power, institution, money and law. This emerging revolution is driving these concepts from human-controlled system to an algorithmic structure, which would lead to an anarchic, self-sufficient world with self-determinism individuals. This research is an attempt to discover novel ontological changes in the traditional concepts due to the emergence of the new modern technology called Blockchain.

KEY WORDS: Blockchain, Cryptocurrency, Ontology, Algorithm, Concept

1. Introduction

The translating of metaphors, allegories or thoughts into technologic algorithms is an essential component of any innovation (Kera 2019). In this regard, the ground-breaking novelty of Blockchain algorithms was introduced by the pseudonymous author Satoshi Nakomoto (Satoshi 2008). He proposed a mechanism that replaces third-party authority with the decentralized ledger (Ishmaev 2017) which enables the secure transfer of money, assets, and information without the need for an intermediary, such as banks or other financial institutions, ensuring that these goods cannot

be copied or multiplied due to its immutable nature (Trivedi 2019). Bitcoin as a cryptocurrency is the first and perhaps most famous application of Blockchain (Swan & de Filippi 2017), and Ethereum as an automated multi-step process for smart contracts (Jaoude & Saade 2019). This technology has progressed very fast in recent years and urged governments to think seriously about the ways that make them able to control it by codifying new and suitable legislations, especially in the cryptocurrency arena. However, some concerning views believe that this technology will inevitably drive the current world towards a world without intermediaries like governments and banks, namely an anarchic world. The issues of “decentralization” and “self-sufficiency” as the main characteristics of Blockchain technology have been controversial subjects in terms of the possibility of the control of Blockchain-based products, in particular cryptocurrencies, by governments. One much-debated matter is how governments can regulate cryptocurrencies while they are transferred between parties without the need for official financial institutions.

Research on Blockchain is expanding rapidly at the different layers of its concepts and implementation, mainly focusing on the first application of Blockchain, i.e. Bitcoin (Jaoude & Saade 2019). Many significant issues have been raised as regards the political, economic and legal aspects of Blockchain technology, which most of them concentrate on the anarchic nature of the Blockchain technology (Markey-Towler 2018). This is because, Blockchain does not have a central control point and, therefore, it may lead to a change in authority from institutions to computational systems in which all individuals take a role.

There are important questions could be raised about the Blockchain nature, one of which is about the concepts that have been provided by Blockchain and their impacts in the formation of the future of the world. By dealing with this question, this study attempts to provide an opportunity for deepening our understanding of this growing field of technology, discovering new philosophical concepts that would affect all other areas and push the world towards a new political and economic system, and a new power structure.

The research plans, precisely, to concentrate on changes that happened because of Blockchain on traditional concepts, like trust, power, institution and money, government, law, aiming to discuss those concepts ontologically to determine the nature of the changes. To realize this goal, relevant growing literature of Blockchain has been considered. The research plan, generally, is based on doctrinal and qualitative methods and is offered in the form of fundamental research concerned with the theoretical aspects, using both deductive and inductive methods for analysing ideas. It has ignored the technical issues of Blockchain dealing with the concepts directly.

2. Algorithmic trust

The issue of trust is considered an important concept in human interaction and has been duly addressed in the Blockchain ecosystem. However, compared to other traditional systems, addressing “trust” in Blockchain is so different and more intriguing, since, Blockchain, in truth, has been got rid of trust. To explain more, Blockchain networks are trust-less in that it is not necessary to know and trust human parties, just the software (Swan 2018). For example, it allows for the peer-to-peer financial transaction with anonymity (Miller 2019) in which human trust is absent completely (Satoshi 2008). Generally, Blockchain, in fact, is a distributed consensus system in which parties do not need to trust each other in their transactions (De Kruijff & Weigand 2017), and This is because Blockchain has a high degree of transparency and rigorous peer review process where even the most trivial of changes are audited, and thus nobody needs to trust anyone (Hillebrand 2018).

All those mentioned above imply that the trust concept has been transferred from human to computer. It means that a new form of trust system called “algorithmic trust” has been created, which is significantly different from the traditional type of trust that was between human agents (Swan & de Filippi 2017). Therefore, Blockchain is a trust-building technology which creates trust through an *Algorithm* as a replacement for traditional mechanisms (Swan 2018). It can be said that an essential change has happened for traditional instruments which build trust by third-parties. Trust has been distributed in the Blockchain decentralized ecosystem where

no third-party has control of the data (Jaoude & Saade 2019). For example, one of the most important applications of Blockchain, which have changed our understanding of trust, is in the transfer of money. Blockchain provides an electronic payment system by cryptographic proof instead of trust, allowing people to transact with each other without asking for third party's confirmation (Satoshi 2008).

There is a significant cause beyond emerging new conception and also a new instrument for building trust. Blockchain as a new instrument has appeared and is starting to see wide adoption (Browne 2017), because trust has waned in many institutional systems, especially in traditional financial institutions, which have failed to deliver results (Swan 2018). In general, People's trust declined in every kind of institution recently (Browne 2017). It is noticeable that the emergence of the Blockchain's first and the essential product, namely Bitcoin, occurred during the 2007-2008 global financial crisis when trust in the regulatory agencies such as financial institutions and the real estate industry as the main causes of the economic crises decreased; So Bitcoin as a form of money with the capability to circumvent the institutions have gained popularity (Barber 2016). Unfortunately, people blindly trust in centralized institutions, but when these institutions fail in their roles, they are often the ordinary users who pay the price of such failing institutions; So, Blockchain technology enables people to create networks without being exposed to the risks resulting from central authorities (Trivedi 2019).

As a result, individuals have stopped trusting each other and the institutions as well, and thus they have chosen computer-based systems as a solution, and this has made considerable changes in social relationships by shifting away from trust-based cooperation between individuals to the trust-less interaction between them on technological mechanisms. In this regard, the algorithmic trust created by Blockchain can be considered as a new form of social capital (Swan & Brunswicker 2018); because the feature of trust-freeness and the shift from trust in authorities to trust in algorithms will provide an excellent opportunity for different direct interactions between individuals (Ostern 2019).

Besides all the technical and conceptual advantages mentioned above, the essential concern is that if the society members do not need trust each other conveying the trust to computers, is that means we are going to put

such abstract concepts in machines or technologic-based mechanisms?! Trust, as a means through which humans test each other, will lose its ethical sense in future as a result of its transfer to an algorithm? If this kind of approach spreads, it may serve as the first step to include other ethical concepts by inventing other types of technologies. Therefore, we will face a world where concepts such as trust are not recognized as a human concept, and there is the probability that those no longer exist in the future, losing their roles in society. This is happening mainly because of essential change in the ontology of trust as a concept or brushing it aside as an unnecessary factor in relationships between human beings.

3. Decentralized power

Power, historically, had been centralized, in particular, by governments, but by applying blockchain apparatuses, power is going to be decentralized in all over the world. Popular applications of Blockchain technology which exist mainly in both decentralized supply chains and property transfers, lack a central entity that needs to be trusted for data to be collectively stored and retrieved (Trivedi 2019). It means that Blockchain system as an institutional application can keep the balance of power restored more equitably to individuals (Swan 2018), and it is executed through decentralizing power to numerous smaller actors (Miller 2019). This movement prevents the concentration of power among dominant groups, including governments, and countries such as the United States will not be able to implement economic sanctions against other countries and individuals with the dollar.

In this regard, in particular, the emergence of Bitcoin has created a new narrative towards decentralization of power (Reijers & Coeckelbergh 2018). This huge change is happening in the light of the two initial products of Blockchain, one of which is the global decentralized cryptocurrencies which are associated with the international decentralized freer markets rather than national banks; and another one is the decentralized smart contracts which allow all individuals to enter into financial contracts, fulfill accepted commitments, and develop an automated execution process and criteria (Jaoude & Saade 2019). Historically, there had been serious thoughts about the ways of avoiding state dominancy and taking back monetary power from

the state (Von Mises 1912, 70), and today Bitcoin can play a significant role in realizing this idea (Nick Bilton 2012). All Blockchain-based currencies, especially Bitcoin, have significant potential to restore monetary power to individuals (Barber 2016) by taking it from governments. Cryptocurrencies have a high capacity to empower people financially all over the world because they do not need to government-based intermediaries for the transaction.

In such a decentralized system, even Satoshi had not an extra privilege. Although he was the only miner in the beginning, he could not prevent others from competing with him, due to the fact that anyone is basically allowed to participate in this industry (Hillebrand 2018). It means that decentralization attribute of Blockchain entails a “de-personalization” of power; namely, it is difficult for the algorithmic institutions to subject others to their will within the system (Reijers & Coeckelbergh 2018). Also, and most important, Blockchain-based decentralization of power will restrict corruption which is associated with centralization and misuse of power by governments (Aliyev & Safarov 2019), we question the reliability of blockchain technology as a tool for anti-corruption and look at how this tool can be utilized to reduce corruption in public administration. Theoretically, blockchain allows citizens to eliminate intermediaries in many public service delivery cases. In this regard, the implementation of blockchain into the public service delivery process may prevent some types of corruption activities. Using the two-round Delphi Method, 17 blockchain experts were requested to assess the potential of the blockchain, the benefits and barriers of blockchain technology in the anti-corruption process. Furthermore, the myths and ethical challenges of blockchain were presented to depict a more realistic framework of the technology in terms of fighting corruption. The opinions expressed and arguments employed herein are solely those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official views of the OECD or of its member countries. This document and any map included herein are without prejudice to the status of or sovereignty over any territory, to the delimitation of international frontiers and boundaries and to the name of any territory, city or area.”author”:{{“dropping-particle”:””,family”:”Aliyev”,given”:”Ziya”,non-dropping-particle”:””,parse-names”:false,suffix”:””}},{{“dropping-particle”:””,family”:”Safarov”,given”:”Igbal”,non-dropping-particle”:””,parse-names”:false,suffix”:””}},”container-title”:”2019 OECD

Global Anti-Corruption & Integrity Forum","id":"ITEM-1","issued":{"date-parts":[["2019"]]},"title":"Logos, Mythos and Ethos of Blockchain: an Integrated Framework for Anti-Corruption","type":"article-journal"},"uris":["http://www.mendeley.com/documents/?uuid=d0d7305f-c33b-41da-bda4-3ad4347bedbb"]},"mendeley":{"formattedCitation":"(Aliyev & Safarov, 2019. Therefore, technological infrastructures like Blockchain can change traditional approaches in social or economic and political domains. These potentials will not be realized automatically, nor within a short period, but will be developed gradually, through continuous processes of deliberate adaption and negotiation (Schrape 2019).

What is intriguing about Blockchain is that the power by Blockchain is shifted and transferred from intermediates like governments to an algorithm in a distributed and decentralized manner, which implies that power has been separated into individuals, who, in truth, do not have any control over the Blockchain system because of its automatic function. Therefore, like trust, power is another concept changed ontologically through acting in an algorithm instead of being applied by an individual or an intermediate institution.

4. Algorithmic institution

Blockchain is equipped with a cryptographic mechanism that authenticates users' identities and coordinates people's activities, eliminating the need for human-run institutions to perform these tasks (Swan 2018). This fact would have significant consequences, one of which, for example, is happening in the cryptocurrency markets. Cryptocurrency transfer mechanisms across Blockchain networks may brush traditional intermediaries aside, which traditionally verify transactions, and hence the institutional structure of the society could transform into the computationally-based one (Swan & de Filippi 2017). The concepts of both structures sound the same, but they are different from the viewpoint that Blockchain ledger records are immutable and the fulfillment of commitments is accomplished through pre-established infrastructure rather than voluntary acts of the parties (De Kruijff & Weigand 2017).

Blockchain is a kind of self-sufficient and self-reliant institution because it has all the necessary features of an institution without using traditional means (Ishmaev 2017). For instance, Bitcoin, as a Blockchain-

based currency, is an international abstract institution of property that can be characterized as a meta-institution with the capacity to regulate relations between individuals, organizations, and other institutions (Ishmaev 2017). Actually, it can perform the same coordination tasks that are considered the core feature of traditional organizations (Schrape 2019). This fact raises a serious concern of the future of traditional financial institutions, Since the survival of those institutions would depend on an essential change in the applicability of them. Those institutions would be required to prove a value creation process that is not based only on control of capitals (Swan 2018).

A cryptocurrency like Bitcoin and its functionality are not under the control of any central government (Trivedi 2019) and, at the same time, Ethereum-based smart contract system allows for any programmable job, to be recorded, validated, and executed through a decentralized algorithm (Trivedi 2019). Therefore, the same way in which Bitcoin as a currency escapes from the central authority of financial institutions, Ethereum can replace intermediaries in charge of managing contracts (Trivedi 2019). This means that Blockchain is stealing power from institutional authority and restoring it to individuals (Murray 2016) by getting rid of government-based institution.

It is evident that the institutional concept, which is physical and human-based, is being systemic and algorithmic-based, which means that another ontological conceptual change is happening because of Blockchain. This change could be the stepping stone to emerging of a post-capitalism era, in which intermediary organizations and platforms become increasingly obsolete (Schrape 2019).

5. Digital money

The current method of storing money in bank accounts is going to change fundamentally because the money will be stored in Blockchain networks in the near future (Swan 2018). The world is going towards forming a complex, dynamic, adaptive and multi-scale crypto-economic system which has been represented, currently, by Bitcoin (Voshmgir & Zargham 2019) specifically complex systems. They are adaptive networks with multi-scale spatiotemporal dynamics. Individual actions towards a collective goal are incentivized with

"purpose-driven" tokens. These tokens are equipped with cryptoeconomic mechanisms allowing a decentralized network to simultaneously maintain a universal state layer, support peer-to-peer settlement, and incentivize collective action. These networks therefore provide a mission-critical and safety-critical regulatory infrastructure for autonomous agents in untrusted economic networks. They also provide a rich, real-time data set reflecting all economic activities in their systems. Advances in network science and data science can thus be leveraged to design and analyze these economic systems in a manner consistent with the best practices of modern systems engineering. Research that reflects all aspects of these socioeconomic networks needs (i. The limited supply of Bitcoin will turn it to the digital gold in place of the physical gold (Satoshi 2008). Therefore, Bitcoin is going to take the role of gold and is evaluated through transactions among the individuals themselves all over the world.

The most interesting feature of Bitcoin is that it is a currency led by no person (Hillebrand 2018). Therefore, advocating it does not mean empowering any party that stands behind it, exactly like gold. This is because everyone can become a miner and create blocks across the Blockchain network, and also, this digital money can spread throughout the international financial markets without reliance on any central entity, so nobody can hold the monopoly over Bitcoin (Hillebrand 2018).

The transfer of money in physical forms, such as gold coins, was difficult in large amounts between long distances, and in response to these difficulties, the physical money was replaced with state bonds; but the circulation of state money is limited to the national borders of that state (Barber 2016). On the other hand, the necessity of transnational trading all over the world has led to the offering of a currency with higher intrinsic value like gold and silver (Barber 2016). However, as global trade developed, the intrinsic value of money decreased and replaced with the functional value as a result of the established trust relationships (Simmel 1978, 181). Therefore, the transferability of money between countries increased through inventing paper notes, checks, credit cards, and online payment systems to provide easy and efficient trade on a global scale (Barber 2016). This path continues by developing another concept of money that has more abstract

nature shifting from being a material into an algorithm and can be called as “perfect money” (Dodd 2012).

From political approach, Bitcoin is a means to avoid state regulation and take back monetary power from the state (Nick Bilton 2012), because, in fact, money is not given its value from the state, and exchanging by individuals employing a “common media of exchange” determines what is money (Von Mises 1912, 70). From this perspective, the main goal of Bitcoin as a libertarian enterprise that promotes the ideals of free markets and individual freedom (Karlstrøm 2014), is returning monetary power from governments to individuals by transcending states and forming a supranational exchange society as the next step in monetary evolution (Barber 2016).

In the International perspective, cryptocurrencies circulate across the world within seconds, and transacting parties do not need to be concerned with their domestic money (Barber 2016). Therefore, if currencies like Bitcoin is used as the medium of exchange, the governments do not need to be interested in the money of each other because Bitcoin has the potential to serve as the international money (Barber 2016). Cryptocurrencies could leave an efficient impact on geopolitics by replacing the present major international trading currencies like US dollar, the Euro, the Japanese Yen or Chinese Yuan, through which these countries exercise control over the financial markets and impose sanctions on other countries (Miller 2019). Therefore, Bitcoin has the capacity to establish another form of the economic system by driving the world towards post-capitalism (Cohen 2017, 64). Bitcoin can lead to a stable financial infrastructure which cannot be centrally manipulated, compared to volatile characteristics of traditional money that historically have been suffering from collapses and hyperinflation (Clegg 2014).

There are some concerns about high volatility of Bitcoin price, but it will decrease as its usage increases, and if more companies begin accepting payments in Bitcoin, fewer users will tend to exchange their Bitcoins for fiat currency (Trivedi 2019). Bitcoin is a new currency and is held and traded by limited number individuals presently; however, in some cryptocurrency markets, Bitcoin is already the leading coin, and its use cases can be increased in the near future. (Hillebrand 2018). Interaction with Blockchain technology is getting more popular, and this would prompt a new definition and understanding of “money” and “property” in the world (Reijers &

Coeckelbergh 2018). Cryptocurrency is the new ontological definition for money and this is another significant change happening in the realm of the traditional concept since Bitcoin is not only different from fiat money, but also from traditional money which is gold.

6. Anarchic governance

As computer-based systems, like video games and virtual reality, are increasingly growing, the production of quality goods such as authority and trust using computational systems, which are traditionally produced by human-run institutions, is taking more steps forwards (Velasco 2017). Both the traditional monetary system and the Blockchain-based system are a political matter by nature because both features of control and authority are essential elements in both systems; but, in the case of fiat monetary systems, institutional actors are in-charge of control measures while such a role and function are the intrinsic features of Blockchain-based systems (Velasco, 2017). This feature of Blockchain means that Developing its applications would open the path towards anarchy, in which the states would be eliminated from the monetary system. The governmental authority would disappear not only from the money transaction process but also from the production process itself (Velasco 2017).

Historically, the elimination of governments, which is the key feature of Anarchy, was the request of some elitists in some stages of political history. There has been widespread criticism of the growing centralization of governments power so that in the mid-19th century an economist by the name of Bastiat called on all governments to get out of the citizens' lives as Locke's law states, advocating the view that whatever is wrong for an individual would be wrong for a government too (Miller 2019).

Blockchain is robust in its unstructured simplicity (Satoshi 2008), and this means that it is so close to being an anarchic system. Since the public record is kept by Blockchain and any individual can update it, no power may be exercised by any institution to corrupt or use the public record as a tool of extortion (Markey-Towler 2018). Blockchain technology, therefore, allows for the possibility of an anarchic dream that is finally coming to truth; a society which is composed of groups and mutual associations in the absence

of violence and coercion of governments (Marshall 1992, 3). The Blockchain technology might provide the missing link which allows for the formation of large-scale societies with institutions are formulated, and records kept and verified collectively (Markey-Towler 2018).

There is a major challenge presented to any given institutional system; For instance, how it can provide an integrated system for conducting political-socioeconomic affairs, and the state has an advantage in this respect over Blockchain, for it has had some thousands of years to develop its institutional capabilities (Markey-Towler 2018). It is unlikely that the governments will ever be entirely superseded by another institutional system in the process of societal evolution; but the emergence of Blockchain means that the anarchic utopia has become a little closer than before (Markey-Towler 2018).

To interact in society, governments guarantee certain reciprocity and security concerning exchange and property by the violence and coercion of the state, while the most basic anarchic theories call for other nonviolent means of enforcement that involve exclusion (Ackerman & Kruegler 1994). The institutional system must, therefore, be sufficiently exclusionary toward those unwilling to abide by its institutional structure (Markey-Towler 2018), and this principle has been installed into both smart contract systems in Ethereum and cryptocurrencies like Bitcoin.

There are some concerns about unpredictable consequences of self-governing collectives due to the fact that history has shown that a mass mind is a cruel idiot; and Nasty mass mind outbursts have been flavored Maoist, Fascist, and extreme religious thoughts, and it is possible to see such social disasters that appear suddenly under cover of technological utopianism (Lanier 2006). It means that anarchic Blockchain has high potential to end up to a populist world and elimination of elitist approaches. Also, the anarchic Blockchain would lead to the lack of a formal governance structure which causes an inability of immediate action or reaction towards important events and disasters. In addition to this, informal and invisible mechanisms of power may take shape.

The anarchist utopia of a society in which individuals are free to associate with others according to a set of rules to which those others agree is not here yet; but it has been made more possible, and then states would be challenged to reform in order to become more competitive with Blockchain

in a society which is continuously evolving (Markey-Towler 2018). The prevailing belief is that Blockchain had come to stand against intermediaries such as governments and banks. This is right, but they would be eliminated with no fight against Blockchain just because it does not have the problems they have, or, in other words, Blockchain is a new abler system than the government. As the carthorse was replaced with the car; governments will slowly be brushed aside by the developing Blockchain. This is a more peaceful view and will mitigate the extremists' stance on the one hand and will ease the moderates' concerns on the other.

Although governance has historically been based on deliberation and negotiation, Blockchain algorithms are reducing governance to automated protocols, consensus mechanisms (Kera 2019). This is considered an ontological change in the nature and concept of governing, transferring from human-based system towards algorithmic one.

7. Self-regulated system

The initial reaction to the emergence of Bitcoin from legal scholars and legislators was a question of if and how Bitcoin should be regulated (Filippi 2013). Because of the pseudonymization transaction of cryptocurrencies, it is so difficult for governments to monitor their transactions (Rehman, Salah, Damiani, & Svetinovic 2019) developers, investors, regulators, and speculators to develop new economic and business models for trade, investment, and taxation. Currently, the cryptocurrency ecosystem is immature with multifaceted trust issues at all levels from technology providers to users and governments. In this article, we present a detailed analysis of trust issues in the cryptocurrency ecosystem, including a detailed taxonomic discussion of the key trust aspects, including price manipulation, price volatility, insider trading, parallel economy, shadow economy, reputation systems, transparency, centrality, token economy, governance, regulations, design, usability, privacy, and security. We also present a comparative analysis of the top 10 cryptocurrencies that are holding about 85% of the total market capital. Finally, we present a detailed summary of the key trust issues and their potential immediate, short-term, and long-term solutions. This article reveals that significant effort is required to develop a fully trustworthy cryptocurrency

ecosystem.",author":[{"dropping-particle":"","family":"Rehman",given":"Muhammad Habib ur",non-dropping-particle":"","parse-names":false,"suffix":""}],{"dropping-particle":"","family":"Salah",given":"Khaled",non-dropping-particle":"","parse-names":false,"suffix":""}],{"dropping-particle":"","family":"Damiani",given":"Ernesto",non-dropping-particle":"","parse-names":false,"suffix":""}],{"dropping-particle":"","family":"Svetinovic",given":"Davor",non-dropping-particle":"","parse-names":false,"suffix":""}],container-title":"IEEE Transactions on Engineering Management",id":"ITEM-1",issued":{"date-parts":[["2019"]]},page:"1-17",publisher":"IEEE",title":"Trust in Blockchain Cryptocurrency Ecosystem",type":"article-journal",volume:"P P"},uris:["http://www.mendeley.com/documents/?uuid=4a7f3384-68a7-4112-9077-84b81ee7502c"]}],mendeley":{"formattedCitation":"(Rehman, Salah, Damiani, & Svetinovic, 2019. In fact, all methods of governance and regulation on Blockchain are inconsistent with its principles. The main issue here is that what cannot be controlled how it can be regulated.

Blockchain is going to support the international political system that has no government. Therefore, it would mean that international law would not really exist, or it is not really a 'law' (Ray 1992, 484) since, in an anarchic system, there are neither sovereigns nor subjects; it is the laws of nature; a commonwealth without sovereign power (Hobbes 1651, 218). Therefore, Blockchain is going to be a distributed political power, being responsible for keeping the population in compliance with its self-sufficient laws.

However, historically, it is argued that the enforcement of government-based laws is essential because, without laws, society would revert to nature—the Hobbesian state of anarchy (Miller 2019) regarding anarchy as a negative attribute which may lead to the collapse of society. In this regard, some claims that the regulation of cryptocurrencies must be on a global scale as national or regional rules would not be able to enforce on a virtual, borderless community (Reuters 2018). This is because, Blockchain technology leaves open the possibility that further non-state individual actors could play a more significant role in international relations, and that can enforce international laws and norms; especially, under the continuing changes to the international design including the traditional concepts of states and international relations (Miller 2019).

The legal and regulatory on Blockchain, particularly cryptocurrencies and smart contracts is unknown, especially from the viewpoint of the traditional regulatory approach (Scholl, Pomeshchikov, & Rodríguez Bolívar 2020). Therefore, Blockchain networks may lead to significant change, particularly, in the form of world trade regulations so that contracts between countries will be authorised through these networks (Krumov & Atanasov 2019).

Also, Smart contracts, called the "data and rules" system, are going towards embedding contracts data in Blockchain, and the conditions are performed automatically (Paik, Xu, Bandara, Lee, & Lo 2019). This refers to an important change in the ontology of regulation which was based on the interference of intermediary organizations. It is a transformation from traditional regulation toward a self-regulation system, which would change many traditional legal theories.

8. Blockchain world

Algorithms are believed to should not parallel reality too strictly since algorithms come to define and shape reality; therefore, Blockchain algorithms and "smart contract" technologies is said to drive forward the future of the world by providing algorithmic governance as the only possible governance solution (Kera 2019). The most important concern is that in developing any new social community, there is a huge difference between what "is" and what politics has determined ought to be (Mulligan & Bamberger 2018).

In this regard, Blockchain technology, through its multiple different self-determined political and economic systems, has enormous potential to act as a tool for developing smart social structures and new models of social organization, which help people decide how to represent themselves as individuals and societies (Swan 2018). In the Blockchain-based citizen relationship, the social contract between individuals can make people feel that they are living in a self-directed community (Swan 2018).

Blockchain is prompting the rethinking of the role of the authorized institutions in the community and the possibility of giving up paternalistic governments to models that improve individual liberty and encourage individuals to determine themselves as an economic and political subject in the new Blockchain-based world (Swan 2018).

On the other hand, Blockchain may have some hazardous aspects because it enforces in mind the chronological temporal dimension in dealing with events, which makes social relations rigid, and weakens dynamism and a sense of freedom and responsibility (Reijers & Coeckelbergh 2018). This is because Blockchain cannot be modified or altered; as an immutable ledger (Jaoude & Saade 2019). It raises the concern that Blockchain has the required potential to impose historical determinism on human society. This would be so hazardous because the core issue for humankind is to discover and expand itself through the revealing technological presence (Koletsi 2019), not to be frozen and stagnated.

Within this decentralized universe of Blockchain, intermediaries do not play any role; and trust and cooperation that may grow among valid strangers is an indication of emerging new socio-psychological dimensions in the society (Koletsi 2019) which has been progressing and developing in the course of human being history. In the other word, The ever-intensifying technological mediation of our 'being-with-each-other' has become by now a basic condition of most of our everyday lives (van den Eede 2011), and Classic "one-to-many" mass media has ended up to "many-to-many" medium dismantling big media's monopoly on the news and transforming it from a lecture to a conversation (Gillmor 2004, 68) and Blockchain, finally, would take the same way but in the many to many relationships. Therefore, this technology is an evolution, providing alternative ways for the organization of the relationship between individuals, communities, and societies and creating new power structures by influencing social relationships, within and between different cultural systems (Koletsi 2019).

About the impacts of Blockchain on the individuals, the subject-formation is a matter that is relevant to self-determination in economics and governance issues, and it happens when individuals introduce themselves as the beings who have developed a sense of self-authority, self-determination options extend beyond the default position, namely the current structures of authority to which we are born (Swan 2018). This is what Kant called "Enlightenment", which means "thinking autonomously and free of the dictates of external authority" (Kant 2013). Therefore, since the enlightenment project is still open, Blockchain can help all people to go beyond their perceived limits (Swan 2018).

In addition, Blockchain has an interesting advantage of saving time as so that it would help people to spend less time and get involved in other activities including artistic and cultural ones (Ammous 2018, 144) since they will have more free time to examine the life mannerism and philosophical concepts. In this regard, Blockchain is such as robots that facilitate human life by carrying out dull works.

In the Blockchain-based society, people will be freer, relations become selectable, and financial technologies like cryptocurrencies will guarantee people's participation in the realm of economic exchange, regardless of their personal, racial or cultural background (Reijers & Coeckelbergh 2018). And most importantly, the public Blockchain as a predominantly community-driven system decreases the responsibility of individual users and increases the impact of coordination (Aliyev & Safarov 2019) we question the reliability of blockchain technology as a tool for anti-corruption and look at how this tool can be utilized to reduce corruption in public administration. Theoretically, blockchain allows citizens to eliminate intermediaries in many public service delivery cases. In this regard, the implementation of blockchain into the public service delivery process may prevent some types of corruption activities. Using the two-round Delphi Method, 17 blockchain experts were requested to assess the potential of the blockchain, the benefits and barriers of blockchain technology in the anti-corruption process. Furthermore, the myths and ethical challenges of blockchain were presented to depict a more realistic framework of the technology in terms of fighting corruption. The opinions expressed and arguments employed herein are solely those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official views of the OECD or of its member countries. This document and any map included herein are without prejudice to the status of or sovereignty over any territory, to the delimitation of international frontiers and boundaries and to the name of any territory, city or area.”,author":{"dropping-particle":"","family":"Aliyev,"given":"Ziya,"non-dropping-particle":"","parse-names":false,"suffix":""},"dropping-particle":"","family":"Safarov,"given":"Igbal","non-dropping-particle":"","parse-names":false,"suffix":""},"container-title":"2019 OECD Global Anti-Corruption & Integrity Forum","id":"ITEM-1","issued":{"date-parts":["(2019)"]},"title":"Logos, Mythos and Ethos of Blockchain: an Integrated Framework for Anti-Corruption","type":"article-journal"},"uris":["http://www.mendeley.com/documents/?uuid=d0d7305f-c33b-41da-bda4-3ad4347bedbb"]},"mendeley":

{“formattedCitation”}”(Aliyev & Safarov, 2019. It would be a new world in which relations have been automatized under the strong consensus of all individuals. This kind of world is the result of considerable changes in the ontology of human world concepts since the new technology always comes up with new concepts and narratives and, finally new world which fits those concepts.

Conclusion

Blockchain technology holds great promise through proposing interesting possibilities in front of human beings, having the huge potential to evaluate human history and providing a new narrative on the world. This is because Blockchain is challenging traditional instruments by throwing up new ontological concepts.

Self-authority feature of Blockchain protects against traditional state domination because Blockchain's sovereignty cannot only be in the control of the governments or the private sector. This is so evident in cryptocurrencies interactions which challenge authorities through providing new financial system empowering individuals against states. Abstract and Self-sufficient features of Cryptocurrencies and their disconnection from the state-run economies keep those currencies away from the influence of oscillation of fiat-based economics and, eventually, will make one or more cryptocurrencies as a united global currency. Also, politically, Blockchain allows for proper authentication through maintaining complete anonymity providing secure voting mechanisms and can be the dynamic anarchic system to progressing democracy all over the world.

Although Blockchain had come to stand against intermediaries, such as governments and banks, they would be eliminated with no fight against Blockchain, which is a new abler system than the government. Governments will slowly be disappeared by the developing Blockchain as the carthorse was replaced with the car. Anarchy-as a main attribute of blockchain- is, in fact, the utopia. Interestingly, the utopia is the same philosophical theory that is explained within the framework of political Anarchy, and Blockchain has emerged as a tool to realize it in the world. It means that new idealistic concepts and a new narrative are going to rule the world.

There are some concerns about the unchangeability of Blockchain, one of which is that it may lead to a deterministic world historically; a world in which everything is registered with no defect conceptually and chronologically. This, as one source of weakness of Blockchain, needs further research to examine more the link between Blockchain ledger and determinism.

Ontologically, Blockchain seems that it is goalless and chaotic and resembles the theories of the chaotic universe in modern physics. If the nature of the universe is anarchic as it has been claimed in physics, then Blockchain would be in the same way of nature ontologically and ethically.

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Neoplatonism and Christian Thinking Leading the Self to the Good in Plotinus' Philosophy

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ABSTRACT: This article brings to the fore the problem of becoming a human being and consequently seeks an explanation for the mind-body ontological duality. The analysis considers the prism of the Plotinian vision. The author interprets the work *Enneade* extracting the argumentative scheme of Plotinus through which the dual nature of the human being seeks to reconcile the two ontologies. In *Enneade*, Plotinus expounds on the ways in which the human being tends to become the being, to his rational purpose, without denying the beauty of the sensitive world. The conclusion of the study identifies in Plotinus' work the mystical ecstasy as the common element of the components of the human being, this being also the path to becoming.

KEY WORDS: Plotinus, becoming being, mystical ecstasy

Unlike the early philosophers of Greek antiquity, and even contrary to Plato's theory, who Plotinus states that continues and merely explains, he constructs a doctrine of the First Principle, of the One, which is clearly distanced from its predecessors, but without completely innovating. In his vision, Plotinus builds his theory on elements already acquired in philosophy, such as the need for the existence of an arché (from the pre-Socratics), the need for a

unique, indivisible and immovable principle – introduced by Parmenides in the context of the two paths (Path of Truth), preserves the condition of transcendence taken from Plato's monad (but rejects synagogue as being hen) and also preserves Aristotle's interpretation of the theory of the transcendence of the Good in the Republic, and notes that Plato identifies the One with the Good. The novelty elements that Plotinus stopped at, although they seem paradoxical, look at the macrocosm on the one hand, locating the universal principle of all things, the motionless Center, as being beyond the Being, as a separate element outside the world (just as Anaxagoras understood Zeus as Nous orderly outside the constituent elements of the world), and on the other hand attributes to it a position in the deepest depths of being, where by introspection the being, alone and free from vices can contemplate the principle of all things and therefore the soul has a chance to reunite with the Good.

In view of these first elements and observing that the thesis of Plotinus' doctrine is the same as that of Plato, the mystical journey of the soul to the supreme intelligible world, the theme of this essay seeks to highlight briefly the reasons why Plotinus thinks that the soul aims to lead the self towards the absolute good, which are the ways to achieve this, if possible, and to what extent the self reaches the contemplation of the good, either by its actions or by its passivity, indifference and rejection of the sensible, and what happens if it succeeds.

The Plotinian ontology establishes, in the work of Enneads, the hierarchy of becoming of the being starting from the self, from the eternal matter of the sentient world, passing through the next step of the soul (Psyche) to reach the higher level of intelligence (Nous), the last level before the Absolute good, presented as One (To Hen). The first question that may arise is how an autonomous, indeterminate, immovable principle that does not become, does not transform, is not positively identified as something but rather as One with the meaning of its opposite, the one that is not multiple, can generate motion so that from it can generate all that is, has been and will be. The answer seems to lie, for Plotinus, in a double picture of divine reality: the superlunary world of intelligence and the sublunary, the sensitive world.

Plotinus originally divided the eternal cosmos into forms of hierarchical representation, so that each form is subject to a higher principle, and more importantly, each form is fit to be the object of a rational thought (noeta). In this way, the basis of Plotinian theory is intelligence, which is born of the desire of thought to move, by attracting to and from the Good (V. 5,6).

Between the three hypostases of reality, Nous holds the central place as being the principle of the soul. The nous is the energy and logos of the One, who, not being able to bear all the power received from the Good to conceive, will multiply this power to bear “part by part” (VI 7:15), thus giving birth to a plurality of absolute units of the good because “through One all beings come into existence”; it must be shown here that all that begets the intellect will contain traces of the Good, even the matter, the thing, “in so far as it is able to receive it” (IV. 8,6).

The next hypostasis, in the order of the Good, is represented by Psyche as a principle of the self, having the function of animating and illuminating the matter. Plotinus considers that every human soul, being hypostasized between the sensible and the intellect, has an upper part unaltered by the mixture with the body and which aims at theory, but also a lower part, Physis, which loses the power of intuitive activity, does not contemplate and degenerate into dianoia and then even in praxis.

The self and the sensible world dominate the first three Enneades of the total four, the importance being given by the ambivalent attitude of Plotinus: on the one hand, he admires the beauty of the sensible world considered by the belonging of intelligible that illuminate matter, and on the other hand, it is horrified by the “ugliness of matter” unable to fully receive the irradiation of the forms. The sentient world is eternal “as the fountain that never dries up” and therefore has its share of the indivisible principle of good. One descends the souls into the sentient world, giving birth to them for the purpose of their transformation “to be fulfilled they were born” (VII 1), providing them with protective organs and senses to withstand the harsh conditions of the underworld. The interpretation of the complete genesis of man in VI, 5 (by notes 660-662) would lead to three or three stages of development due to different types of souls that intervene and produce the vegetative, sensitive and rational forms. After the final stage of development,

the individual body is prone to receive the transcendent soul which, can project a ray of light through which formal reason is added to man, in order to guarantee a good being.

At this point in the analysis, we can continue with the punctual answers to the suggested questions: Why would the self-need to union with the good, as long as it seems that the soul cares for it in the underworld and does not seem to be alone, and the shadow of goodness which he possesses, as well as the quality of the object known to the intellect, would enable man to reason according to his good pleasure, his will being able to ensure a good life? According to Plotinian theory, the answer is simple: man longs for union with the good “out of longing for God”, out of love for that trace of Good that dominates him and urges him to return to the spiritual womb from which he comes. The erotic component of Platonic inspiration is fundamental in the work of Plotinus, thus ensuring the link between the two worlds. Describing with maximum sensitivity the relationship of love and desire between Soul and Objects, Soul and Intelligence, Intelligence and Goodness, Plotinus attaches fundamental value to beauty. It is acquired through grace, the descending grace of the Good to fill beings with color, goodness, and tenderness, or the very intelligence that without the light of the good remains indifferent to the soul. In its becoming, the self feels that it is not whole in the sublunary world, and by participating in the higher nous it intuits that only the union of love with good can complete it. But the love needed is not the kind of earthly Aphrodite.

But what are the ways allowed by the universal principle of all things by which the self can merge with the good? Distinguishing between two levels of divine reality – the World of Forms and One – Plotinus unequivocally cuts the guideline. In his opinion, the Rational Path, through which the self recognizes itself through reflexive acts, such as self-thinking thinking, in the desire to access the trace of the Good within it, is an undesirable, secondary, derived path mediated by the doubling and perversion of the nous community. Instead, the path considered safe and direct is the path of mystical ecstasy, of contemplation to which higher souls have access through the intuitive act doubled by the Love represented by the heavenly Aphrodite described by

Plato in the Banquet dialogue. The conditions under which the self can reach ecstasy presuppose its detachment in advance from any trace of matter, from anything outside it, from any vice, the need to turn inward, ignoring them all (VI, 7). If in doing all this and being ready to meet the Good, it feels that his movement becomes circular around a center, as in a mystical dance that carries it to his own center, then the self-unites with the One: “it realizes the source of life, as well as that of intelligence, the principle of being good, the root of the soul [...]” (VI, 9). The experience of mystical ecstasy represents for Plotinus the only way of the soul to become what it was, the contemplation of the good not being an objective, rational, but even a transformation, or as P. Hadot shows, a deifying ecstasy, and an inner metamorphosis. The proof that “the one is united with the One” seems to be the desire of the self to remain forever in the state of “sobria ebrietas”. But the soul does not remain in that center of the universe, its state does not last, the ecstasy and union with the Good are temporary, because the doubling has not been achieved definitively and the soul is still trapped in the sublunary world.

The conclusion that Plotinus’ theory of the union of the Self with the Good leads us to be also an exhortation to epoché, chemosis, ataraxia, and expectation. If the soul continues to practice the same type of Plotinian asceticism and does not pervert itself by practicing the sciences that involve demonstrations and proofs even in soul dialogue, its possibilities of continuing contemplation on equally high steps will no longer be hindered.

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Christianity and Anthropocentrism within the Poems of Oodgeroo Noonuccal

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ABSTRACT: Lynn White, Jr. identifies Christianity as anthropocentric in nature. Before him, Max Weber, a German sociologist, tried to indicate a similar kind of interpretation of Judaism and Christianity. For him, the religion of the Bible was responsible for the ripping off the earth 'from any religious, numen, significance—and holiness' (Kunzmann 1). Carl Amery supported White's view in *The End of Providence: The Merciless Consequence of Christinity* (1972). Later, Betsy S. Hilbert's re-reading of Lynn White Jr.'s above discussed essay "The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis" in her essay "Beyond "Thou Shalt Not": An Ecocritic Reads Deuteronomy" gives the issue a new dimension. She tries to find out White's design behind proposing St Francis of Assisi as 'a patron saint for ecologists'. Throughout the essay, Hilbert gives ample examples from the *Bible* to illuminate our apprehension of human relations to the environment. Critics like Betsy say that Christianity has been misinterpreted by earlier critics as rendering humans the power of 'domination of nature'. But a proper study of the Bible shows God's original design in endowing special power to humans: to take the responsibility of showing respect for the laws of nature. This paper intends to probe further into the issue and find out the possibilities of Christianity spreading ecocentrism.

KEY WORDS: Anthropocentrism, Christianity, ecocentrism, ecological crisis

Lynn White, Jr. discusses the relation of man with the environment (as directed in the Bible) elaborately in his essay “Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis”. He observes, “Christianity is the most anthropocentric religion the world has seen” (White 1996, 9). Unlike Greco-Roman mythology believing in a cyclical notion of time, Christianity introduced the concept of time as linear. It also introduced the story of creation of the world by the omnipotent God. He gradually created light and darkness, the heavenly bodies, the earth, and all the plants on it, animals, birds, and fishes. Finally, He created the first man, Adam, and then the first woman, Eve, to accompany Adam. It was man who gave names to all the other elements and thus established his dominance over them. It seems from Genesis that each and every item was created by God only to serve man’s purposes. They are planned particularly for man’s benefit. And above all, though man is also ‘made of clay’, he is not just a part of nature. He resembles God’s image, and hence shares the privileges of the Creator over nature. Christianity also insists upon God’s will that man should exploit nature for ‘proper ends’.

Even before White, the German sociologist Max Weber hinted at similar kind of interpretation of Judaism and Christianity. For him, the religion of the Bible was responsible for the ripping off the earth ‘from any religious, *numen*, significance—and holiness’ (qtd in Kunzmann 2014, 1). Carl Amery supported White’s view in *The End of Providence: The Merciless Consequence of Christianity* (1972). John Passmore justifies White’s accusation of the Bible in his *Man’s Responsibility for Nature* (1974). He argues that if humans are made in the image of God, then human’s relation to nature is equivalent to God’s relation to humanity, i.e., nature is the servant of humanity as humanity is of God’s. In 1981 came out Eugene Drewermann’s *Deadly Progress: The Destruction of the Earth and Humanity as Christian Legacy*. Paulos Mar Gregorios, the Eastern Orthodox, brings a more serious allegation to Genesis. He remarks that the idea of stewardship reduces nature to ‘nothing but an object into our hands for safe keeping and good management’ (Gregorios 1987, 88). Andre Collard, the radical ecofeminist critic, supports him while suggesting: “Genesis presents the view that God created everything and gave it to man[and not just in the generic sense!]

to dominate..” (Collard 1989, 17). Ian McHarg also states that the Bible “encourages the most exploitative and destructive instincts in man...here can be found the sanction and injunction to conquer nature...” (McHarg 1989, 26). Recently Norman Habel from the University of Adelaide refers to a threefold anthropocentrism in Genesis 1:26-28 in his “Introducing Ecological Hermeneutics”. First, the claim in genesis that humanity is made in the image of God gives it a privileged position compared to the other elements of the creation. Second, humanity is given the power to ‘rule’ over the rest of the creation. Finally, humanity is instructed to subdue the earth which, for Habel, reflects the exercise of force.

It seems apparently very surprising that Oodgeroo, a poet belonging to a highly ecocentric race and herself a great admirer of this attitude, refers to Christianity (such an anthropocentric religion) time and again in her poems with great respect for the religion. And when she talks of Christianity or of God, it never seems that she is at all bothering about such an allegation to the religion. In “Colour Bar”, a poem protesting against racism, Oodgeroo reminds the white people of God’s design at the time of creating the universe. She says that He created all of us as equals. He never intended to make any differences among his children. But the whites who brought Christianity to Australia are acting in a way just the opposite to the instructions of the Bible. In this way, the poet thinks, the Christianity they talk of so much becomes meaningless to them: “The Christianity you hold so high/ Is but a lie” (15-16).

The most poignant satire upon such hypocrites is found in “God’s One Mistake.” To show the disgust that God feels at man’s behavior Oodgeroo quotes from Genesis 6, where God says: “It repenteth me that I have made man.” Humans, in search of knowledge of the whole universe, have ignored the most simple things of life. Too much knowledge has made them feel less. They are forgetting the basic lessons of life taught by God:

That hate is wrong,
Injustice evil.
Pain there must be and tears,
Sorrow and death, but not
Intolerance, unkindness, cruelty. (11-15).

Instead, they have chosen the ‘mean and base’ (17), which was never intended by nature. Men alone on earth have chosen such evil things. As a consequence he is now lonely on earth, unhappy. Moreover, their selfish activities have caused disaster to the other lives on the earth too. Oodgeroo anticipates that this error/fault in selection might be the reason that God is repenting for creating mankind. He created mankind with the special gift of ‘reason and free will’ so that they can live life of their own will. But now he feels that such a precious gift was imparted to someone utterly/completely unworthy of it. They couldn’t utilize it for the benefit of the world. Their insensibility has turned bliss into a curse. Their lack of wisdom has led them to choose unhappiness as a consequence of their activity.

Oodgeroo refers to the crucifixion of Jesus Christ in “White Man, Dark Man”. The poet here accepts that the whites had something more to be proud of than the blacks. Jesus Christ was born in their place and enlightened their people with his sermons. But then, it was the same white people who couldn’t value Christ. They were unable to realize the significance of his preaching of loving everyone. And they crucified him. This is an extremely shameful act. Christ here becomes a symbol of innocence. The crucifixion of Christ stands for the crucifixion of the whole biosphere, including the blacks who are inseparable from nature. The sermons of love preached by the Bible are still unintelligible to the whites. They are still incapable of giving proper reverence to Jesus Christ and his words. In “White Australia,” Oodgeroo again addresses the same issue.

The mindset with which the Europeans crucified Christ has not yet changed much. In “Verses VIII,” Oodgeroo apprehends that if Christ returns among us today, he would meet the same treatment as before. He would be looked upon with equal suspicion. He might even be suspected to be a communist, a non-believer in the existence of God. Here I would like to remind that Oodgeroo herself was an active communist in her political life. Her sound knowledge of Marxism helped her to find out the resemblance of the two ideas. Particularly Marx’s concept of the proper utilization of the natural resources with ‘mastery over nature’ may have appealed to her. And probably, she could see within it the reflection of what God may have intended while attributing special qualities to humans.

Betsy S. Hilbert's re-reading of Lynn White Jr.'s above discussed essay "The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis" in her essay "Beyond 'Thou Shalt Not': An Ecocritic Reads Deuteronomy" (2001) gives the issue a new dimension. She tries to find out White's design behind proposing St Francis of Assisi as 'a patron saint for ecologists'. She opines/thinks, "White pointed the way for contemporary rethinking about religious attitudes towards environment, seeking the strands within traditional religions that have persistently avowed human responsibility for the care of creation" (Hilbert 2001, 31). Throughout the essay, Hilbert gives ample examples from the Bible to illuminate our apprehension of human relations to the environment. Hilbert observes, "from its first words, spoken in and from the wilderness, Deuteronomy is suffused with the theme of connection to the landscape; it consistently expounds the idea that human beings, in their intricate connections to the earth and to one another, bear the responsibility of justice and righteousness as a condition of their continued survival in the places that give them nurture" (Hilbert 2001, 29).

Critics like Betsy say that Christianity has been misinterpreted by the earlier critics as rendering humans the power of 'domination of nature'. But a proper study of the Bible shows God's original design in endowing special power to humans — to take the responsibility of showing respect for the laws of nature.

Genesis has been alleged to be anthropocentric chiefly for two reasons: 1) the use of the words like 'rule' and 'subdue', and 2) the reference to the creation of humans in the image of God: "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness" (Genesis). This reference has been misinterpreted by critics to render some extent of dominion to be given by God to humans over the natural world. Moo suggests: "The creation story, true to its tendency to present God's creation of the world in polemical interaction with other ancient creation stories, "democratizes" the image of God language, asserting that all human beings are created in God's image and therefore serve as his agents, or vice-regents, in governing the world as created" (Moo 2006, 10). So the 'Christians conforming to the image of God' (Moo 2006, 11) actually indicates towards a wise and loving stewardship of the earth by humanity.

In his attempt to defend Christianity from the allegation of anthropocentrism, Michael R. Stead traces the meanings of the original Hebrew words used in Genesis for 'rule' (*radah*) and 'subdue' (*kabas*) in his essay "To 'Rule Over' and 'Subdue' the Creation". He sees that the word *radah* 'doesn't intrinsically carry the connotation of despotic rule' (Stead 2010, 2). He finds out another word (*perek*, 'harshness') in Biblical Hebrew corresponding to despotic rule. He again finds out that when Psalm 8:7-9 alludes to Genesis 1:26, it replaces the word *radah* with *mashal*. After analyzing the connotations and usage of all these words, Stead comes to the conclusion that "the kind of 'rule' over creation that humanity is given is to be patterned after God's 'rule'—that is, a rule that protects and nurtures, not a despotic rule that exploits" (Stead 2010, 3). Steve Bishop also concentrates on the original Hebrew words for 'rule over' and 'subdue' for proper understanding of the issue. He suggests in his "Green Theology and Deep Ecology: New Age or New Creation?" that "Yet, despite the strength of these words they do not provide humanity with a mandate to dominate or conquer nature. The meaning of these two words is best seen, not in their derivations, but in their context" (Bishop 1991, 4).

The concept of 'managing' the earth for its 'true owner' (Moo 2006, 10) is echoed by most of the critics defending Christianity from the allegation of anthropocentrism. White's accusation chiefly rests upon the existence/occurrence of the two words 'rule over' and 'subdue' in Genesis 1 and 9 to show that humanity is the steward of God's creation, not the owner. He remarks, "God expects us to treat our animals with the dignity that they deserve as God's creatures" (White 1996, 5). Humans are responsible and accountable for their treatment of the non-human world. Steve Bishop also supports the concept of 'stewardship' and says that "the earth has been given to humanity because of God's love and concern for nature" (Bishop 1991, 7). C.F.D. Moule introduces the term vice-regent or sub-manager for man's role as lord under God in his book *Man and Nature in the NT*. He sees man as responsible steward, not an independent tyrant. According to Moule there was nothing like unlimited freedom and right for Biblical man. Moule compares humanity with the operator of a beautifully functioning machine.

As long as the operator follows the instructions left by its maker, the machine runs without problem. But with the violation of the rule he invites destruction both to the machine and to himself. Andrew J. Hoffman and Lloyd E. Sandelands, both from Stephen M. Ross School of Business at the University of Michigan reflect in their Working Paper “Getting Right with Nature: Anthropocentrism, Ecocentrism and Theocentrism” that “This mutuality [of God’s love] animates the role of steward by balancing the Genesis mandate for dominion with the challenge of restraint and replenishment. Man may press nature into his service, but himself must also serve nature, to preserve her integrity and, where possible, to improve her” (Hoffman and Sandelands 2004, 23). Pope John Paul II remarks in the Encyclical Letter, *Contesimus Annus* (1991): “Man thinks he can make arbitrary use of the earth, subjecting it without restraint to his will, as though it did not have its own requisites and a prior God-given purpose, which man can indeed develop but must not betray” (Pope 1991, 56). Moo suggests to interpret human dominion from the perspective of Christ’s own sacrificial ‘rule’. Douglas Hall, after studying extensively over this topic reflects, “If Christology is our fundamental premise both for theological...and anthropological...doctrine, then ‘dominion’ was a way of designating the role of Homo Sapiens within creation can only mean stewardship” (qtd in Moo 2006, 10). Bishop goes on with his argument over the creation story and suggests that the creation was never meant for humanity; it exists for the glory of God. It has its meaning only in God. He further argues that as creation is theocentric, it can never be anthropocentric.

Armerding (1973) also echoes the same thought in “Biblical Perspectives on the Ecology Crisis”. For Armerding (1973, 8), “a Biblical worldview is really theocentric rather than either anthropocentric or biocentric”. Martin Ashley, from the University of the West of England, asserts that in traditions like Judaeo-Christian where God is at the centre of things, humankind cannot be and hence denies the allegation of anthropocentrism. Stead refers to Exodus 23:29, where God explains his intention of giving his people the Promised Land in stages so that the inhabitants of the land would not be driven out from their place. He also places limitations upon the Israelites regarding the use of nature (like the fields are not to be reaped to the border

[Lv 19:9, in Bishop], harvesting allowed from trees five years old [Lv 19:23], the land is to lie fallow regularly [Lv 25:1-12] and so on). These laws clearly indicate towards God's concern for the sustenance of the whole creation. Betsy S. Hilbert begins her essay "Beyond 'Thou Shalt Not': An Ecocritic Reads Deuteronomy" by mentioning the Biblical story of Moses and the Promised Land. The Israelites were to pay the price for their continuance in the Promised Land and the price was "social justice—justice not only among themselves but for every other occupant: human, animal, and the land" (Hilbert 2001, 29). For her, Deuteronomy speaks of ethics and ecology, warfare and social justice. The story of Noah, the concepts of the Sabbath year (rest year for the land) and the year of jubilee (Sabbath year of Sabbath year) are the further testimonies to God's care for the land and animals. Douglas J. Moo, author of "Nature in the New Creation: New Testament Eschatology and the Environment", remarks: "The OT then pictures the promised land of Israel as a renewal of the Garden; and therefore, included in the Mosaic law are many provisions for the care of the land itself" (Moo 2006, 10). This attitude leads to the 'fundamental consideration' (Moo 2006, 10) of humanity as merely the 'manager' of the earth 'on behalf of its true owner' (Moo 2006, 10) i.e., God.

But then the deep ecologist Arne Naess objects to the concept of human's role as 'steward' of the earth. He thinks, "The arrogance of stewardship consists in the idea of superiority which underlies the thought that we exist to watch over nature like a highly respected middleman between the Creator and the Creation. We know too little about what happens in nature to take up the task" (Naess 1995, 237). In this respect, Moo suggests that wisdom is needed for proper conservation and development which are integral aspects of human 'rule' of the world. And for acquiring that wisdom we need to gather knowledge starting from the scripture and then supplemented by modern science about the created world. He says, "Christians should seek the best information available about the earth over which we have been appointed stewards" (Moo 2006, 13). According to John Stek, "We can fulfill this vocation [as stewards of the earth], fulfill the very purpose of our being, only as we rightly know both God and Creation" (qtd. in Moo 2006, 13).

It seems that the Aborigines of Australia could, from the very beginning, realize this ecocentric spirit of Christianity. The misinterpretations could never mislead them. Possibly they saw within it the reflection of their own age-old tradition that teaches the human connection with the environment. Maybe this is one of the reasons that in spite of disliking the Europeans and their ways of living, they didn't hesitate to adapt Christianity from the core of their hearts, which has well been reflected within the poems of Oodgeroo Noonuccal.

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Aspects of Judicial Competence under Community Law

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ABSTRACT: According to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, when the European Union is conferred exclusive competence by the Treaties in a specific area, only the Union may legislate and adopt legally binding acts, the Member States being able to do so themselves only if so empowered by the Union or for the implementation of Union acts. The limits and conditions for the exercise of Union competence are laid down in the provisions of the Treaties relating to each area. With regard to the determination of the international competence of the Romanian courts, the example of succession matters is given, where the competence is acquired by meeting two conditions: the deceased had his last place of residence in Romania and the claim relates to movable or immovable property located in Romania.

KEY WORDS: treaties, competence, European court, principles, powers

Principles of ensuring competences in the light of the European Union Treaties

In order to better understand the competences in the field of justice, let us start with a few general points on how the European Union operates at this level. According to the 2017 amendments, provisions have been introduced in the Treaty on European Union on certain principles governing the competences of the Union. Thus, the limits of competences are governed

by the *principle of conferral* and the use of competences is governed by the principles of *subsidiarity and proportionality*.

The principle of conferral provided that the Union shall act only within the limits of the competences conferred upon it by the Member States in the Treaties. Under the principle of subsidiarity, in areas which do not fall within its exclusive competence, the Union shall act only if the objectives of the proposed action cannot be sufficiently achieved by the Member States, either at central level or at regional and local level. Regarding the principle of proportionality, the Union action shall not exceed what is necessary to achieve the objectives of the Treaties.

The principles of subsidiarity and proportionality shall be applied by the institutions of the Union in accordance with the *Protocol on the application of the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality*.

Moreover, these aspects are supplemented by the fact that the European Union has acceded to the *European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms*, and the Union's competences have not been altered by this accession. The fundamental rights as guaranteed by the Convention shall constitute general principles of Union's law.

According to the *Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union*, when the European Union is conferred exclusive competence by the Treaties in a specific area, only the Union may legislate and adopt legally binding acts, the Member States being able to do so themselves only if so empowered by the Union. When the Treaties confer on the Union a competence shared with the Member States in a specific area, the Union and the Member States may legislate and adopt legally binding acts in that area. In conclusion, the Member States shall coordinate their economic and employment policies in accordance with the provisions of the Treaties, since the Union is competent to carry out actions to coordinate or supplement the national actions of the Member States, without thereby superseding their competence in these areas.

The limits and conditions for exercising the Union's competences shall be determined by the provisions of the Treaties relating to each area. Legally binding acts of the European Union adopted on the basis of the provisions of the Treaties relating to these areas may not involve harmonisation of the laws, regulations and administrative provisions of the Member States.

The Court of Justice of the European Union in the Community legal order

The Court's fundamental task is to ensure respect for the law in the interpretation and application of the Treaties. To this end, the Member States determine the remedies necessary for judicial protection in the areas governed by European law. The Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) comprises the Court of Justice, the General Court and specialised courts. Each Member State is represented by a judge on the Court of Justice and the General Court. The judges, Advocates-General and judges of the General Court are elected from persons whose independence is beyond doubt and shall be appointed by common accord of the governments of the Member States for a renewable term of six years. If the office of judge falls vacant before the expiry of the term of office, a successor shall be appointed for the remainder of the term.

The Court's powers under the Treaties are as follows:

- ✦ in actions brought by a Member State, an institution or a natural or legal person;
- ✦ as a preliminary ruling, at the request of national courts, concerning the interpretation of the Union law or the validity of acts of the institutions;
- ✦ in other situations provided for by the Treaties

According to the provisions of the Statute of the CJEU, judges enjoy "immunity from legal proceedings" even after they have ceased to hold office. An important aspect of the Court's deliberations is that its decisions shall be valid only when an uneven number of its members is sitting in the deliberations and decisions of chambers consisting of either three or five judges shall be only valid if they are taken by three judges. The Grand Chamber deliberates only if eleven judges are sitting. The preliminary ruling procedure is based on close cooperation between the European Court and the Member States, in particular in the case of requests for preliminary ruling which must be dealt with celerity (Fabian 2017, 230).

Competence of the Court of Justice

It is necessary to distinguish between direct and indirect application of foreign law by the competent forum. *Direct* application refers to the dynamic and immediate application of foreign provisions to facts occurring and established on the territory of the forum, raising various issues relating to the limits of application in terms of public order and fraud. *Indirect* application refers to the application by the forum of the effects of the application of a law which has previously been enforced abroad to facts and legal acts or judgments ruled abroad. In the latter case, arises the question of the enforcement of rights acquired abroad and their effects (Dariescu 2018, 130).

From the internal perspective of the European Regulations, in the case of civil proceedings abroad, in which persons resident in Romania are parties, the service of documents is carried out in accordance with the national law. Depending on the legal basis of the communication, the application may be received by a similar central authority, such as an authorised institution or the requesting court (Păncescu 2014, 81-82).

The exclusive competence of the Romanian courts is provided for in the Code of Civil Procedure in the part dedicated to international competence, including special rules of competence, derogating from the general rule provided for in Article 1066 of the Code of Civil Procedure. When the Romanian court of the place with which the court case has a sufficient connection becomes competent to decide on the case, if it proves that it is not possible to bring an action abroad, the “forum of necessity” intervenes; when the action is brought by a Romanian citizen or a stateless person domiciled in Romania or by a legal person of Romanian nationality, the jurisdiction of the Romanian court is mandatory (Zidaru 2015, 224).

Regarding the competence of the *General Court*, the criteria by which cases are to be allocated are the following: a) the case is assigned as soon as possible after the document initiating proceedings has been lodged; b) cases involving a public office, brought pursuant to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and, where applicable, the Statute of the Court of Justice of the European Union, shall be assigned among the four Chambers by designating a judge, in accordance with the order in which the cases are

registered at the Registry; c) cases concerning intellectual property rights shall be assigned among the six Chambers designated for that purpose, also by a rotation system; (d) cases other than those referred to in sections (b) and (c) shall be assigned on the basis of two separate systems of rotation, differentiated according to the subject-matter of the cases: those concerning the application of the competition rules applicable to undertakings, aid and trade protection measures and all other cases.

Members of the General Court shall, in principle, perform the duties of a judge. With the exception of the President and the Presidents of Chambers of the General Court, they may, in certain specified circumstances and by express designation, perform the function of Advocate General. The term of office of the Judges shall begin on the date of issue of the instrument of appointment or, as the case may be, on the date of publication in the *Official Journal of the European Union*. The Judges shall elect one of their number as the President for a term of three years. If the office of President falls vacant before the normal date of expiry, a successor shall be elected for the remainder of the term. The elections shall be by secret ballot, with more than half of the judges composing the General Court. If no Judge obtains that majority, further ballots shall be held until that majority is attained. The Vice-President of the General Court is also elected for a term of three years. Regarding the responsibilities of the President, it should be noted that he/she directs the judicial business and administration of the General Court, presides at the plenum, presides over the Grand Chamber and, when attached to a Chamber, presides over that Chamber.

In terms of setting up, the General Court shall set up Chambers sitting with three and five judges. Decisions taken are published in the *Official Journal of the European Union*. Cases may be heard by the Grand Chamber or by a single Judge. The Grand Chamber shall be composed of fifteen Judges, the General Court deciding how to designate the judges composing the Grand Court. If a Judge is unable to take part in the disposal of a case, he is required to inform the President of the General Court. The deliberations of the General Court shall be secret. When a hearing has taken place, only those Judges who participated in that hearing shall take part in the deliberations. The conclusions

reached by the majority of the Judges after final discussion shall determine the decision of the General Court. The deliberations of the Chambers sitting with three or five Judges are valid only if three Judges are sitting.

With regard to the determination of the international competence of the Romanian courts, the example of succession matters is given, where the competence is acquired by meeting two conditions: the deceased had his last place of residence in Romania and the claim relates to movable or immovable property located on the national territory.

Conclusions

With regard to the competences in EU civil law, the doctrine (Reich 2014, 23-24) establishes that there is a consensus regarding the absence of a general EU competence in regulating civil law matters such as contracts or obligations. However, elements of civil law have found a context for regulation in the European area, through the Treaties and legislative rules, in particular regulations and directives. For example, in the area of contracts or civil liability, the competence is determined by the rules on the application of foreign law, when cross-border elements are involved in the cases to be settled.

At the domestic level, the new Civil Code has tried to meet the requirements arising from the commitments undertaken by Romania in the context of European integration (Bonciog 2010, 123), regulating together private law relationships in areas such as family relations, commercial, but also provisions of private international law.

However, we would point out that, when actions are brought before the European court, the general constitutional principle (Stănescu 2017) must be respected, particularly the principle of *proportionality*, especially in areas where a common European law is sought as far as possible, such as in the area of sales. The *principle of effectiveness* relates to procedural aspects, especially in the area of contracts, where it is necessary to protect the disadvantaged party and avoid discrimination in the content of the contracts in question. Last but not least is the principle of conciliation, which concerns the interpretation and application of EU civil law by the courts.

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Marriage and Family in Different Cultures Throughout History – A Historical Overview

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ABSTRACT: The essay provided an introductory overview on the role of marriage and family in different cultures throughout history. The cultures chosen are the Babylonian culture in the second millennium BC, the Egyptian culture during the first millennium BC, the culture of the Greek city states during the sixth and fifth century BC, Jewish culture during the Hebrew Testament times and early Judaism, the culture of the Roman Empire, the culture of Western Europe in medieval times and in modern times. It thus provided an overview of the diversity and complexity of the understanding and practice of the roles of marriage and family in different cultures at different times.

KEY WORDS: marriage, family, history, gender, men, woman

Introduction

To offer a well-informed overview of an understanding of marriage and family over the course of several millennia while at the same time researching different cultural contexts is almost an impossibility, especially if this has to be done on only a few pages. Such a task is further complicated by the fact that even within single cultures, changes in the understanding of marriage and family can often be observed over the course of time. Therefore, this essay can only provide a broad overview with a focus on a few aspects. As some cultural areas and epochs had to be selected, I intentionally limited myself mainly to Near Eastern and Western European cultural regions.

Each chapter will provide an overview of the understanding of marriage as well as the understanding of the family in these cultures. We'll focus on the Babylonians, Egyptians and Greeks, and then go on to present the views of the Old Testament and early Judaism, as well as those of the Roman Empire, before providing an overview of the understanding of marriage and family in Western Europe since the Western Middle Ages. However, we should by no means lose sight of the fact that we are thereby completely disregarding not only Africa, but above all Asia (with the exception of the Orient). Especially in a more and more globalized world, we should definitely include these cultural contexts in our thinking and research.

Marriage and Family among the Babylonians

It was the image of sexual debauchery that shaped our Western understanding of Mesopotamian culture for centuries. We do not need to go into the reasons here, but recent research shows a completely different picture. I would like to single out in this essay the understanding of marriage and family in Mesopotamia of the second millennium BC, because we have the most sources for this time – let me just mention the codex of Hammurabi here.

The classical Babylonian family was patriarchally structured and “based on paternal authority and agnatic kinship” (Glassner 1996, 131). The term “agnatic kinship” goes back to Roman law and means a male blood relationship going back to a common ancestor, legitimized by marriage. Family was understood in Babylonia thereby as nuclear family, which consisted of the parents and the unmarried children. The marriage was arranged by the family of the future husband at a very early age. French historian Jean-Jacques Glassner wrote:

“It [marriage] thus began long before it was actually consummated and lived together, since the wife did not leave the parental home until she was capable of marriage (the only known fact is that boys were capable of marriage at about the age of ten). The Mesopotamians thus knew inchoative marriage, in which the wife was already subject to the authority of her in-laws while still being brought up in the parental home.” (Glassner 1996, 131)

An oral or written marriage contract was the prerequisite for a valid marriage, which was established by the payment of a bride price on the part of the groom's family. As long as the fiancée lived in her parents' house, any sexual contact was forbidden and considered rape, for which the man received the death penalty.

In general, adultery was punishable by death. It is remarkable that neither Sumerian nor Akkadian knew a name for marriage. Marriage was paraphrased as "the property of wife and husband" or that a man "takes a wife." "Marriage consisted, in effect, of the man taking possession of the woman" (Glassner 1996,133). The man initially moved in with her for a few months before returning with his wife to his family. Around the wedding, there were larger and more pronounced rites and festivities, which also extended in time. In the current research, one speaks regarding Mesopotamia of a "moderate monogamy" (Glassner 1996, 139), since the plural marriage (a man, several women) formed a quite usual practice. However, incest was forbidden.

If we look at the understanding of the roles of husband and wife, we see that the husband, as lord and "master of the wife," had the power of disposal over his wife and children and all those who were economically dependent on him.

Glassner noted:

"His prerogatives were balanced by certain duties, which were at times an expensive burden, especially in marrying off his daughters and sons. However, certain restrictions were also imposed on him by Babylonian society. A man was by no means master of the life and death of his wife, and he was equally forbidden to disown her as a seriously ill person; moreover, a father was forbidden to disinherit a child without just cause, and was compelled by the 'lawgiver' to be lenient." (Glassner 1996, 143)

In the second half of the second millennium BC, the privileges of men, however, were extended:

"There he received a right of chastisement of rare brutality towards his wife and was allowed to beat her at will, to whip her, to pull her hair, in short to 'blister' and 'maim' her to his liking. Cane blows on the soles of the feet, however, required the presence of a judge, and

mutilations such as cutting off the nose and ears that of a priest with basic medical knowledge.” (Glassner 1996, 142)

Accordingly, the woman’s situation looked bleak: Throughout her life, she was entirely subject to the will of another person: first her father, then her father-in-law, and finally her husband. Only as a householder in her husband’s household was she given a certain amount of freedom of movement.

“She had access to household goods, could buy and sell, lend or incur debts for which her husband was liable; she could rent and lease, make gifts, adopt, appear in court and swear oaths, complain and sue. As a person, she was fully recognized socially, legally, and morally.” (Glassner 1996, 144)

It is noteworthy that she could even own her own property, even if her parents or later her husband managed it for her until their death. After the woman’s death, the property also did not fall to her husband who survived her, but to her children. At the same time, the woman also could not become the head of a family upon the death of her husband, but this role fell to the eldest son or otherwise to the father-in-law.

The woman’s task was to give birth to children and to raise them. Once she had become a mother, her husband was no longer allowed to disown her, nor did she have to tolerate a concubine. Divorce was possible, but as a rule it had to be initiated by the husband and could cost him dearly if there were no valid reasons (childlessness, marital misconduct). However, there were also cases in which the divorce was initiated by the wife, e.g., when a wife was able to convict her husband of homosexual practices.

Marriage and Family Among the Egyptians

The first legal marriage contracts that are preserved date back to the first millennium BC, even though there are some indications that such contracts existed even earlier.

In Egyptian, too, there was no name for the institution of marriage. This is probably due to the fact that a wedding was perceived as a purely private matter and had neither a political nor a religious dimension, at least as far as the normal population was concerned. Marriage thus established a *de facto* status that resulted from living together. “Residential companion”

became a term for the wife, and the conjugal union was usually made visible by a common and separate residence of the couple.

In an example of a preserved contract, the contract was concluded between the husband and the father-in-law (bride's father), who "gives him his daughter to wife" – such a formula from such contracts. Forgeau wrote:

"From the 6th century onwards, marriage contracts reveal a certain emancipation of the woman from her father's power of disposal. [...] The divorced woman becomes an independent person and is proud to have acted as such. The Egyptian marriage is based on duty and consensus, withdrawing from the interference of the community and thus demonstrating a great adaptability to the particular situation of the individual." (Forgeau 1996, 168)

Remarkable is the predominant motive for choosing a partner in Egypt, namely a mutual affection. This is attested by numerous love songs – an aspect we do not find in many other early cultures. Sibling marriages seemed to have been possible in Egypt, at least at times, though not necessarily common. Polygamy was especially common in higher social circles, since repudiation or divorce from the first wife was not a precondition for further marriage.

Family life took place primarily within the framework of the nuclear family. A typical Egyptian household included parents and children, and possibly a single relative, such as a widowed mother. The young man usually married at the age of 15, and the girl was between 12- and 14-years young. The average life expectancy during the Greco-Roman period is estimated to be about 30 years for women and about 34 years for men. The success of a marriage was reflected, among other things, in the number of children one had as well as in the prosperity gained.

What was the situation regarding the understanding of roles in Egyptian culture? Annie Forgeau, a historian specializing in Egyptian history, wrote:

"The authority of the head of the family derives from the social order as a whole, in which men dominate politically, economically, and culturally to such an extent that recognition of a natural equality of the sexes could not redress the imbalance of status." (Forgeau 1996, 190)

Nevertheless, the term “mistress of the house” is apt for the role of women since the Middle Kingdom. She was responsible for the housekeeping and the upbringing of the small children, but also her advice was heard in all matters and men – so it is documented – revoked already made decisions due to the intervention of their wife. If the husband died before his wife, the latter assumed responsibility. Forgeau noted:

“The widow assumes the head of the household. She has unlimited disposal of the property she has contributed and that acquired jointly during the marriage, may be head of the family, and may even hold office until the eldest son comes of age.” (Forgeau 1996, 1991)

In Egypt, too, the child was the focus of moral considerations as the very meaning and purpose of the family. The child had both rights and responsibilities, and married couples who could not have children were expected to adopt orphans. Although a son was considered important for succession, and the eldest son always took the main focus, nevertheless there was no gender discrimination. After the infant stage, the father was responsible for the moral education of the children. He was to pass on of his treasure of wisdom to his children. Forgeau pointedly comments, “The Egyptians believed more in the virtue of acquired knowledge than in the right of noble birth.” (Forgeau 1996, 193) It is noteworthy that girls were also encouraged in their education.

Marriage and Family Among the Greeks

In examining the perception of marriage and family in ancient Greece, I would like to focus on the Greek city-state during the sixth and fifth centuries BC. The reasons for this lie, on the one hand, in the complexity of the subject matter and, on the other hand, again in the limited scope of this essay.

We find a starting point for an understanding of marriage and family in Aristotle, who offered a structured overview in the first book of his “*Politeia*” (Politics). For Aristotle, the *oikia*, the family or household, is an integral part of the polis, the city-state. Thus, it is not individuals that make up the polis, but solid family groups. An expert on ancient history, Maria Dettenhofer concluded:

“Human dimensions played no role in classical Athens in the question of the meaning and purpose of marriage. Rather, what was decisive was the function it had for Athenian citizenship: marriage became virtually the instrument of the new form of government, democracy.” (Dettenhofer 1998, 1)

At this point, I am deliberately skipping the very important and central political dimension of marriage and family in the classical city-state, since it is not really relevant to our topic. Only this: The law specified, at least for a time, who could marry whom at what age and at what age a couple could father children. Despite enormous political changes in the Greek polis – the catchword being “democratization” – the tasks and position of the wife changed only very little.

At the time of marriage, a man was around 15 years older than the woman. Girls married between the ages of 13 and 15, while the man was around 30. The background to this rather high age difference was the rather educational relationship between the spouses.

“The conscious aim was that the husband should shape the wife. The role of the mistress did [...] not necessarily belong to the sphere of responsibility of the wife. Since marriage did not claim a sexual monopoly [...], it did not primarily serve the satisfaction of the man’s sexual desires. For this purpose, as in his relatively long bachelorhood, he had at his disposal a rich supply of both sexes from the prostitution trade.” (Dettenhofer 1998, 4)

A woman remained a minor throughout her life, was legally incapable of acting and, as a ward, was subject first to her father and later to her husband. She could not acquire citizenship either. The *engye* (betrothal) was the legal act that established the man’s legal power over his future wife. The bride price, the so-called *hedna*, which the groom had to pay to the bride’s family, also played an important role.

“The *hedna* reverted to the bridegroom if the marriage broke down through the fault of the woman, for example by leaving the marital community or by adultery. If, however, the husband was to blame for the dissolution of the marriage, the bride-price remained in the possession of her family as compensation and security for the wife. Losing the *hedna* therefore meant a considerable economic loss for the guilty party.” (Dettenhofer 1998, 1)

Divorce was therefore possible and could be brought by both the wife and the husband. Adultery, however, led to divorce only if it was committed by the woman, since the husband was allowed sexual relations with other women.

Marriage and Family in the Hebrew Testament and Early Judaism

A biblical understanding of marriage and family begins with Genesis 2: Man was created in the image of God as male and female, with the purpose of multiplying and subduing the earth. The linguist and ethnologist Franck Alvarez-Péreyre and the anthropologist Florence Heymann, both proven experts on Judaism, note:

“No sooner were they created, named, and inserted into a complementarity far beyond the physical and physiological sphere, than the spouses, by union, made manifest the paradox of kinship: ‘Therefore a man leaves his father and mother and clings to his wife, and they become one flesh.’ (Gen 2:24). A family can only come into being if another one breaks up first. The word *laasow* (to leave, forsake) finds an equally powerful correlative in the term *ledabek* (to bind), which establishes that there is an affective bond between spouses. [...]

Procreation in the spirit of faithfulness is not copulation between strangers. When it says in the Bible ‘Adam knew Eve, his wife’ (Gen. 4:1), it is to be understood [...] that love becomes all the more intimate the better the partner recognizes the other in soul. Marital love has shed all animal-like qualities. It is based on something other than the procreation of children.” (Alvarez-Péreyre/Heyman 1996, 200)

If one looks at the Hebrew Testament legislation, you will see that many things were forbidden that were permitted in other cultures: incest, homosexuality, rape and adultery. All these things were punishable by death. At the same time, the Hebrew Testament advocates monogamy. The man binds himself to “his wife”, not to “his wives” – even if the practice looked quite different at times.

According to both biblical and Talmudic law, a marriage was initiated in two ways. A marriage was contracted and, as a rule, a bride price was fixed,

which the groom or his family had to pay. The signing of the contract marked the beginning of the marriage, even if the actual wedding, the “taking into the house”, took place later. Thus, a dissolution of an engagement corresponded to a divorce. However, the woman remained an independent person and never became the property of her husband. She could not be sold or mortgaged. She could also own property and inherited a compulsory share from her parents, the dowry.

Divorce was possible but could only be initiated by the man. However, there were also restrictions on divorce and such a divorce was basically subject to “moral disapproval” (Alvarez-Péreyre/Heyman 1996, 220). After the divorce was finalized, it was open to both man and woman to remarry, but not to the divorced partner.

Both concubinage and polygamy occurred and were found primarily in the upper social classes. Nevertheless, they were not widespread, probably also for the theological reason that monogamous marriage was understood as a reflection of the relationship between Israel as a covenant people and its God.

“In both the biblical and Talmudic eras, plural marriages were viewed negatively, and numerous passages in the prophets presuppose a monotheistic and monogamous society (Ezra 24:16-18; Hos 2:18-19). [...] From the first temple period to the first post-Christian centuries, the wealthy and common people distinguish themselves according to plural marriage and monogamy. In 14th century Spain, on the other hand, double marriage is a reality and apparently reaches into all strata of society. Jewish forms of behavior undeniably also developed as a result of outside influences. Babylonian Judaism, shaped by a classical environment, was much more inclined to polygamy. At the same time, Palestinian Jewry lived, if not in principle, predominantly monogamous.” (Alvarez-Péreyre and Heyman 1996, 224)

In early Judaism, however, a fundamental change in the attitude toward women and their position took place:

“The overall slope of Jewish thought in post-testamental times, however, shows a consistent disparagement and disrespect for women, even in contrast to their position in ancient Israel.” (Grundmann 1990, 173)

This was expressed not only in their increasingly restricted cultic role, but also in statements such as those of Rabbi Judah ben Elai: “Three praises must be spoken every day: Blessed be He who did not make me a Gentile! Blessed be He who did not make me a woman! Blessed be He who did not make me ignorant” (Grundmann 1990, 174). However, there seems to have been little change in the practice of betrothal and marriage.

Let us briefly consider the understanding of family life. Family was understood as the extended family (parents, grandparents, unmarried relatives, and children), including wage laborers and slaves, so that a family could well include up to 30 people. The head of the family was the father. In Judaism, the family is also the main place of worship, religious events, and it is the father who is responsible for the upbringing of the children.

Marriage and Family in the Roman Empire

“If a contemporary of Cicero or Seneca enumerated what was most important to him in the world, he would, according to tradition, first name his sons, then the honors he had earned in the city of Rome [...], and at the same time his fortune, the paternal house with its throng of clients and friends as a sign of a sonorous name. At the end of this enumeration was the wife.” (Thomas 1996, 277)

Even in the Roman Empire, the understanding of marriage and family changed several times over the centuries. What remained was: A Roman citizen married a woman “to have sons” – that was the legal formula. Marriage was understood as a private matter.

A key concept here is the Latin word *familia*, a community of life, to which belonged not only husband, wife, children, but also all the freemen living in the household, as well as slaves, but also the living cattle, as well as all the property as well as all the assets of the deceased ancestors.

“According to a conception developed many times in classical times, the family comprises as many generations as can stand together under the power of one. Only the descendants of the male line belong to it. With the death of the eldest ancestor, those of the succeeding generation become heads of the family and stand at the head of their own respective families.” (Thomas 1996, 288)

Marriage was preceded by an engagement, to which both bride and groom had to give their consent. A girl could not marry until she was 12 years old, and an engagement could last no longer than two years. As a rule, however, the young woman was probably 15 years old. "What was important for the marriage to come into being was the will of the bride and groom to marry, not coitus [...] or a certain ritual. [...] The woman's will to marry was evident when she moved into the man's house." (Imperium Romanum, n.d., n.p.) Therefore, marriage was considered a private matter, which was neither a legal act nor regulated by contract. If at all, there was only a contract about the dowry.

Remarkably, the Roman Empire emphasized a duty to marry, including a punishment for celibacy, especially up to the turn of the first century. Marriage was therefore generally motivated neither by love nor by eroticism but was understood as a civic duty. One married in order to

"to secure a dowry (this was one of the respectable methods of getting rich) and to produce offspring in lawful wedlock who would inherit as legitimate children and who would ensure the continuity of the state by replenishing the ranks of its citizens." (Veyne 1999, 47)

While in the early centuries of the empire, the so-called *manus marriage* was rather common – the woman was subject to the domestic authority of her husband from the moment of marriage – this changed especially in the course of the late republic and the *manus-free marriage* became the rule. Nevertheless, "A man is master of his wife as he is master of his daughters and domestics." (Veyne 1999, 51)

A divorce could be executed without giving reasons by abandoning the actual cohabitation by both the husband and the wife, and the husband and the wife had to pronounce different divorce formulas. The dowry had to be returned to the wife, at least if she was divorced without fault. The dowry was intended to provide for the wife's post-marital needs, especially in later times. The children, however, remained part of the father's family. Divorce was common, as were multiple remarriages. In the case of a marriage *cum manu*, the property became the property of the husband or the head of the family. In the case of a marriage *sine manu* there was a strict separation of property and even a prohibition of donation between the spouses.

The educational ideal of Rome – especially as far as boys were concerned – was embodied in the attitude of being honorable and heroic and not complaining. This education was enforced with all rigors; self-control was highly valued and a boy accompanied his father to every public place from an early age. The historian Aline Rousselle summarizes:

“Thus, through hard physical education according to ethical principles, the sons of the great families and their daughters prepare themselves to have the moral stamina for necessary deeds on the decisive day.” (Rousselle 1996, 323-333)

However, it should not be overlooked that it was up to the head of the family to abandon any child he disliked before the age of three. Either it was found by someone who took it in and adopted it, or it died in this Roman form of birth control.

In view of all this, it is important to remember that only persons with Roman citizenship and freemen had the opportunity to marry. Slaves were denied the possibility of marriage at least until the year 200 AD. This affected one to two million people in Roman Italy in the first century BC and the first century AD, compared to five to six million freemen and citizens, i.e., up to 20 percent of the population.

The question of which marriage model the first Gentile Christian communities adopted in the first two post-Christian centuries is an interesting question. Was it the Jewish understanding or that of their respective cultural context? Unfortunately, the sources that have been preserved are silent here; only adultery is clearly rejected. Probably the New Testament scholar Bo Reicke is right with his conclusion:

“Among the Christians of the Hellenistic environment certain Greek or Roman forms of marriage were common [...]: among the Greeks surrender [...] of the bride by her father in the presence of witnesses, among the Romans the taking home (deductio) of the bride or, in the case of slaves, simply living together (contubernium).” (Reicke 1982, 320)

Marriage and Family in the Western European Middle Ages

We now make a leap in time by several centuries. While the Middle Ages are usually dated from about 400 AD, I skip the Migration Period and start in

the age of the Carolingians from the eighth century. One of the reasons for this is motivated by source situation, which presents itself from the middle of the eighth century as a much better one than for the preceding centuries. Furthermore, I only deal with the situation of the majority population and not of the nobility.

Whereas in the early Middle Ages, in particular, the term family was used primarily for the household and hearth community, the understanding of the family changed in the further course of the Middle Ages. A typical family consisted – as research in France, Italy and Germany shows us – of father, mother and the usually unmarried children, so that a family usually consisted of an average of five to six people. Pierre Toubert, award-winning former professor of medieval history, noted:

“In rural society, everything revolved around the married couple. Marriage ensured the legitimacy of the descendants and the family’s customary right to the farmstead. On marriage was based the authority of the spouse, limited from the 9th century, however, by some very concrete guarantees given to the woman by law or by custom on the domain.”
(Toubert 1996, 112)

In the urban context, especially among craftsmen, the household included servants, apprentices and sometimes journeymen. However, it was also quite common for work to be done outside the home and for even women to pursue a professional activity.

During this period, a Christian image of marriage became more and more prevalent, even in legislation, although it must be remembered that it was not marriage but the family that formed the primary institution. There were three aspects that increasingly came to the fore: Prohibitions on marriage based on kinship, the understanding of the indissolubility of a marriage, and comprehensive marriage legislation. Thus, as part of a rigorous list of marriage prohibitions, marriage was prohibited up to the seventh degree of kinship (and later reduced again to the fourth degree). The very issue of the indissolubility of marriage, which was unequivocally taught by Rome from the middle of the eighth century, led to practical problems in its enforcement, which were related to the given social structure:

“The marriage of clergymen, the numerous successive remarriages of widows, the value of vows of chastity of consecrated virgins, marriages between socially unequal partners, the descent of a husband into slavery or his infection with leprosy, a husband’s expressed desire to enter a monastery, long absences from the domestic hearth when the husband had gone to war, been taken prisoner, or held an office or fief in a distant marrow of the realm, ‘malicious desertion,’ etc.” (Toubert 1996, 118)

Subsequently, another aspect is worth noting:

“The model of marriage that the spiritual elite wanted to impose as a regulating authority against the social violence in society, furthermore, included a recognition of the woman as a person, as consors with all the rights in the family unit. [...] The perfect equality between the spouses was a regularly recurring theme in the literature on marriage, and was in complete agreement with the legislation which, since the middle of the 8th century, had repeatedly postulated: ‘Marriage law is one and the same, for the man as well as for the woman.’ This ethic of reciprocity gave meaning to a mature concept of marital communion.” (Toubert 1996, 122)

In the twelfth century we observe another change. The so-called “munte marriage” (the woman was first under the guardianship of her father and later under that of her husband) was more and more pushed back. From then on, mutual consent, based on mutual attraction, formed the basis of a marital relationship.

In this regard, historians at the University of Ghent, Belgium, Walter Prevenier and Thérèse de Hemptinne noted:

“Parents often met the freedom proclaimed by the Church in choosing a spouse with persistent resistance. In the M[ittel]A[lter], marriage was one of the few possibilities for emancipation. This often led parents to make desperate attempts to prevent planned marriages against their will. Since this was impossible under canon. Since this was impossible under canon law, parents resorted to denying dowries or to disinheritance.” (Prevenier/de Hemptinne 2009, 1636).

At the same time, however, especially from the thirteenth century onward, there is an increasing “moral and psychological degradation” (Toubert 1996, 152) of women - despite all their legal equality, above all under reference to Eve as the alleged guilty one at the Fall.

Let us look briefly of the age at marriage. Young women often married at the age of 15 and their partner was usually quite a bit older, although the available sources are not consistent. As a rule, the man was between seven and 15 years older than his wife. Children were desirable, though boys were often preferred. It is also important to keep in mind that, for children as a whole, infant mortality can be assumed to have exceeded 30 percent in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. At the same time, we must be aware that not everyone had the opportunity to officially enter into marriage. Thus, often only those who could maintain a family were allowed to marry, and permission had to be obtained from the landlord. Otherwise, the public authorities had no legal authority over marriages.

Marriage and Family in the Western European Modern Era

“The house, not the family, formed the central order of life in the early modern period. The house not only offered protection from cold, wet and external violence, but was also a place of work, joy, sorrow, where birth and death took place. The house formed a community of life that included not only the homeowner with his wife and children, but also relatives, servants (farmhands and maids), and guests who happened to be staying in the house.” (Faix 1997, 8)

The German theologian Wilhelm Faix aptly described the initial situation at the beginning of the modern era, which, however, was to change rapidly and radically.

In Austria, the model of the nuclear family was especially widespread, where only the heir was allowed to stay in the parental home after his marriage. And we encounter another innovation: It became fashionable for the growing children to go “into employment”. Even as children, they hired themselves out as maids and servants in the household or in practical work. What in its positive form could be understood as an apprenticeship and occurred in all social classes was often a brutal exploitation of children’s labor, which did not even stop at abuse and in some countries affected between 20 and 40 percent of all children of certain population groups (especially in northern Europe). The Tyrolean Swabian children may be cited as an example. The French social and modern historian André Burguière concludes with regard to the often associated use of violence against children:

“It can be stated, however, that from the 16th century on, the deliberately administered or rather the pedagogical violence increased in scope. [...] This violence, conceived as ‘character-building’, was applied, and in a cruder and more immoderate way, also on the farm and in the workshop: exaggerated punishments, injuries, arm fractures that sometimes crippled the child for life.” (Burguière 1996, 49)

He continued:

“For the child, the experience that he was now a servant or a maid was all the more decisive for his personality development and the formation of his conception of society, the earlier it was made. [...] This experience meant for the child an emotional impoverishment and at the same time a spiritual expansion. On the one hand, it lost the special bond with its family of origin [...]. On the other hand, the special feeling of belonging to the circle of his close relatives who had accompanied his childhood, aiming at closeness, was replaced by the pronounced awareness – and soon also the demand – of autonomy.” (Burguière 1996, 52)

Burguière speaks in this context of a “school of individualism” (Burguière 1996, 52).

But let us turn to the understanding of marriage: it is only in the 18th century that the idea of a love marriage emerges. Burguière elaborates:

“The talk of love marriage as a ruling model of marriage mixes two separate aspects which only later became joined: 1. the idea that young people themselves should determine their marriage, and 2. the idea that the bond of love and the bond of marriage should form one, that love is the better reason, if not the reason for the existence of marriage at all.” (Burguière 1996, 145)

And Monika Wienfort, a German historian of modern times, noted:

“Free choice of spouse, erotic attraction, and the unity of body and mind were to shape a modern conception of marriage that emancipated itself, at least in theory, from the sacred as well as the rational marriage doctrines of the past.” (Wienfort 2014, 20)

It is worth considering that with the emergence of the notion of “eternal love”, regulations on the dissolution of marriage were also regulated at the same time, and this already in Austria as early as in 1811 (cf. Goldberg 1998, 243).

However, the reality was quite different in many regions. After all, there were numerous marriage bans, or to put it another way, laws were passed that tied marriage to economic conditions. Let's take Tyrol as one example among many. Monika Wienfort:

“In Tyrol, the marriage consensus, i.e., permission to marry by the municipality, was introduced in 1818/20, modified in the 1870s, and abolished only in 1921. The Tyrolean local authorities in the Habsburg Empire applied the laws restrictively to prevent the marriage of members of the lower classes for fear that these landless people, together with their children, would become a burden on the local poor fund.” (Wienfort 2014, 27)

This naturally had an impact on the number of marriages, wild marriages and non-marital unions. While non-marital cohabitation remained extremely rare among the aristocracy and bourgeoisie and, where it did occur, represented a “veritable scandal” (Wienfort 2014, 30), the situation was different among the lower social classes. Here, wild marriage was widespread. Marriage was also made difficult for “foreigners”.

Exact figures are difficult to ascertain, but in some regions it could have been around ten percent of the population who were denied marriage. Conclusions can be drawn from the number of out-of-wedlock births. In 1880, 706,823 children were born in wedlock and 121,157 out of wedlock in Austria, which means that almost 15 percent of all children were born out of wedlock. (Zweig 2017, 495) At the same time, an extremely high unmarried rate of up to 50 percent can be assumed for Austria in the 19th century (Wienfort 2014, 52). Moreover, since Austria knew only one ecclesiastical matriculation system until 1918 – and this was in the hands of the Roman Catholic Church alone until the middle of the 19th century – this made official marriages even more difficult.

Finally, in this section we will briefly turn to the position of women. The professional world was only open to an unmarried woman. However, a woman was supposed to give up her professional activity at the latest with the birth of the first child and became responsible for the family sphere, while the man usually pursued a professional activity outside the home. This clearly shows the consequences of industrialization for the understanding of the roles of men and women. At the same time, the man alone was entitled to custody.

“Most fathers saw themselves primarily as having moral responsibility and claimed spiritual leadership in comparison to the physical, caring role of the mother.” (Wienfort 2014, 206) The husband could both decide on the family’s residence and prohibit his wife from working.

Marriage and Family in the Twentieth Century

Anyone who takes a closer look at the developments surrounding the image of marriage and the family in the twentieth century cannot help but speak of serious upheavals. Industrialization and the departure from a predominantly agrarian society had led to a spatial separation of the man’s gainful employment from private family life. Christine Goldberg aptly summarizes the ideal of the modern family:

“The ideal of the modern family contains essentially all the aspects that continue to characterize the nuclear family today.

- ♦ The wife’s responsibility for privacy and the husband’s for employment.
- ♦ Love as a marriage-establishing and -preserving motive.
- ♦ The centrality of children and education.” (Goldberg 1998, 241)

This had further consequences, as historian Reinhold Sieder explains:

“Since husband and wife no longer performed joint work in the home, the couple was relegated to intensified communication after work; this favored mutual perception of personal idiosyncrasy and individualized the partners, giving their increasingly private and intimate relationship more intrinsic value, but also making it more susceptible to competition and disruption from ‘without.’ The bourgeois family model envisioned the omnipresence of the man as head, breadwinner, educator, and supreme moral authority of the home. But the bourgeois mode of economy, capitalism, separated and distanced men’s diverse businesses and privatized family life as women’s domain.” (Sieder 1996, 215)

In the further development of the understanding of marriage and family, the world wars and their effects must not be underestimated. Not only did millions of men go off to war, countless died or returned as physical or mental cripples, but women and mothers were suddenly forced to take on the work in war-related businesses that men had previously performed, not to mention the additional task of caring for and raising children alone.

After the collapse of the Third Reich and the lost world war, men and women devoted all their energies to reconstruction and to securing at least a modest level of prosperity. At the same time, men found that the women who had held down the fort at home during the war years did not simply return to their household duties, since they had also “stood their ground” professionally outside the home during the war. Conflicts were therefore inevitable when the men returned in the late 1940s and early 1950s to a world that was so very different from the one they had left at the beginning of the war.

The protests of the student movement of the 1960s accelerated the erosion of previous values and norms. The sexual revolution, free love and the birth control pill are just a few examples. At the same time, there were also serious reforms in legislation, here in Austria especially in the course of the 1970s. Adultery and homosexuality were decriminalized, the abortion deadline solution was introduced, divorce law was amended, and equality for women was enshrined in law (cf. Sandgruber 2003, 160). “Marriage in its function as a provider for women” (Goldberg 1998, 242) no longer existed. I quote from a Ministry document on women’s rights:

“The patriarchal model of a marriage of provision is being replaced by a family model based on partnership. Both spouses are now obliged to contribute to the maintenance (whether by working or by running the household). The husband is no longer ‘head of the family’. He can no longer forbid his wife to be employed. [...] The legal representative of legitimate children is no longer automatically the father. Since the reform of family law, fathers and mothers have equal rights and duties towards their children. Since then, the mother can also sign the passport application or the apprenticeship contract for her child. Until then, only the father was authorized to do so.” (Feigl 2016)

Although Austria had known universal suffrage for women since November 1918, it is only since the mid-1970s that a woman in Austria has been able to work or open a bank account without her husband’s permission.

However, the downside of some twentieth-century developments should not be overlooked either. It is true that the pursuit of private and personal happiness is becoming the maxim of life for individuals and couples. But the physician and psychotherapist Arnold Retzer wrote pointedly about this in “Lob der Vernunftelhe” (“In Praise of Marriage of Reason”):

“With the Enlightenment and the political and cultural changes that accompanied it, happiness became a significant, even central phenomenon of life and a goal of life. If the people of the Middle Ages expected happiness, then at best in the hereafter, from now on the focus was on this world, also in the case of happiness. We are therefore dealing with a change that runs parallel to that of the ideas of equality and justice. [...] Very quickly, then – almost unnoticed, but all the more lasting – happiness has gone from being a right to being an imperative and thus a duty.” (Retzer 2013, 142)

At the same time, Sieder noted:

“But with the increased expectation of happiness, the threshold for entry was also raised: Many delayed marriage in the hope of finding the right partner first or with the intention of putting the current partnership to the test. They no longer stumbled into their own marriage, so to speak, as a matter of course at a young age, fleeing from their parents. Premarital cohabitation and diverse new combinations of family remnants after separation and divorce increased the variety of forms in cohabitation.” (Sieder 1996, 231)

Finally, let's look at some statistics from Austria (the following statistics are provided by the Austrian governmental statistic agency “Statistik Austria” - <https://statistik.at/>).

In 1950, for example, a total of 64,621 marriages were performed in Austria (9.3 per 1,000 inhabitants), in 1970 there were 52,773 (7.1 per 1,000), and by 2010 the number of marriages had fallen to 37,545 per year (4.5 per 1,000). The low point was reached in 2007, and since then the number of marriages has been rising again.

At the same time, more and more marriages are breaking up. While the annual divorce rate was only around 10 percent in 1975, it rose to just under 50 percent by 2007 and has since fallen again to just over 40 percent. Austrian historian Ernst Hanisch originally summed it up in 1994:

“Marriage as an institution has lost social significance. At the same time, the demands on a marriage, in terms of happiness fulfillment, emotional and sexual harmony, have risen sharply. Because marriage as an institution is arguably overburdened by this, divorce occurs in every third marriage.” (Hanisch 2005, 488).

Changes are also evident in the image of the family. For example, the percentage of so-called patchwork families has remained constant at around nine percent for years. And a final example: In 2018, 65.5 percent of children under three lived in married couple households, 27.3 percent in cohabiting households and 7.1 percent in single parent households. While the number of single-person households was 386,000 in 1951, it rose to about 780,000 in 1981 and as high as 1,480,000 in 2019.

Today's reality is therefore a plurality of different ways of life with simultaneous deinstitutionalization (Rosenmayr 1986, 60), in which the classic marriage between a man and a woman and the nuclear family of father, mother and their children is only understood as one among numerous other options. (cf. Wilk/Mair 1987, 81-108).

Conclusions

The aim of this essay was to provide the reader with an introductory overview of the variety of models and understandings of marriage and family in different epochs and cultures. Much could have been mentioned or discussed in more detail, other cultures could still have been included. Nevertheless, the author hopes that he has succeeded in taking the reader on a journey through history, during which the reader has made new discoveries and acquired new knowledge, and perhaps even reawakened his or her interest in studying the subject in greater depth.

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Ethical Reflections on Consumerism and Evangelical Christianity in Romania

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ABSTRACT: The paper highlights the negative, as well as the positive, consequences of consumerism for Evangelical communities in post-communist Romania. Consumerism is identified as a feature of postmodernity, as a way of life that focuses on pleasure, possessions, desire, and consumption. It may offer opportunities for Christian ministry, but it also presents a challenge due to its penchant for individualism, seeking one's own satisfaction to the detriment of others, and the priority given to material aspects of life rather than spiritual matters.

KEY WORDS: consumerism, postmodernity, evangelical Christianity, Romanian society, Christians in Romania

Introduction

The collapse of Eastern European Communism some 30 years ago has opened the door to many social, political and economic changes in the life of Romanian citizens, some of them positive and some negative (Măcelaru 2021, 80-84). Economic progress and freedom of movement were accompanied by the progressive capitulation of the Romanian society to a consumerist ethos, a move fueled by access to goods and services, previously unheard of

in the country, typical of a free market economy, which gradually replaced the traditional commercial institutions and comportment. Undoubtedly, access to goods is something to appreciate. However, less so is the gradual change to a consumerist mind-set that has taken roots within communities of faith that traditionally would have resisted such change. Thus, “consumerism” is what concerns us in this paper, and that in the global sense of the word. For “consumerism is global, not in the sense that all may consume, but in the sense that all are affected by it” (Lyon 1999, 88).

Consumerism as a feature of postmodernity

Christian thinkers have long endeavored to speak about consumerism, and that mostly in negative terms. For Dave Collis (1999, 2), consumerism is “the voice which narrates a fragmented story full of myths centred around money” which “blurs the reality/illusion boundaries through imposing a type of hyper-reality.” Mark Buchanan (1999, 63) speaks of “consumerism” as if it were an alternative idolatrous religion. He writes:

The Cult of the Next Thing is consumerism cast in religious terms. It has its own litany of sacred words: more, you deserve it, new, faster, cleaner, brighter. It has its own deep-rooted liturgy: charge it, instant credit, no down payment, deferred payment, no interest for three months. It has its own preachers, evangelists, prophets, and apostles: ad men, pitchmen, and celebrity sponsors. It has, of course, its own shrines, chapels, temples, meccas: malls, superstores, club warehouses. It has its own sacraments: credit and debit cards. It has its own ecstatic experiences: the spending spree.

Consumerism is “The Spirit of the Age” (e.g. Bartholomew and Mortiz 2000), the pursuit of unlimited pleasure (Gabriel and Lang 1991, 100), the promise of freedom (Wenham 2000, 129), the carving for material possessions (Buchanan 1999, 63-64), and the never-ending desire for purchasing and consumption (Collis 1999, 20).

Consumerism has also been associated with “postmodernity.” According to David Lyon (1999, 88), “if postmodernity means anything, it means the consumerist society.” Elsewhere Lyon (2000, 77) writes: Consumerism, that is lifestyle and cultures structured around consumption, is a defining feature of the postmodern. Consumerism works in tandem with new media

as one of two crucial characteristics and carriers of postmodernity. Direct mail, computer-generated niche marketing, expresses this marriage perfectly. Strolling and shopping have become an important part of life for many people in the affluent societies. Leisure consumption is displacing work as the source of identity. Disneyland draws all this together in one symbolic place, epitomizing the postmodern focus on consumption and the self, on desire and choice.

Similarly, J. Richard Middleton and Brian J. Walls (1995, 60) describe consumerism as the “carnival” or “the mall culture” of postmodernity. In the least, the consumerist culture is regarded to be an important feature of postmodernity as it influences society in all of its aspects: moral (Scotland 2000, 135), social and cultural (Lyon 1999, 71). Given its wide impact, we can also say that it is a means by which people’s identities are shaped (Lyon 1999, 71, 74). As Alan Storkey (2000, 115) observes,

There are many theories of postmodernism, and as a practicing sociologist I have read most of them. I have several more of my own, including one that took something like ten years to develop. But much of the erudite and even arcane discussion of postmodernism misses the most powerful theory of all. Postmodernism is consumption. The deconstruction and fragmentation which is often identified with changes in approach to text and philosophy is actually buying, advertisements, TV culture, in-your-face entertainment, shopping, pressure, thing-filled living-in a word consumption.

To conclude, we could regard consumerism as postmodernism’s basic outlook on life. It is a pervasive feature of the contemporary society and its effects on individual and community life are wide-ranging, deep-reaching and long-enduring. It should therefore come as no surprise that consumerism is also affecting faith communities. This is the aspect that will concern us in the reminder of the paper.

Consumerism and Evangelical Christianity – Negative Consequences

One of the phrases frequently used by leaders within the Evangelical Romanian context is: “The problem is not the presence of the church in the world but the presence of the world in the church.” Why is that so? Because

the voice of the world speaks through consumerism in many languages and from many sources, including television, radio, media, advertising, the mouths of politicians, the music, the internet, etc (Collis 1999, 12). Umberto Eco characterizes our world as an “uncontrollable plurality of messages” (Eco 1986, 148). Myers (1994, 61) describes the voice of consumerism as “a relentless aural and visual onslaught upon our consciousness, with objectified texts and seductive subtexts, which we cannot help but absorb.” All these suggest that there is a certain abusive influence consumerism has upon individuals and communities. The question, here, however, is whether consumerism impinges on our spiritual life; and if so, how? Lyon (1999, 72) has argued that consumerist culture influences “not just artistic and consumer goods but intellectual and *religious* ones become subject to the market which resists both monopoly and hierarchy”. Similarly, Miles (1998, 1) notes that the parallel drawn between consumerism and religion is not accidental, since consumerism “is arguably the religion of the late twentieth century.” Does this mean that consumerism is “bad news” for the churches in a context as Romania, a society that is still moving away from the communist mindset and structures toward the new free-market, democratic, western models (cf. Măcelaru 2016, 35-54; 2020, 375-386; 2021, 80-84)?

I propose that the danger consumerism poses for the Evangelical community in a place like Romania is the excessive re-branding of the Christian message so as to fit the new market models, thus stifling the prophetic voice of the church and therefore missing on the role it has to evaluate, challenge and eventually critique the consumerist culture (cf. Bartholomew 2000, 85). Bartholomew observes that there is “a fine line between being relevant and losing integrity, and in order to have successful ‘ministries’ many churches too easily start packaging the gospel as a product for consumers” (2000, 86). Thus, a market-oriented approach is potentially disastrous to education and faith. For instance, it is my personal assessment that courses in the Seminary where I pursued my theological education in Bucharest, Romania, methodologically speaking, are more secular than religious. Thus, the future leaders of the church are becoming managerially intelligent without however being spiritually deep. And since the face of the church is directly dependent on how spiritual or secular her leaders are, the very future identity of the Evangelical community in the country is at stake.

Another dimension of consumerism is the pursuit of “the latest” in all aspects of life: culture, fashion, possessions, etc. This has affected the younger generation within the churches in the region. Such lack of discernment is a danger to genuine spiritual growth within the community of faith. In this regard, Lasch’s note on the narcissistic nature of consumerism, which focuses our attention on the present rather than the past or the future is relevant. He explains that “to live for the moment is the prevailing passion to live for your self, not for your predecessors or posterity” (Lasch 1979, 5). Such worldview, which claims that the most recent is the best, is a serious challenge to the Christian tradition, which is many at times perceived as old-fashioned and irrelevant (Drane 1994, 14).

The promotion of pluralism may also pose a threat to faith communities since “pluralism easily becomes relativism” (Cobb 1975, 58). The popular form of such thinking is expressed as: “You can believe (do, be) whatever you like as long as it doesn’t hurt me” (Riddell 1988, 60). No wonder that Christian leaders in Romania have become increasingly nervous when faced with pluralism and have chosen an isolationist attitude, which is the reversal of the coin, as negative as its counterpart (Măcelaru 2021, 80-84). As Riddell (1988, 65) observes,

a new generation in a new culture wants to throw the doors open and listen to all the stories. If there is such a thing as truth, they argue, it will emerge from listening to these stories. The concept of truth they are reacting to is objective, rationalistic, individualistic, and linear. Stories, on the other hand, are subjective synthetic, relational and playful.”

Related to the above, is the acute tendency to individualize and privatize the Christian faith evident within Evangelical communities. The pursuit of personal spiritual experiences, fueled by a desire for personal spiritual satisfaction is a manifestation of the same outlook on life that forms the base of consumerism. Since a “consumer society is individualistic by definition” (Sulkenen et al., 1997, 6), the “actualization” of Christian ministry models to fit the new society is bound to lead to “strong individualism and in particular a hedonistic understanding of the self with devastating moral implications for society and the church” (Walker 1999, 3). Evidently, this would have deep implications in regard with community life and a community-based self-understanding. Scotland notes that one aspect of consumerism, frequently

termed “niche marketing,” advances the idea of the customized, individualized approach, designed to reach targeted individuals, or groups of people, with the Christian message, fashioned to fit their distinctive tastes and values (Scotland 2000, 149). This is “Christian consumerism” at its best, because “evangelism without a worldview is simply marketing with no purpose other than a desire for success and no criteria by which to judge the results other than mounting numbers of warm bodies” (Wells 1994, 221).

To conclude, since we live in a culture concerned with the satisfaction of oneself, with personal fulfillment and the meeting of individual needs, the shape of Christian life and witness has undergone change as well (Cray 2000, 157). As Christopher Lasch has warned, “the contemporary climate is therapeutic not religious. People hunger not for personal salvation (...) but for the feeling, the momentary illusion, of personal well-being” (1979, 7). In such a society Christians may feel tempted to live for the spiritual experience, a sort of “feel-good” factor, to the detriment of genuine biblically based spirituality, which is evaluated in terms of “the fruit” it bears and the service to the lost and the needy it provides. Again, from personal observation, it seems that many at times Pentecostal and charismatic Christianity in Romania falls prey to the pursuit of personal “encounters” with the Holy Spirit to the detriment of genuine conversion, sanctification and participation in the *Missio Dei*. Could this tendency have something to do with “the spirit of the age” – consumerism?

Consumerism and Evangelical Christianity – Opportunities

The fall of Eastern-European communism came at the dawn of a new era, a period in which the modern worldview begun to collapse the postmodern fingerprints became more pronounced. As one of my colleagues has recently observed, this would mean that we live in “post” society: post-modern, post-industrial, post-critical, post-liberal, post-Enlightenment, post-Christian, post-Communist, post-etc. Undoubtedly, this may represent a serious threat, especially to communities of faith that “have hitched their wagon to some aspect of modernity” (Gohen 1999, 167). However, it may also be an opportunity. According to Gohen (1999, 167), in postmodernism “the church has lost its dominant position and is now at the margins. As it struggles with its identity, the opportunity is there to recover a missionary

self-consciousness". In fact, there seems to be a connection between spiritual revivals around the world and the consumerist culture. As Drane indicates,

... the spiritual revival has tended to be influenced by the consumer culture, so that religious options are selected and combined to suit the tastes and lifestyles of their users. Dazzling and bewildering arrays of different spiritualities compete for attention, each of them claiming to be able to offer something that will help us find our souls again, and chart a safe course for the future. The goods on offer in this religious market-place range from messages from spirit guided and extra-terrestrials, to neo-paganism, Celtic mythology and aboriginal spirituality - not to mention renewed interest in astrology and a vast range of psychological therapies offering the prospect of a renewed, holistic humanity (Drane 1994, 16).

Similarly, Scotland emphasizes that the accomplishment of "confined marketing enterprises" has positive implications for churches. He gives examples of church planters, who begun new congregations with the specific objective of reaching particular people groups, or ethnic minorities, or specific age subpopulations. He agrees that "this kind of precise targeting has proven to be an effective means of evangelism and has seen the emergence of unique enterprises" (Scotland 2000, 149). Of course, the question remains as to the authenticity of the spiritual experience sought by the new converts, but according to Lyon (2000, 82), more consumption may mean less conservative-style but not necessarily less sacred. He explains:

The new symbols that excite, inspire, or give a sense of connection with others may actually be cultural commodities, available in the mall, on TV, or on CD. In this light, the sacred may in one sense be reduced, in another relocated, in a third redefined. These processes have huge implications for understanding both the postmodern and its relation to contemporary religious life (Lyon 2000, 84).

To conclude, it seems that there is a certain freedom that comes with a consumer culture, the freedom to perceive God as the "author of our satisfaction" who fills "a niche in the market through satisfying the desires of customers" (Walker 1999, 3). However, I argue that while learning what is good and worthy from consumerist methodology in order to build bridges for mission, Christians also need to remain faithful to the ethos of the Gospel.

Conclusion: The Responsibility of Christians in a Consumerist Culture

I have argued above that the consumerist society comes with both positive and negative features. As such Christians and church leaders must be constantly engaged in the task of analysing their surrounding culture and the needs of the people who live within it. Firstly, this may mean a recovery of a biblically based worldview. As Bartholomew (2000, 94) emphasizes,

What we thus need is for Christians to consciously allow their worldview to become more and more biblical, to think through all aspects of our culture from a Christian perspective. Only thus will we exercise and embody a prophetic perspective in our own context and resist the idols of our day, such as consumerism.

Indeed, not all pastors or Christian leaders will be experts on cultural analysis and social phenomena. However, we can expect that they keep their audiences attentive to God's word and thus direct them to fulfil their role within the society. The church needs gifted thinkers who have the courage to engage their culture. As Wells (1998, 4) points out, "part of the theological task must always be to ask what it means to have this word in this world at this time". And the only way this can be accomplished is by engaging in "careful, rigorous, and sustained analysis" (Wells 1998, 4) of one's culture. Of course, on the other hand, Christians must stay alert so that the analysis of culture does not become the objective, thus losing sight of the message itself. To "market the gospel using consumerist models without necessarily changing the product" (Scotland 2000, 150) ought to remain the objective.

To accomplish the above, I argue that maintaining one's integrity as Christian and as minister is a vital ingredient. That would allow for an objective assessment of positives and negatives of culture. If not so, the church loses its reason for being. That is, "when the church abandons the biblical worldview, when it fails to confront its culture with this worldview in a cogent fashion, it has lost its nerve, its soul" (Wells 1994, 223). This applies both at individual and community levels. Integrity for the church is to embody that which it is meant to be – the people of God, the sign of hope, the agent of transformation in a world grown old with sin and cynicism. Regarding these, Kenneson and Street (1997, 23), rightly state:

We believe that the church is called to be a sign, a foretaste, and a herald of God's present but still emerging kingdom. Because the hallmark of the kingdom is God's reconciling in the world, the church lives to point to embody, and to proclaim that reconciling work. But because this present-but-still-coming kingdom is a certain kind of kingdom, the church is called to be a certain kind of people. Not just any kind of community will do. If the convictions that animate the life of the church are at cross-purposes with the convictions at the heart of this coming kingdom, then the church will fail to be what God has called it to be. If the church's embodied life and witness are to be a sign, a foretaste, and a herald of this kingdom, then the church must strive diligently to embody faithfully those convictions that make visible this kingdom.

Thus the responsibility for the Christian nowadays is to "consume" the word of God so that she or he is equipped to resist consumerism as an ideology while employing its methods where appropriate. This is Bartholomew's plea as he looks for "a way of consuming the Bible" which "will inoculate us against idols such as consumerism rather than allowing us to succumb to them" (2000, 97). Within this context integrity means to develop a Christian worldview that is integrally shaped by the Bible. In this way we may learn that we are made in God's image as fundamentally moral beings rather than not consumers. Thus, the satisfaction of our desires pales in significance when compared with the lasting value of doing what is right. Such an attitude calls us away from consumerism to a lifestyle of simplicity, generosity and contentment, in which we take responsibility for the other in our communities and use the gifts God has given us (talents, work, even money) to serve the other. As Green (1996, 130) has claimed, our primary responsibility is "stewardship". The responsibility of Christian communities is to serve the needs of the society, without compromises, but with courage and wisdom.

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