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THE IDEAL OF PERSONALITY AT NICOLAE MĂRGINEANU

SUMMARY

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Professor Nicolae Mărgineanu has become representative for the Romanian culture throughout the remarkable work that he deployed in various fields, from psychology - the main domain that he passionately cultivated, to philosophy of science, logic, pedagogy, scholar and professional education and orientation, to the philosophy of culture. In each of these areas he left reference works, which have a distinct place in their evolution, all through the abundance of information, knowledge put into circulation, a rare synthesis capacity, enabling him to link ideas and theories supported in different eras and cultures that the professor knew in depth, and to provide an association of ideas of great originality.

Mastering a rich ideational material did not stop him from keeping a thread of continuity of his own concepts, an inner logic of a vision that put into practice the great values that have led him, as almost his entire generation: the belief in the power of reason, in the explanatory powers of science, appreciation of complexity, beauty and human dignity, her ability to fulfill in the course of education and employment, through culture and the conviction that the complete personal fulfillment depends on the accomplishment of their community, of the nation which occupies a distinct place among worlds` nations¹.

For those of today, Professor Nicolae Mărgineanu means not only a great scholar and a teacher committed to University, but also a moral example of a rare force by the nearly seventeen years of communist detention, received with an injustice that even today causes bewilderment, years faced with an exemplary dignity and a courage that elicit a sincere admiration. Their testimony is reflected

¹ N. Mărgineanu, „Professor’s Lewin Conception of Laws, în „J. Gen. Psychol., 1935

in the groundbreaking book of memories "Lectures and prisons", which remains a test of dignity of rare personality of our people.

Our thesis "The Ideal of Personality at Nicolae Mărgineanu" presents several elements of his philosophical view on the world and life, not without firstly debating some elements of his conception of human capacity for knowledge, the nature of science and its evolution in human spirituality, its achievement over time, about functions and especially the social role that it undertakes.

Nicolae Mărgineanu was constantly concerned with the study of logical and mathematical tool used in the research, interpretation and development of scientific theory. For Nicolae Mărgineanu, logic, mathematics and research form a triangle to be analyzed in order to understand the nature of science and to be able to relate it to reality, with the aim of practical application. He starts from the distinction cultivated at that time, between social sciences and natural sciences, to show that the logic of meanings masters both the social sciences as the biological ones, which can not handle only the pure theory of meanings to the extent that the value of facts is both quantitative and qualitative. Thus the whole science is based on mutual action of logic, mathematics and research, with a share a each one specific on the one hand, to social and biological sciences, and on the other hand, to natural sciences. Nonetheless, for everything the essential problem is the form in relation to content, underlying the interpretation of the whole real world.

N. Mărgineanu is concerned with the entire complexity of the concept of "object of current science", with special interest on psychology, which he defines under a logical and mathematical aspect. In this respect, he offers an insight into various fields of science, for a principle understanding of what could mean a coherent logical characterization, giving the possibility to expand the capacity of representing sciences through mathematical analysis.

The triangle of science, according to N. Mărgineanu, consists of logic, mathematics and research in relation to theory, requiring mutual completion of the first two, under the research and theory angle. Researchers from different fields can not sufficiently possess the logical and mathematical tool, appealing to specialists in these areas, as N. Mărgineanu himself did, thus developing a multidisciplinary epistemological perspective².

The nature of science is three-dimensional in his opinion and is given by the rationality, objectivity and its completeness, dimensions that in his viewpoint represent the basis of the definition of science even since Aristotle.

To know the personality of a person or a nation, we need to compare with other people and other nations, mainly to establish the first stage of development of certain features and functions, which in logic is called *determination from the extension of singulars*, which operates in width. The second stage of knowledge about a man or a nation is called in logic *determination from comprehension*, which means we need to know their content and structure in relation to the infra- and supra- structure of the human being or of the nation. Accordingly, we must proceed to the analysis of intelligence, sensibility and determination in the case of human, and of economic, social, political and cultural values in the case of the nation, to study the integration of the individual in a family, class, nation, or of the nation in the mankind, based on the process of synthesis.

The two ways of knowing the man or the nation, complete one another, but must not be confused. The first is based on logical principles, which define the similarities and differences between individuals and nations while the second is based on the laws of dialectics, which study the causal connection between parts and the whole, and between the whole and the other wholes.

² N. Mărgineanu, „Natura științei, Editura Științifică, București, 1968, pp. 25-26

Quantitative determination is accurate and is based on judgments of existence while the *qualitative* is valid and is also based on value judgments, defined by the role of the parts in the whole, and of the whole in the world, throughout evolution. Discrimination between good and evil can be based on *positive adaptations* (e.g., mental health, harmonious development, social fairness) and *negative adaptations* of beings to the world, under the sign of development or regression (e.g., aggressive war, murder and madness). Logical and mathematical determination are placed under the sign of lawfulness of necessity (through which we obtain certain facts), or probability and can be interpreted metaphysical or dialectical.

According to N. Mărgineanu, the world appears as a unity in multiplicity, with continuity in discontinuity, all binding and evolving together, individuality integrating within generality, particularity being completed by universality and the moment integrating in eternity. The three determinations act reciprocally and are not reduced to each other for the world's order is not only the one of classes, but is evolving, not static. They are not alike only logical or mathematical, but both logically and mathematically at the same time, in relation to the laws of necessity, of the truths (more or less plausible) and those of probability.

The affiliation of N. Mărgineanu to the interwar generation

Although a large number of works was published following the years of detention, N. Mărgineanu was formed in the interwar spiritual climate, belonging to that generation who believed that national identity, the ideal of personality of the Romanian people are required to be served with commitment towards work, country's modernization and its synchronization -as the scholar argues - with history. Therefore we consider that determining generation and its concerns in this

segment of time provides an understanding of the ideational foundation on which N. Mărgineanu built his own conception.

The first section of the thesis also discusses the idea of "generation" in Romanian society, the so-called "young Romanian generation" after the war. The young generation that follows the generation of heat (of the union, of thought, of sacrifice), includes the last quotas that entered in the war of 1918, composed of people that the war has found as adolescents.

Approaching the moments in the history of the young generation we detach characteristic circumstances that contributed to its formation, the dominant character of its manifestations and this generation's own mission. The circumstances in which the young generation was formed are due both to its character and unity.

The greatest importance is possessed by the war that completely overthrew the formation criteria, changing its mentality. The feeling of freedom for this generation of war remained in the hearts of its members as a reminder of a world that they only lived in the childhood world, being animated by the desire to avoid being deceived by words.

Furthermore, the young Romanian generation was influenced by two personalities, V. Pârvan and Nae Ionescu, which introduced universalism in history and autochthonism in Romanian philosophy.

The third influence was manifested from outside, the one of mysticism, neo-Thomism, communism and fascism, existing not even one youngster whose formation was not sealed at least by one of the above influences. The conscience of the young generation has been forged in cultural student circles or the student's political centers.

A generation's mission is a response to the needs of society in which it stands, setting certain limits of action. The mission of the young generation is

rooted in the historical moment of Romanian society, having a triple dimension (see Table 1). The young generation has primarily the task of discovering the originality of configuration, the specific dosage of influence and their effectiveness, to define an own soul.

Table 1 The mission of the Romanian young generation

No crt.	Mission	Mode of accomplishing the mission	Feature
I.	To provide the spiritual unity of the Romanians	- political unity by sacrificing the generation of fire	- cooperation among generations including youngsters from around the country
II.	To express in universal forms this Romanian soul	-finding authentic forms of life, adequate to the Romanian people, in politics, theology, art, philosophy, literature and science	- to unite ideals of Romanians from all over the world in a single image of the Romanian man, as to be recognized everywhere
III.	To prepare for the hard times to come	- to prepare for the defense of its nation, not to repeat mistakes. To be ready to resist at any cost	- to give up the fight for self-realization
IV.	A universal mission	- to prepare the new man, to integrate him in the rhythm of the universal creation	- to be a great generation, to the height of its mission

Beyond judgments regarding the qualities or defects of the interwar generation, one can not ignore its concern to define the personality of the Romanian people, just to better serve its interest. To this effort N. Mărgineanu has subscribed, starting with the study of human personality to devote to the one that defines the Romanian people.

Arguments from history, psychology, social theory and politics, from anthropology, biology, philosophy of culture, religion, philosophy of history, have

been invoked to determine the personality of the Romanian people, in a continuity of ideas launched in the late nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century, but amplified in the interwar period. These arguments found their first synthesis in the work of Constantin Rădulescu-Motru, particularly in "Romanianism, the catechism of a new spirituality"³.

Nicolae Mărgineanu`s conception of personality

Research on personality has sparked interest in several areas: sociology, anthropology, biology, criminology, philosophy. Starting from the desire of knowing and understanding personality as a whole in order to help people to know better, to adapt and act more efficiently.

The study of personality as a systematic effort to understand the way of being and the behavior of individuals has a long history.

From the definitions of personality, several characteristics emerge, such as globality, coherence and permanence.

Globality refers to the fact that one's personality consists of all characteristics that allow the description of that person and identify it among others. Valid theoretical constructions referring to personality must permit the portrayal of behaviors and psychophysical aspects that make every human being a unique example⁴.

Coherence points out that there is a certain organization and interdependence of the elements of personality; coherence`s postulate is

³ C. Rădulescu-Motru: „Românismul, catehismul unei noi spiritualități”, Editura pentru Literatură și Artă Regele Carol II, București, 1936.

⁴ Julius Kuhl, Jürgen Beckmann, Volition and personality: action versus state orientation, Hogrefe & Huber Publishers, Canada, 1994, p. 11.

indispensable to the study of personality structures and their development, as personality is a functional system composed of interdependent elements⁵.

The third characteristic is **temporal permanence (stability)**. Starting from the assertion that personality is a coherent functional system, it can be observed that it generates laws of organization with permanent action. A person is transformed and evolves, while retaining his psychical identity as a human being has the awareness of its existence, a sense of continuity and personal identity⁶.

The objectives of scientific theories of personality refer to the description of conduct, explaining that behavior by using information on the influence of heredity and environment and predicting behavior in typical situations.

Personality theories can be divided into two main types: idiographic theories (in-depth study of the individual) and nomotetic theories (identifying the common characteristics of people)⁷.

Furthermore, this second chapter of the thesis discusses the psychoanalytic approach to personality (Freud's theory of personality), the psychometric approach to personality of H. J. Eysenck or Cattell's theory of personality; moreover we take into consideration Carl Rogers contribution in this field as well as the personal construct theory of George Kelly, briefly stating the ideas of several scholars such as Carl Gustav Jung, Alfred Adler, Karen Horney, Harry

⁵ Chaterine A Sanderson, Nancy Cantor, A Life Task Perspective on Personality Coherence: Stability versus Change in Tasks, Goals, Strategies, and Outcomes, în vol. Daniel Cervone, Yuichi Shoda (edit.), *The Coherence of Personality: Social-Cognitive Bases of Consistency, Variability, and Organization*, The Guilford Press, New York, 1999, pp. 373 și următ.

⁶ Julius Kuhl, Jürgen Beckmann, op. cit., p. 35.

⁷ Ion Dafinoiu, *Personalitatea. Metode calitative de abordare*, ed. Polirom, 2007, p. 45.

Stack Sullivan, Gordon William Allport, Abraham Maslow, Henry Murray, Robert McCrae and Paul Costa, Arnold Buss and Robert Plomin.

The human condition in N. Mărgineanu`s thinking

Nicolae Mărgineanu believes that the man is the supreme creation of the world and the psychological structure of the person can not be understood without its biological infrastructure or without its social and psychological superstructure. The *human condition* defines the relationship between the three components and is in constant evolution; it is explained by the causal pre-structure and is interpreted by the prospective post-structure.

Analysis of the human condition is also made in terms of conscious and unconscious. In healthy human condition, conscious is considered to be "the synthesis and master of the unconscious" and in the ill human condition, the two enter in conflict, their normal report of determination being altered.

The individual is analyzed from a behavior perspective which is seen as an expression of consciousness, as the human condition is also analyzed in terms of "differences and mutual completion arising from the struggle of opposites"⁸.

Mărgineanu adopts the dialectical interpretation of the human condition, considering human behavior and consciousness as being a bio-psycho-socio-human structure in cultural development. Psychical functions depend on the biological and biophysical ones. Biological unconscious includes the biochemical

⁸ Nicolae Mărgineanu, *Condiția Umană: aspectul ei bio-psiho-social și cultural*, ed. Științifică, București, 1973, p. 9.

and biophysical ones. Awareness builds on these processes being influenced by them and determines them simultaneously. All these lie under the sign of interconnection and interaction that operates horizontally and vertically, and they can not be independent of the environment that puts his stamp on them. N. Mărgineanu states that there is a link between body and psychic structure so that researching the relations between biotype, intelligence and character should be considered in relation with the personality coefficient of the individual, as psychic structure depends not only on the biological structure but also on the socio-political and cultural structure⁹.

Some aspects of the human condition at N. Mărgineanu

The horizon of the human condition varies in time and space. Symmetry defines the relationship between facts and ideas, content and integration and must be placed "under the sign of optimal efficiency." Harmony determines mutual completeness between facts and ideas, content and integration and must be situated under the sign of "logical meanings"¹⁰.

The two concepts define, argues Mărgineanu, the affinitive, complementary, hierarchical relations as well as the development relation of the evolving structure: "they define our vision of world and life and our actions in relation to it, so the character and control mechanism, under the angle of positive or negative value of adjustment to the world, with the purpose of conservation and development of emotions"¹¹.

⁹ N. Mărgineanu, pp. cit, 1973, pp. 151 – 178.

¹⁰ Idem., p. 322.

¹¹ Idem pp. 321 – 326.

Mărgineanu argues that the human person is an open system that is completed by society in order to gain material wealth and spiritual welfare, defined by culture: "humanism can not be achieved in an individualistic formula ... but only in a socio-cultural formula"; "human personality without economic, social, political and cultural order can not exist"; "material and spiritual welfare can be obtained only from their mutual, symmetrical and harmonious completion, founded on justice. "¹²

Viewed from the perspective of socio-cultural humanism, the personality of an individual coefficient defines, in Mărgineanu's thinking:

1) the broadest possible, rich and multilateral development of the horizon or the vision on world or life of the individual under the sign of completeness;

2) the logical integration of individual ideas into the system, the ethical integration of the facts in rules of conduct and the aesthetical integration of emotions and feelings into complete happiness;

3) symmetry and harmony of the horizon and its depth, which logical, ethical and aesthetical integration brings;

4) harmonious conjugation with society, based on freedom and justice, so with a freely accepted discipline of the order, for material and spiritual wellbeing¹³.

Personality is defined as being the ultimate synthesis of Intelligence Coefficient, character and emotional experience related to temperament and nature under the influence of school, family, profession, marriage and the established nation in a state. Completion of the bio-psycho-social structure of a person and his economic and socio-political condition is determined by given cultural age. Multilateral development of personality signifies intelligence, superior culture, an

¹² Idem, p. 327

¹³ Idem, p. 328

honest and consistent character, emotional balance, balance of temperament and nature.

The scholar believes that personality must be regarded as a multilateral development. Personality coefficient, be it positive or negative, defines the development degree of the persons depending on the breadth, depth and harmony of their horizon of knowledge, action and emotional experience.

Humanity, characteristic of the Romanian people

The work of N. Mărgineanu entitled "Under the sign of humanity" is indicative of its conception on the people, on his personality throughout history. For him, across history, the main role is played either by the creative nations of high culture, or by the culture – destroying nations. Mărgineanu restates the idea that the Romanian nation after Rebreanu was the quietest in the world, that his past lacked wars of conquest, but only of defense, lived mostly in the village, in the shade of miraculous events that created the history even if the village did not leave documents for future history.

The word *humanity* ("omenie") is apperas only in Romanian and expresses, writes N. Mărgineanu, our human condition, functioning as a real keystone in all our social relations¹⁴, being, as Rebreanu affirmed, a single law of our nation. Our historians consider that the birth and shaping our ethnic being occurred during early development of Christianity, which, in our historical past is not institutional nor church related, but moral, Christian teaching related as such, tied more to the Christian spirit of the catacombs, brought by Trajan's soldiers and the colonizers not by the Christian church (which is recognized only after Aurelian left Dacia).

¹⁴ N. Mărgineanu, pp. 137-138

What has infiltrated during our formation as a people, was a Christian moral, that did not know the book, but only the divine service of the prayer, with the the priest being the one who knew how to read religious literature and the Psalter. In this line of thought, the sense of proportion and harmony in behavior and thinking, represent the other two main features of the Romanian people that are described in this final part of the thesis.

Concept of N. Mărgineanu about national style

Romanian culture derives from the blending, integration and development modes of the four categories of values: economic, social-political, theoretical and aesthetic, that represent its basic coordinates. Some scholars approached only the economic values, others were only interested by the socio-political, but the majority with the theoretical ones, to whom they have identified our very stylistic codend. .

National style cannot be defined, considers N. Mărgineanu, only by mentality and feeling, but also through socio-political structure and economic infrastructure that is built on. Some speak only of minor culture, some of the major culture, but the national style combines them both; it can not be explained by an allegedly objective spirit but only by ways and degrees of conjugation, integration and development of individual relationships, mediated by social institutions placed in the service of cultural values. National style can not be interpreted metaphysically, but scientifically, it can not be related to classical logic and can not be studied and interpreted only under the angle of similarities and differences, but from an evolving causal interconnections perspective¹⁵.

¹⁵ Idem, N. Mărgineanu, p. 197

N. Mărgineanu tried to present the Romanian cultural style by comparison of a Gothic catholic cathedral and the wooden churches of Maramureș. He shows that the church from Maramures is so faultless in the ways of integrating its parts, and especially through the spirit of harmony that rules the symmetry from which only the tower emerges, that conquers you. The contrast between the two churches is impressive, one is a monumental cathedral, the other one a modest church that solves integration, which actually tells the hard tried history of its people and explains the soul that animates his achievements, built on an economy so undersized.

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