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The relationship between national culture and organizational culture

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Abstract

The definition of organizational culture must start from humans, from their historical existence, the psychology of the people they belong to, because, as everybody knows, organizational culture is an integral part of national culture. The values, symbols, histories of a nation become starting points in shaping the cultures of organizations operating in that geographic area.

Keywords: culture, national culture, organizational culture

JEL classification: A10, H10, O10

1 National culture

The intent of our initiative is to highlight how some values that support our specificity as a nation are reflected in the culture of organizations operating on Romanian land. For this, we assume that the first national value that must be preserved in its constitutive elements remains the Romanian language. Moreover, we will make a diachronic synthesis of attempts and successes of a myriad of Romanian scholars who dared, among the first in our national culture, to speak on the Romanian language, on its origins, on the need to use the Latin alphabet and Romanian language in writing.

Towards the middle of the seventeenth century, but especially in the next century, a profound opening of the Romanian Countries to the West takes place, an important contact with other civilizations and cultures superior to ours occurs, the taste for travel is augmented, undertaken not only in order to trade or carry battles, but especially with the intention to learn, to discover, to receive. The first Romanian scholar who opens the series of writings of memoirs in our country is encyclopaedist Nikolai Spathari. His first known work dates back to 1661 and it is a Romanian translation from the works of Saint Athanasius the Great, Archbishop of Alexandria. The writing, called *Carte cu multe întrebări foarte de folos pentru multe trebi ale credinței noastre (The Book with Many Questions Very Useful for Many Aspects of Our Faith)*, was a small catechism in the form of questions and answers, in which Nikolai Spathari intuits the specificity of Romanian language, its Latin origin. This action is certainly a way of affirmation and defence of national identity. Even if Nikolai Spathari spent most of his life in foreign countries, which he masterfully described in his travel works, the Moldovan scholar still remains faithful to his homeland.

In discussions on the roots of the Romanian language, there has been a common attitude, adopted by all Romanian scholars in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, attitude translated by an emphasis on our Roman origin.

Moldovan chroniclers, defenders of our national values, carriers of European humanism elements on Romanian land, support the Latin origin of Romanian language and people. The findings are based in particular on the impression created in these scholars by the lexical aspect of the language. Thus, in *Letopisețul Țării Moldovei (The Chronicles of the Land of Moldavia)*, in the chapter called *Pentru limba moldovenească (For the Moldavian Language)*, although acknowledging the mixture of other idioms in the formation of Romanian language, he strongly asserts its Latin origin.

In the same spirit, Miron Costin, in his historical writing, *De neamul moldovenilor. Din ce țară au ieșit strămoșii noștri* (*On Moldovan People. What country our ancestors came from*) starts from the premise that Romanian language has remained isolated in an environment of languages different in terms of origin. This situation has been created by the specific conditions in which Romanian language was formed, devoid of the influence of Latin cultural superstratum, characteristic of Western Romanity. This probably explains the rapprochement between Romanian and Latin, more than in other Romance languages such as Italian, for instance, which was exposed to the Latin element for a longer period.

Scholar of European fame, Dimitrie Cantemir brought to the Romanian people a more sustainable glory than that of military victories: European conscience. Since 1714, the Moldavian prince had been elected as a member of the Academy of Berlin and at the behest of scholars there, wrote *Descriptio Moldaviae*, a book with the precise purpose of making Moldavia known by the Western world. Geographic, economic, social, linguistic information are thoroughly supported from the scientific viewpoint.

Dimitrie Cantemir goes down the same road traced by his predecessors, regarding the Latin origin of the Romanian language. His observations on the nature of Latin language at the basis of Romanian language are deep and intelligent: it is an old Latin language, from Trajan's times, which implicitly proves Romanians are the descendants of settlers brought in Dacia by Emperor Trajan.

In his cultural and diplomatic actions, Cantemir always made sure he circumscribed as often as possible Romanian facts into a Romanic context, which translates into a constant emphasis on national identity.

Romanian national culture begins its true path of modernization in the second half of the eighteenth century, under the impulse of the Enlightenment ideology. Under the sign of this renewing spirit, according to which nations needed to be emancipated from the state of ignorance through education, through science, Romanian culture acquired new coordinates in Transylvania first, then in the Principalities. In fact, this period is dominated by the ideas and values promoted by the resounding movement, Transylvanian School. The leaders of this reforming movement, Samuil Micu, Gheorghe Șincai, Petru Maior, Ion Budai-Deleanu, became staunch defenders of the national identity of Romanians in Transylvania, of Romanian language in particular. In the grammar, *Elementa linguae Daco-Romanae sive Valachicae*, published in two editions, 1780 and 1805, in

Vienna, a rigorous demonstration of Romanians' Latinity and that of their language is displayed. The authors of this paper, Samuil Micu and Gheorghe Șincai also include, among linguistic theories supported, their own conception definition coordinates of an idiom, a concept that situates them among the avant-garde thinkers of the day. We refer to the idea of the historical development of languages, which predicts the importance of studying the diachronic linguistic rules, i.e. the logical transformation of Latin forms into Romanian forms. It's an advanced idea for the late eighteenth century, which will be valued at a higher level in the next century, transformed into a scientific principle, namely the comparative method.

The linguistic activity of the Transylvanian School has been marked by purism, i.e. a desire to prove that Romanian is exclusively a descendant of Latin, without any interpenetration of the substrate or adstrata, which inevitably would change its purely Romanic features. But this theory of Transylvanian scribes also appears in a different light if one takes into account the necessary intention to highlight the Latin origin of the Romanian language. First of all, in *Elementa*, there is a constant Romanian-Latin reference, hence the subsequent appreciation that it is the first historical grammar of the Romanian language. Secondly, Samuil Micu and Gheorghe Șincai took special care not to isolate our language from Romanity, claiming that Romanian has a binary gender correlation, like Italian, French etc., although the linguistic reality is different.

All these efforts, undertaken linguistically, culturally or politically had the sole aim of preserving our national identity unaltered, amid a Transylvania subject to foreign occupation. Deep cultural values of the Romanians, such as their language, are the most important step in our recognition as a nation in a turbulent period of history.

The coordinates that define the Romanian culture in the mid eighteenth century open the safe way of its modernization, continued and developed in the following centuries.

We exposed the main directions of this vast field of cultural development of Romanians during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in order to revive the values that define the national character of Romanians. Because the identity of a nation is the core of its existence, of its internal recognition, but especially of its international recognition. The central elements that define the identity of Romanians have been, are and certainly will remain language and history.

2 Organizational culture

Maintaining this type of identity becomes even more necessary, as the current contemporary space is filled with economic issues and more or less successful globalization trends. The danger translates into a uniformity desire, of establishing an “overview”, devoid of colour, identity, nationalism.

Our action is all the more obvious, as we want to emphasize the idea that organizational cultures are constituent parts of the culture of the nation they belong to. Organizations operating in a parent culture and many of the elements that make them up are derived from the assumptions of national culture. It is up to organizations to take over, to emphasize and to amplify sometimes deep elements of the parent culture.

The composition of the organizational culture certainly reflects the national values. The language, symbols, behaviours, myths constitute the visible forms of manifestation of institutional culture, bearing the marks taken from the values of national culture.

Bringing together the principles and beliefs of individuals in an organization means a permanent interaction that naturally leads to compiling a strong organizational culture. This is the core of the entire organizational network, receiving influences of all kinds, such as those related to its structure, strategy, system, members and skills.

The concept of "culture" in organizational analysis encompasses shared values and beliefs that seem to characterize organizations. Although, in general, it is seen as a whole, there are a number of factors that customize organizational culture. Among them, we mention management style, the way decisions are made, level of formality, the manner of organization, policies. An organizational culture becomes stronger when a permanent correlation is made with the values and principles of the organization and a clear link with the values of the nation in which they operate.

The individual's accession to organizations already presupposes the existence of ideas and feelings that, at the same time, can be developed and delivered to others or can be replaced by taking values, customs, rules already existing in that organizational environment. The union of these convictions, ideas, beliefs, feelings gives rise to the organizational culture. The establishment and development of cultural forms at the organizational level can be reported, with other dimensions, to what happens at national level. The idea that leads to our approach is that, as it is known, organizational culture is an integral part of a

nation's culture: It has its origins in the history, values, personalities, symbols of a nation, in the rises or falls of the social system.

3 Conclusion

The relationship between the national culture and the organizational culture is characterized by including the latter in the specificity of the nation in which organizations operate. Defined as the personality of an institutional structure, a strong organizational culture will take and adapt what is lasting and valuable in national cultures.

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