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(Editors)

CULTURAL DYNAMICS OF VALUES



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FOREWORD

The proposed volume brings together a selection of scientific papers, most of them presented at the 9th edition of the conference *Interdisciplinary Perspectives in Humanities and Social Sciences*, with a special focus on value. The articles shed light on the continuous debate between traditional values and contemporary advancements. Through interdisciplinary exploration, the articles probe the profound questions facing our societies, offering diverse perspectives that span the realms of theology, linguistics, literature, technology, and social sciences. *Cultural Dynamics of Values* reflects the core themes of the volume, emphasising the intersection of longstanding values with contemporary issues like technology, environmental concerns, and social dynamics, all while highlighting the different approaches to exploring human values across various contexts.

The volume opens with the conference of our keynote speaker: **pr. prof. Andrei-Răzvan Ionescu** (Coordinator of the “Orthodox Theology and Science” department within the Centre d’Études et de Recherches “Dumitru Stăniloae”, Paris, France) with a debate about *Human Enhancement: Technology versus Theology. Landmarks for the Interdisciplinarity Evaluation of Human Values a Potential of Becoming Through Knowledge*. Pr. prof. Andrei-Răzvan Ionescu examines *human enhancement*, scrutinizing the ethical and theological implications of technology’s expanding role in reshaping human existence. Professor Andrei-Răzvan Ionescu contemplates whether artificial advancements align with or diverge from theological doctrines on human potential and values. The development of emerging NBIC technologies (Nanotechnology, Biotechnology, Information Technology, and Cognitive Sciences) is causing new expectations about human possibilities. This pressure may lead to a crisis in traditional values, driven by ideology rather than discoveries. In an era of rapid technological advancement, the intensifying collaboration between humans and machines necessitates a re-examination of traditional values, especially those related to human

knowledge, agency, and potential fulfilment. The paper addresses critical questions about the consequences of human enhancement for the concept of fulfilment, highlighting the potential reconfiguration of values in response to augmented reality and new technologies that redefine human experiences. Through this analysis, pr. prof Andrei-Răzvan Ionescu explains how *human enhancement* might influence our perception of what it means to be human, urging reflection on the future trajectory of human development and fulfilment in a technologically evolving world.

Philology

Cristina Bleorțu in *The Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Linguistics. Case Study: Analysis of Linguistic Phenomena in the Novel 'Ion' by Liviu Rebreanu*, explores artificial intelligence impact on linguistics, showcasing how AI technology influences language study through the lens of literary analysis, specifically within the context of Liviu Rebreanu's novel *Ion*. By utilizing the R programming language and tools like `udpipe` for text processing and linguistic annotation, the paper provides deeper insights into the linguistic features of the text, including syntactic parsing, sentiment analysis, and semantic interpretation. The findings advocate for a broader integration of AI methodologies in linguistic research, paving the way for more complex and nuanced understandings of literary texts.

In the same line, **Alexandra Ilie** in her study – *Automatic Translation of Literature: A Still Living Chimera?* – inquires about the impact of artificial intelligence (AI) on translation, particularly focusing on the evolving role of human translators in light of advances in machine translation (MT). While recent MT systems, especially for technical and medical texts, deliver outputs very close to human translations, challenges remain for legal and literary texts due to AI's inability to grasp nuanced meanings and contextual depth. The paper highlights the limitations of Transformer models and the unique advantages of DeepL, which incorporates high-quality human translations from the Linguee database. Research in natural language processing has improved the quality of automatic literary translation, but the current state of automatic translation for classical Romanian literature remains uncertain.

Daniela Petroșel examines kitsch through the multifaceted lens, based on an interdisciplinary array of theories from aesthetics, psychology, ethics, and gender studies. The works of thinkers like Clement Greenberg, Matei Călinescu, and Karsten Harries are examined alongside psychological perspectives from Abraham Moles, Stefan Ortlieb, and Claus-Christian Carbon, as well as ethical considerations by Hermann Broch and gender perspectives by Rita Felski. The author argues that kitsch functions as a mode of cultural critique and reflection, embodying the tension between art and non-art, ethics and aesthetics, and the values associated with Modernism (when kitsch was viewed as lacking in value or as possessing a pseudo-value in opposition to 'true' art) and Postmodernism (with its blurred hierarchies and fluid boundaries, has given rise to new perspectives on kitsch that highlight its role in the reconfiguration of aesthetic and ethical values). The author concludes that kitsch, never been a static concept, is a dynamic force within cultural discourse that continually challenges and redefines what is valued in art and culture.

Drawing on qualitative insights from **Mihaela Secrieru's** teaching experience, the article *Perennial Values in Teaching Romance Studies in Romanian Universities* discusses the need for modernizing disciplinary content to align with international educational trends. Through a synthesis of the nomenclatures and descriptions from the curricula of the seven Romance languages traditionally taught across 15 university centres in Romania, the analysis highlights a significant conclusion: these languages are consistently associated with the classical educational ideals of goodness, truth, and beauty. The author underlines the idea of a lasting cultural permanence in teaching Romance languages, reaffirming their value in the academic landscape.

The investigation of authentic versus pseudo values raises critical questions about the nature and integrity of values within contemporary society. Acknowledging that educating children is one of the most challenging tasks for parents, **Paula-Andreea Onofrei** begins with insights from the book *Femeia și sfintele ei rosturi* [*The Woman and Her Holy Purposes*]. Then incorporates Urania Cremene's methodology from the "All about Parenting" program, culminating in key guiding principles derived from

Hal Edward Runkel's international bestseller *ScreamFree Parenting*. The author emphasizes the significance of instilling Christian-Orthodox values, which are further explored through the Collection *Sfinții Părinți pe înțelesul tuturor* [*The Holy Fathers Understood by Everyone*], specifically volumes addressing education, freedom, and discernment. The author stresses the importance of authenticity in parenting, the necessity of setting a positive example for children, and self-determination to nurture personal growth. The article also addresses contemporary challenges, such as peer pressure, while advocating for an approach to parenting that is tender rather than harsh – rooted in love, gentleness, dedication, and patience.

The intersections of feminism and medical humanities bring a critical and often underrepresented perspective to the exploration of human values, highlighting the role of gender in shaping our understanding of health, wellness, and ethical medical practice. In her study – *Medical Humanities Approached Through a Feminist Lens* –, **Laura Ioana Leon** addresses the underexplored area of Medical Humanities in Romania, highlighting the lack of comprehensive educational programs in medical schools that would equip students with essential interdisciplinary skills for contemporary healthcare settings. Research indicates that medical students who engage with Medical Humanities topics tend to develop enhanced communication skills, better observational capabilities, and greater empathy towards patients. Students already possess some understanding of the intersection between medicine and literature, particularly the significance of storytelling in medical practice. Recent experiments have included the exploration of feminist theories as applied to literary works, films, and women's magazines, allowing students to recognize the roots of discrimination and the experience of marginalized voices. While feminist theories in medical education often focus on the disadvantages faced by female healthcare providers, this approach emphasizes how literature and cultural constructs reflect broader societal gender inequalities.

Alexandra Olteanu, in her paper *Theoretical Explorations and Terminological Overlaps. The Novel, as Object of Reflection and the First Support of the Genre Theory*, examines the intertwined history of the native Romanian novel and its theoretical explorations within Romanian culture. As a foundational genre,

the novel has sparked significant discourse regarding its nature, objectives, stakes, and thematic content, articulated through various paratexts such as prefaces and dedications, as well as through the voices of narrators and characters. The emergence of novellas and novels, which developed simultaneously, challenged the theoretical rigour of Romanian writers in the 19th century. The official institution responsible for establishing terminological and theoretical codes of the novel is represented by the writers and scholars of the era and influenced by institutional, political, and social frameworks.

Teodora Iuriusciuc, in *The Specters of Literary Filiations. Portraits of Generations – Mircea Ivănescu and Radu Vancu*, explores the poetic connections between Mircea Ivănescu and Radu Vancu, two prominent poets from the 1980s and 2000s from the Romanian literary scene. The study aims to identify the key similarities between their works to construct a comprehensive portrait of their generations. By employing biographical criticism, the article examines how both poets have translated their life experiences into their poetry. Through this approach, the author reveals how personal narratives and historical contexts shape their creative outputs.

In *The Memory of Communism in Ion D. Sîrbu's 'Journal of a Journalist without a Journal'*, **Oana-Elena Nechita** highlights the importance of memory in maintaining cultural continuity during communism. The experience of communism shaped Romanian literature themes and narrative strategies. The regime's ideological pressures forced writers to balance propagandistic demands with artistic integrity. Sîrbu's journal reflects the harsh realities of the regime, using his personal experiences in prison, as a symbolic space to capture the collective trauma of Romanian intellectuals.

Irina-Marinela Deftu, in *Language in the Church: Orthodox Religious Terminology in Polish and the Role of Translations in Establishing Lexical Norms*, examines the standardization of Orthodox terminology in Romanian and Polish linguistic frameworks, focusing on the Church's role in fostering unity and the influence of translations on lexical norms. Romanian culture has a distinctive confessional identity rooted in Orthodox religious language, which evolved through translations and adaptations. The Polish

language has expanded its role in liturgical and spiritual domains, highlighting the need for unification and codification of Orthodox vocabulary. Despite borrowing extensively from Church Slavonic and Greek, significant challenges remain in standardizing this terminology within the Polish linguistic context.

History & Theology

Iulia Dumitrache, in *'Non naturalibus desideriis, sed censibus aestimentur'*. *The Roman Vegetable and Fruit Market*, investigates the evolution of the grocery trade in Roman times, with a particular focus on the acquisition of fruits and vegetables in urban settings. Literary sources shed light on consumption patterns, preservation methods, and societal views of traders. Epigraphic sources offer technical details on the economic aspects of the trade, while papyri offers precise technical data and fascinating facts about daily life. Private letters from the Roman period describe the delivery or request for vegetables and fruit. Based on a diverse range of historical documents, this study provides a comprehensive understanding of the fruit and vegetable trade in Roman times.

Pr. **Liviu Petcu**, in *A Possible Split Between the Theory of Style and Its Application in the Case of Augustine? The Plurality of Styles in Augustine's Works*, discusses St. Augustine's unique style, which often contradicts his theory. Despite the split between theory and application, Augustine's writings and preaching remain consistent, with variations based on time, topics, and recipients. In defiance of these variations, Augustine remains recognizable, with his unique tics, peculiarities, and recurring puns, along with personal details. Through his study, pr. Liviu Petcu invites readers to reconsider the relationship between theory and practice in Augustine's work, emphasizing how his multifaceted style serves to reinforce his identity as a writer and thinker.

The sixteenth-century Reformation in France presented a dilemma for French elites and citizens, who were supposed to submit to earthly authority. However, the Reformation made this impossible, as Protestants identified the Catholic Church as a new Babylon and the pope as the Antichrist. This led to

disruptions in French society, including open rebellion and the development of a new political mindset that separated politics from religion. By examining the conflicts and shifting loyalties during the French Wars of Religion, **Andrei Constantin Sălăvăstru** reveals in his study how these historical tensions contributed to a transformation in political thought.

Constantin Răchită, in his *Theological Polemics in 'Praefatio paraenetica' by John Pearson (1613-1686)*, analyzes the *Praefatio paraenetica*, a preface by Anglican theologian John Pearson, which appeared in numerous European editions of the *Septuagint* from the 17th to the 19th century. Initially regarded as an apologetic text defending the Greek biblical translation against Saint Jerome's 4th-century criticisms, Pearson's work was highly influential within pre-modern biblical scholarship. The preface was valued for its advocacy of the Greek translation and its relevance to the ongoing debate within biblical philology regarding the merits of the *Septuagint* versus the *Latin Vulgate*.

Mihai-Bogdan Atanasiu, *Death – a Preoccupation of Everyday Life in the 18th Century Iași*, explores the impact of relocating church cemeteries outside the city of Iași on the collective memory of individuals buried in these sites, particularly those interred in the 18th century. While this relocation marked a significant step in Iași's modernization, it also erased the identities of many community members. Once remembered primarily through religious services and obituaries, the memory of these laity is now largely preserved in historical sources, particularly documentary and epigraphic evidence. The author specifically focuses on the lesser-known graves of various figures, including boyars, officials, and merchants, who chose to be buried in the cemeteries of churches such as Sf. Sava, Dancu, Trei Ierarhi, Bărboi, Sf. Ioan cel Nou din Tătărași (Nicoriță), Adormirea Maicii Domnului din Sărărie (Vulpe), as well as the Armenian and Catholic churches. Through this exploration, Mihai-Bogdan Atanasiu aims to shed light on the broader implications of modernization in Iași, particularly how it intersects with memory, identity, and cultural heritage in Moldova during the 18th century.

Economy

By evaluating small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Romania, **Valentina Diana Rusu** and **Angela Roman**, in their approach, *The Use of Information and Communication Technologies in Business as a Value-Creating Tool: Analysis on the Case of SMEs in Romania*, reveal how information and communication technologies (ICT) act as catalysts for value creation within business frameworks, offering new insights into how traditional values intersect with economic imperatives. The primary objective of the paper is to empirically analyze whether the implementation of ICT serves as a significant determinant in creating value for businesses. Recognizing that SMEs often face unique constraints compared to larger enterprises, the study focuses on their particularities and challenges. Their results offer practical implications for SMEs by identifying strategies to increase their value-added and, at the same time, inform decision-makers aiming to support the growth and sustainability of the SME sector in Romania.

The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly impacted Romania's hospital financing and resource management. Through their study, **Mihai-Vasile Pruteanu** and **Alina Moroşanu** compare pre-pandemic and post-pandemic financing processes, examining the mechanisms of hospital funding, and outlining the structure of financial sources, budget allocations, and expenditure patterns. Their study investigates whether the changes implemented during the pandemic have prompted long-term reforms in hospital financing, with a focus on enhancing resource allocation, improving infrastructure, and elevating patient care standards. Their findings contribute to the broader discourse on healthcare policy, strategic planning, and pandemic preparedness, offering guidance for future improvements in financial sustainability within healthcare systems.

Green jobs and sustainable practices bring to light the evolving definitions of the value of environmental stewardship and corporate responsibility. **Silvia-Maria Carp** and **Ana-Maria Bercu** reveal in their analysis that Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) is the most frequently addressed concept within the reviewed literature, with a particular focus on its influence on pro-environmental behaviours among employees. Their findings stress the

importance of adapting educational and human resource strategies to align with the growing emphasis on sustainability in the workforce.

Is Security a Timeless Value? An Insight from International Relations inquires about the concept of security, highlighting its multifaceted nature and the varying interpretations that have emerged over time. **Andreea-Cosmina Foca** and **Oana-Maria Cozma** explore different academic perspectives on security as a value. Their findings indicate that the concept of security is not static; rather, it continuously evolves, reflecting both timeless moral considerations and context-dependent ethical frameworks. Some scholars view security as a fundamental, enduring value, while others emphasize its ethical and temporal aspects, suggesting that its significance may change depending on societal and cultural contexts.

In this dialogue between the past and the present, the universal and the particular, the theoretical and the practical, the present volume reflects on what it means to live and thrive in a world where values are constantly in flux. Through a nuanced engagement with diverse fields of knowledge, the studies illuminate the paths by which humanity may seek to reconcile its enduring values with the forces of change, creating a profound exploration of what it means to be human in the age of continuity and transformation.

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