

## „GLOBAL ROMANIAN LANGUAGE” FACE TO FACE WITH PROMOTING ROMANIAN SCIENCE

Saturday, the 4<sup>th</sup> of March, 2017, at nine o'clock, within the framework of the International Congress of "Apollonia" University in Iasi, the XXVII edition, "We Are Preparing the Future by Promoting Excellence," professor Sanda Golopenția delivered the lecture "Global Romanian Language." On this occasion there were resumed and updated the data presented in the book "Global Romanian Language. Romania and Its Speakers Outside Romania", published in 2009 in Bucharest at the Cultural Foundation Century 21 publishing house. This event was the completion, from a scientific point of view, of the journey completed by the professor of Romanian origin of "Brown" University, Providence, Rhode Island. Her visit in Romania reached the festive peak on March 2, 2017, the day when she turned 75 years old, she received the title of Doctor Honoris Causa granted by "Apollonia University".

The book and subsequently the conference brings into the foreground the fact that it is a must to follow very attentively how the Romanian language develops, not only within the area that represents today Romania, but also in places where it is either the national language (more or less recognized) or mother tongue. Written from the perspective of a person who chose to write in Romanian in exile who lived the trauma of alienation from her own language ("in exile, the language dies every day in us," said Sanda Golopenția repeatedly) the work serves as premises and pretext at the same time the statistics, concerning the population of Romanian origin (using the term in its broadest sense possible including the populations which historically were not or are no longer part of the Romanian space). Hence two problems arise: a quantitative one: how many Romanian-speaking people are and a qualitative one: how the Romanian language evolves abroad. Both problems are equally complex, with difficulties in finding solutions. Very important is the fact

that the two issues are intertwined. In the absence of a formal or informal education in Romanian most native speakers from abroad will lose their sense of language, and it will decrease in quality and in one or two generations span of time the children of today's emigrants will forget.

Regarding the first issue, Sanda Golopenția performs a statistical analysis, without pathos, with the detachment of a scientific a sociologist (based on interdisciplinary expertise but also on the family tradition), including data whose acuity today may be outdated, but whose relevance for the population dynamics remains. The conclusion is that the Romanian language is a language medium use that is found in a process of marked dynamics by the diminution of the number of people who speak it the national space (Romania and Moldova Republic) and the increase through emigration of the number of natives who speak it outside this area, abroad.

Increasing the number of emigrants brings us closer to a second problem of keeping the quality of the language, requiring it to be better spoken outside the Romanian area too. In another linguistic environment, where you are uprooted, the language is "corrupted", every day being inserted words or grammatical forms borrowed from ensuring linguistic landscape. As a result, in the next generations the Romanian language will be spoken by a smaller and smaller number of people, while increasing the difficulty of maintaining a language correctly spoken outside the country.

Also, concerning the Romanian language there is another aspect which was not developed by professor Sanda Golopenția, but that was analyzed during the conference due to questions asked by the guests from Moldova, namely the fight for a Romanian language spoken as correctly as possible in the second state where the Romanian language is the national language

(aspect more or less accepted by the political leadership). In this context returning to a language, which out of political considerations for 45 years it has been deliberately mutilated, a cultural language developed organically, harmoniously is done with great difficulty. Changing the alphabet, the use in the academic education and scientific milieu only of Russian language, the introduction of Russian as the language of administration, brought about unique linguistic changes leading to variations specific for space over the Prut. The two different evolutions of Romanian language highlight two elements. Firstly that, despite all political pressures in a linguistic space where the native language is spoken within the family, it survives in its deepest forms. The second is that in the absence of supporting a Romanian language at academic and scientific levels it will alter, unable to develop naturally and in its elevated form.

This second point too brings us to the issue raised in the title: the promotion of science policies. The premises developed so far stress that it is necessary to have a national policy for the development of the Romanian language in accordance with the current requirements of a globalized world and the historical specificity of Romanians. These policies should be supported consistently at least by three fundamental institutions of the Romanian state: the Romanian Academy, the Ministry of Education and Research (whether there is one ministry or two) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (including here all the institutions dealing with or should to deal with the promotion of Romanian values). Naturally, this list is not exhaustive, nor closed, it could be completed, without a specific criterion, with the Presidency, the Ministry of Culture, the Romanian Cultural Institute etc. We can not say that these institutions do not conduct activities through which to support the Romanian culture and language, but we want to emphasize the need for a coherent development of the Romanian language.

To highlight the shortcomings in this regard I wish to underline a situation that we may call paradoxical. In fact we have developed an antinomy because comparing the policies concerning the development of Romanian

language and the promotion of science (two equally important strategies) we can clearly see the contrast between them. For language development it is vital to write in Romanian, in all areas, while, in order to be read and cited internationally is very important to write in a foreign language (preferably English). The Romanian scientist is caught between the two components as the national program to develop the research it was required for funding and promoting at university and academic levels, the international visibility as a fundamental criterion. Building on reasonable criteria, they have evolved from year to year leading to a situation where articles and books published in journals that are not listed / indexed in international databases to have no relevance whatsoever.

Magazines listed / indexed (depending on specialty) meant for Romania scientific journals published in Romanian. From that moment on there began a transformation of how to write scientific papers in Romania, working on two directions. Firstly the scientific journals were transformed in order to be introduced into international databases, a process that was conducted in parallel with the change of the language in which the articles were published, supporting the international languages, especially English, to the detriment of the Romanian language. On the other hand, each of the Romanian researchers focused their attention towards magazines under international databases, writing (or translating) in English most of the articles. In this context, the journal in Romanian language have lost a lot because those who wanted to publish then moved to other magazines, dropping the scientific quality, which resulted in a decrease in the number of readers. Step by step, traditional magazines either reoriented towards internationalization publishing in English, or disappeared. At the same time there was achieved a leveling of value by lowering the quality, disappearing the academic tradition as well as those scientific publications of apprenticeship, assumed as such, open to young researchers and PhD students. In a paradoxical way, all magazines are starting from point zero, and those journals which due to their tradition lived from their prestige and

internal relevance had the most to lose. The final effect was the sharp drop in the number of scientific journals and articles published in Romanian.

The replies I met with so often when I mentioned this problem and I supported the need for a quality scholarly literature in Romanian language were: "why do we need it?" "In a globalized world do we wish to shut our borders from a scientific point of view?". Nobody wants that. In this case the "middle way" as Horace so beautifully expressed by the formula "*aurea mediocritas*" is the solution. The two parts of the antinomy can live together without conflict. Regarding the development of the Romanian language, each area makes its own contribution. The subtly nuanced language of the various sciences can not be correlated with the specific novelty of the areas unless the scientists think and write in their mother tongue. Regarding the publication of research results in foreign languages, the Latin saying *non multa, sed multum* is the one offering the solution. We must not publish all the scientific "thoughts" in English and display in many cases, the submediocrity (often because of unprofessional translations that can transform an exceptional article in one of very poor quality), but only those exceptional results, matured, to be published in firsthand journals.

Another element that keeps the necessary balance in assessing the academic work is given by the differences between sciences. In the case of natural sciences, health, mathematics or of certain social sciences the proportion of scientific papers in Romanian can be reduced, very important being the editing of courses in Romanian, books for the popularization of science books as well as the academic dialogue. In these situations there should be inserted among the academic criteria promotion the existence of such epistemic tools in Romanian. Thus the thinking in Romanian for drafting articles (there are cases where the researcher thinks the scientific work directly in the language in which he writes the article which often determines the realization of documentation in the same language) the researcher participates actively in the development of language because being in contact with the scientific achievements in

other areas of language he adopts, adapts and assimilates naturally the terms, offering them to academic debate. Eliminating all academic debate in Romanian (by replacing the national congresses with pseudo international congresses), of the scientific publications in Romanian, of the books and magazines for the popularization of science will result in a relatively short time on history scale (until 50 years) in an important linguistic pauperization.

Much more serious is the state of things in terms of the humanities and the social sciences. In this case the research and the publication of research results should be made predominantly in Romanian and the publications in English to be the exception by which to promote the most important results (excepted in this case are the studies in foreign languages and universal literature, where the conditions should be similar to sciences). It is vital for our language and culture to write in this case in Romanian. The Romanian culture is not a self-sufficient culture and writers of Romanian origin who published literature of great value in international languages are proof of this, but it should not be a self-destructive culture either. Writing the texts in Romanian developed in parallel with the systematic professional translation and of an efficient promotion system may be the solution for the development of Romanian science without discriminating the Romanian language.

Instead of conclusions I would like to say something. From a historical perspective, the Romanian language existed as mature form of communication among all those of the same people long before there existed Romania, and a hundred and fifty-one years ago, in Bucharest, the Romanian Academy was established following the model of the French Academy as high forum that had as goal the development of Romanian language, gathered under its dome, in equal proportions, intellectuals from all the geographical areas where they spoke Romanian. Today we should follow that example and support the Romanian language in all areas where Romanian was spoken. We should follow that example and to support the Romanian language in all the areas where it is spoken and it is everyone's duty to participate with our humble powers to its

development. And if the academic policies do not change (which is expected), we can double our effort that everything we write or publish in a foreign language to rewrite and publish in

Romanian (as it will be the case with this article too). Through a modest gesture we not forget our duty towards the language that allows us to live and communicate.

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