

THE ENVY

Mihai ȘLEAHTIȚCHI¹

¹PhD in Psychology, PhD in Pedagogy, Chișinău, Republica Moldova
Corresponding author: Mihai Șleahțițchi; e-mail: mihaisleahitichi@yahoo.com

Abstract

In the case of envy, as it results from many specialized sources, we are dealing with an extremely pernicious phenomenon. Regardless of how it is approached - as "an unpleasant state, along with shame and guilt, causing difficulties of psychological regulation and social adaptation," as "an ensemble of simpler emotional reactions, in various proportions and combinations (such as hostility, feelings of inferiority and injustice), or as something that conveys the expression of "emotional constructs associated" with "a significant specific weight" (like the state of jealousy, hope or schadenfreude) - each time it appears as a complex social emotion centered around "the desire to acquire the attributes or things that another person possesses". In uttering the word envy, we refer to the "selfish feeling of sorrow, tribulation, oddness, caused by the successes or the good situation of another", to a "tumultuous and obsessive state caused by the awareness of the fact that for the moment, we do not possess what one possesses, "or "an inner plague, through which the sadistic pleasure of talking bad about our friends, of criticizing the qualities of our acquaintances and defaming the beloved of another, insinuating that he/she is unfaithful, is constantly appearing". The passion that unleashes at last stays unconfessed because, in fact, "it is impossible to confess it". Envy is "mostly silent," but "always active," being implied in a hidden way "in the judgments and choices of those we come in contact with". Following, to a certain extent, R. Descartes, we could say that any one of those who surrender to envy sooner or later display an "earthly face" caused by the circulation of a "vicious" blood, and a "black yellowish" gallbladder. As soon as a certain sense of control is put on envy, the life of each of the individuals who were not so long ago characterized by the inability to enjoy the success of others starts to radically change, knowing a new measure and a new beginning. Once out of the unlimited influence of the "neighbor's goat" syndrome, these individuals realize that they have a healthy way of building constructive relationships, with a mentality of solidarity and "being" instead of "having".

Keywords: *envy, social comparison, the effects of envy, diminishing envy.*

In the Bible, the most searched book in the world, with a translation in about 1,800 languages, we come across a passage in which we are told about what happened to Joseph, Jacob's son in old times, once when he - from an unselfish spiritual

and absolutely innocent outburst -initiated his eleven brothers in two dreams of his own that he was predicted to become the ruler of "the whole land of Egypt." Finding out about this, and knowing that young Joseph was their father's favourite, the eleven brethren were taken away by envy, deciding to resort to murder. The murder would have happened without delay if one of the brothers - named Ruben - would not insist on the idea that homicide represents a great sin in the face of divinity. As a result, Judas, another brother, came up with the proposal to sell Joseph as a slave to a caravan just passing through those places. The proposal was accepted, and Joseph having thr destiny, for many years, of a man lacking any civil and political rights. Going through abominable sufferings, he managed to save himself and ultimately become what his dreams predicted once -the eloquent embodiment of the royal power¹.

One way or another, the idea of the biblical passage that has as a protagonist Joseph, the son of Jacob, is to be found, in time, in many other histories with reference to the moral physiognomy of the human species. What happens to David, who, being brought to the court of King Saul, manages to build a very exceptional military career very quickly? The commanding talent and the immense authority he had among the soldiers triggered dissatisfaction, and then Saul's hatred. Falling under the emptiness of the envy, the Emperor tries several times to kill David. Another example: Othello of W. Shakespeare. The noble Venetian Iago could not bear the glory Othello had won when he defeated the Turks defending the northeast of Italy. To destroy the friendship between the latter and one of his most devoted friends, Cassio, Iago has set up an infamous plan. Out of sheer envy, he made Othello believe that his wife, Desdemona, was cheating him on Cassio. The outcome was tragic: falling in the

trap set up by Iago, Othello kills his consort. Whoever watched *Amadeus* directed by Miloš Forman or read the drama *Mozart and Salieri* written by Alexandr Puskin had the possibility, we believe, to observe what the source of the death was of that one who composed *The Kidnapping from from Seraglio, Figaro's Wedding, Don Giovanni* and / or *The Magic Flute*. Both in A. Pushkin's and M. Forman's case, the suggestion is as clear as possible: Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart has fallen prey to a mediocre opponent with a distorted vision of culture and with a spirit of envy past any limit.

In fact, to all outstanding personalities - regardless of the time, geographical area or field of activity - we have at least an aphorism, a maximum or a thought made about envy and its disgusting character. As confirmation, we can use the following examples:

- **Aristotle**: envy is a kind of sorrow for the happiness that our peers seem to enjoy;
- **Antistene**: Envy corrodes the envious as rust corrodes iron;
- **Socrates**: envy is the soul's ulcer;
- **Eschil**: too few people have the innate power of honoring the success of a friend without envy;
- **Seneca**: You will never be happy if you are angry that someone is happier than you;
- **Victor Hugo**: It is the habit of the envious person to forgive his sin by mixing his personal envy with the general evil;
- **Napoleon Bonaparte**: the envy is a statement of inferiority;
- **Artur Schopenhauer**: the envy is a vice and at the same time a misfortune;
- **Barbu Delavrance**: animals do not envy; the envy is a human vanity that punishes instantly the one who feels it: it is the most certain consciousness of inferiority;
- **Ion Ghica**: the envy is the passion that corrodes more the soul in which it has entered, it is more implacable than hatred, it is the origin of the greatest evil, it gives birth to enmity and hatred;
- **Mihai Eminescu**: there is a means to fight against enmity, against envy - no;
- **Nicolae Iorga**: the safest way to catch up with someone is to envy him: it always holds you back;
- **Simion Mehedinți**: the envy, whether confessed or not, is always a sign of inferiority;
- **Frank Tyger**: You can not be envious and happy at the same time;
- **George Călinescu**: repress your envy with the exceptional man, learn to understand and appreciate him;
- **Paolo Mantegazza**: the envy is the hatred of another's superiority;
- **Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn**: our envy devours us the most;
- **Carlos Ruiz Zafon**: the envy is the religion of the mediocre;
- **Gabriel Liiceanu**: there is no better sign of success than the hatred and the envy of others (CUVINTE CELEBRE, n.d.;)².

In addition, there is no people or ethnicity that - through various forms of collective wisdom (proverbs, sayings, moralistic stories etc.) - would not condemn the envy, specifying that it depicts a nuisance, a flaw, a state of mind of great inconvenience, trouble and suffering. Here are just a few examples:

- your neighbor's hen seems to you a goose (**Armenian proverb**);
- if envy would cause fever, everyone would feel hot (**Italian proverb**);
- envy gives nothing to anyone (**French proverb**);
- the bald does not like the hair of another (**Persian proverb**);
- the envy always sprouts with great worth (**English proverb**);
- the envy is like fire (**Romanian proverb**);
- the generous gives, the miser dies of envy (**Bengali proverb**);
- the envy aims at others and hurts itself (**German proverb**);
- the envious turns yellow when he sees someone happy happy (**Polish proverb**);
- a hungry wolf is more peaceful than an envious man (**Romanian proverb**);
- the towers are measured by their shadow and the people of worth by those envious of them (**Chinese proverb**);

- the envy of the enemy is his own punishment (**Indian proverb**);
- the envy does not have feast days (**Latin proverb**);
- in the fertile tree it is thrown with stones (**Turkish proverb**);
- the envy is the disease without cure (**Arab proverb**) (INTELEPCIUNE, n.d.; LORIBALOGH, n.d.; PROVERB, n.d.; WIKIQUOTE, n.d.; ZICATORI, n.d.)³.
- **J. D'Arms**: the envy renders an extremely unpleasant emotional state that causes shame to the person experiencing it, making it unreasonable, irrational and even acting imprudently (D'ARMS, 2016);
- **Ph. Braud**: the envy, this "abjection of human nature," expresses a mechanism of social relations which can be said to be - most of the time - camouflaged (BRAUD, 2008);
- **M. Curelaru**: the envy shows a complex social emotion characterized by negative valence (CURELARU, 2015).

May it be randomly that everywhere - whether it is about culture, art, science, politics, religion, and / or various forms of folk wisdom - the envy is seen as something to be exposed at the pillar of infamy? No, of course not According to H. Schoeck, author of the well-known *Envy: A theory of social behavior* (SCHOECK, 1969), this concern of society is absolutely natural. Who is the envious? A disrupter of peace, an instigator to rebellion, a dissatisfied with his fellow men, a person who opposes the social order, an individual who does not want and can not accept two things - that people, in principle, can not be alike (as nature, value or importance) and that the idea of establishing an egalitarian society has no prospect of success. Of course, both Schoeck and many other social field analysts - G.M. Foster or B. Vidaillet, for example - it is extremely important to speak directly and with great force about the cruel essence of envy and, at the same time, what we have to do to prevent it to leave a mark on how we feel, think and act (FOSTER, 1972; VIDAILLET, 2008).

Having said that, let us first see how the envy phenomenon can be defined. To a closer analysis of the literature in question, it can be observed that in most cases it is approached from the perspective of a *complex social emotion*, of a *large spiritual movement* that, in its present day situations, embraces more or less embarrassing states (such as shame or guilt) likely to compromise the notion of proper behavioral style. *Verba docent, exempla trahunt*:

- **J. Tangney & P. Salovey**: the envy is the phenomenon that can be set in a category of emotions of a problematic nature (along with shame and guilt), constantly contributing to the difficulties of emotional regulation and social adaptation (TANGNEY & SALOVEY, 1999);
- **M. Klein**: the state of envy really defines the feelings of oddness and anger that a subject has when he is afraid that another might possess something that may be desired and enjoyed by him (KLEIN, 1968);
- **WG Parrott**: the emotional episode, which we objectively call envy, can comprise several components subjectively expressed by a person and accumulated over time: the longing for what the other one has more or what offers him superiority, the resentment towards the envied person or group, the resentment in relation to the situation ("fate", harsh conditions, inequity), guilt and / or admiration (PARROTT, 1991);
- **R. H. Smith & S. H. Kim**: the experience of envy is characterized by the presence of an emotional mixture consisting of hostility, the sense of inferiority, and of injustice (SMITH & KIM, 2007).

By bringing to the same denominator the considerations presented above, we can state - together with M. Miceli and C. Castelfranchi, C.R. Harris and P. Salovey - that the label of envy

can be applied not only to embarrassing affective states, but also to an articulated ensemble of simpler and non-similar experiences and reactions, in various proportions and combinations (MICELI & CASTELFRANCHI, 2007; HARRIS & SALOVEY, 2008; DENIS, 2006p; JOUVENIT, 1999). This very ensemble is often perceived by the subject as an intrinsically distinct tension that puts it in a clearly individualized relationship with all those who, in one form or another, have a certain privilege to him.

Before we conclude the presentation of the views with regard to the compositional profile of envy, we will mention that there are a number of authors - we refer to GM Foster, G. Taylor, A. Ben-Ze'ev, KT Strongman, G. Clanton and St. Boncu - who consider that in the structure of the phenomenon considered, besides the "embarrassing states" (shame, guilt, etc.) or "the articulations of simpler and non-similar emotional reactions" (hostility, anger, feeling of injustice, sentiment inferiority, etc.), "associated affective constructs" with "significant specific weight" (the state of jealousy, hope or of *schadenfreude*⁴) may also be encountered (FOSTER, 1972; TAYLOR, 1988; BEN-ZE'EV, 1990; STRONGMAN, 2003; CLANTON, 2007; BONCU, 2009). Moreover, they say, beyond the emotionally obvious feelings, the envy is also characterized by the presence of what it is called the faith, that is to say, of strongly established attitudes to which individuals fully adhere, and which, the expression of J.- P. Deconchy finds them true even when proof of their veracity does not belong to a science logic. Essentially, the point of view that G. M. Foster or G. Taylor, A. Ben-Ze'ev or K.T. Strongman, G. Clanton or St. Boncu is based on the following reasoning:

- common language ignores, most of the time, the distinction between envy and jealousy;
- the definitions contained in several types of dictionaries (including those specialised) point out that envy and jealousy "can be distinguished by the possession of a desired attribute or relationship" ("when someone possesses this attribute or relationship and is worried that his possession could be threatened by another, not only envy but also jealousy appears ");
- both envy and jealousy "generate similar emotional reactions - anger, sadness and anxiety";
- the situations that cause envy cause also jealousy ("when a rival threatens the relationship that the individual has with another person, there is jealousy, because the individual anticipates the loss of the relationship, but also envy, because he considers that what happens is due to the superiority of his rival");
- whenever individuals receive from a person who is not indifferent to them a feed-back that threatens their self-esteem, they go through a sort of envy mixed with a strong dose of jealousy;
- although the notions of envy and jealousy overlap, there are also considerable differences between them:
 - (i) jealousy includes feelings of suspicion, rejection, hostility, anger, suffering and fear of loss, whereas envy focuses on feelings of inferiority and dissatisfaction, on desire and self-criticism;
 - (ii) jealousy is exclusively associated with inter-human relationships, whereas envy does not have such restrictions;
 - (iii) unlike envy, which essentially expresses a diadic relationship, jealousy covers a triadic relationship;
- the state of *schadenfreude* is the condition that usually occurs when three conditions are met: "when there is envy, when there is the conviction that the suffering of the other brings a gain, even a symbolic benefit, and when the other seems to deserve that suffering ";
- hope can be associated with envy, given that, in the absolute majority of cases, each of us either manifests the desire for the envious person to "lose comparative superiority", or the belief that - sooner or later - "the existing disadvantage will improve ";
- the beliefs are often encountered in the envious man's discourse because in his mind, the following conviction takes shape: "the other enjoys more luck in life, the plus he has confers him advantage and superiority, his advantage threatens the social position, and the situation is unjustifiable or unfair. "

After all, gathering together the information we have been working on up to this moment, we can state that we are confronted with an eminently pernicious phenomenon in the case of envy. Regardless of how it is treated - that it is "an unpleasant state, along with shame and guilt,

causing difficulties of psychological regulation and social adaptation," it is "an articulated ensemble of simpler emotional reactions, in various proportions and combinations (such as hostility, feelings of inferiority and injustice) "or that it expresses the expression of" associated affective constructs with "a" significant specific weight "(of the state of jealousy, hope or *schadenfreude*) - it appears, each time as a complex social emotion centered on "the desire to acquire the attributes or things that another person possesses." Uttering the word envy, we refer to the "selfish feeling of sorrow, tribulation, oddness, caused by the successes or the good situation of another", to a "tortuous and obsessive state" caused by the awareness of the fact that, for the moment we do not possess what another one possesses, "or an inner plague through which, R. Rachieru's expression, the sadistic pleasure of slendering our friends, of gossiping on the qualities of our acquaintances and of defaming the beloved of another, insinuating that she is unfaithful appears constantly⁵. The feeling is that we are witnessing, as Ph. Braud mentions, to a double stigma: "The envious contests the superiority of others without being able to invoke a clear motivation; he mourns caustically what, from solidarity or fraternity, he should, on the contrary, appreciate" (BRAUD, 2008). The passion that unleashes is not confessed because, in fact, "it is impossible to be confessed." It is "mostly silent," but "always active," creeping in "hidden in the judgments and choices of those we come into contact with." Following, to a certain extent, R. Descartes, we could say that anyone of those who allow to be carried away by envy, sooner or later, display a "greysh face" caused by the circulation of a "vicious" blood, and a "black-yellowsh" ball ...

How is it that at a certain moment, individuals fall under the spell of envy? What are the factors or conditions that make it appear and develop, on a certain level, to a particular time, to a lesser or greater extent?

In an attempt to answer as plausibly as possible to this question, we will specify that envy, regardless of the form in which it appears - *malicious or admirative*⁶, *dispositional or situational*⁷ - is based on social comparison (LANGE & CRUSIUS, 2015; RAWLS, 1971; SMITH et al.,

1999; SMITH et al., 2009). According to scientists who have been constantly concerned with the study of human emotion - we consider especially P. Salovey and J. Rodin, M. Miceli and C. Castelfranchi, RH Smith and SH Kim, MD Alicke and E. Zell, St. Boncu and M. Curelaru, the most important role in emerging and maintaining the "selfish feeling of dissatisfaction caused by the successes or the good situation of another" belongs to the target gender of comparison (SALOVEY & RODIN, 1984; MICELI & CASTELFRANCHI, 2007; SMITH & KIM, 2007; ALICKE & ZELL, 2008; BONCU, 2009; CURELARU, 2015; COHEN-CHARASH, 2009; GOLD, 1996). Why? Because, they say, being inspired by the works of L. Festinger, FX Gibbons, BP Buunk, TA Wills, SE Taylor, M. Lobel, K. Corcoran, J. Crusius, and T. Mussweiler⁸, social individuals are placed either in the face of the need to value and assimilate the standards, examples, models or advanced experiences of others, the energies thus obtained playing an emulative role, stimulating their own activities, enhancing the self and orienting towards progress (happens less often) or to the need to look at those who "are better or more advantaged" with contempt, hatred, guilt or regret, expecting that sooner or later these ones "to fade away or to become unheard"(which happens regularly). Stating that envy is a result of social comparison, specialists - we are referring not only to those already mentioned, but also to some that we have not yet taken into account (J. Schaubroeck and SK Lam example) - they want to bring to light the underlying aspects of the existing relationship, noting that at its basis there are at least three factors: *the similarity, the relevance of the field of comparison and the change of status* (SCHAUBROECK & LAM, 2004). Referring, for example, to similarity, they find the following: "envy often occurs to people who have similar characteristics, except, obviously, the field where the advantage is recognized and which, as a matter of fact triggers the envy"⁹. Regarding the relevance of the field of comparison, it can be said that the people, accustomed to invest more in one area of life and less in another, "pursuing, more or less, in a programmatic way, to become relevant in the area to which they tend (professional, family or other) in order to maintain

a positive self-esteem ", it is characteristic of them to become envious when another person" obtains more important results in the area considered relevant by them in the area that has an essential role in defining their own self"¹⁰. The arguments regarding the third factor - the change of status - show that "the loss of an important position, a professional advantage, a function or official qualities held to one moment and passed over to another" give moments that, being relevant to comparison, they only have to humiliate the one who suffered the loss, making him carry on his further existence in the rhythms of wickedness and enmity. The intensity of pain and the depth of revenge will now depend on the "social importance of the lost position, its duration, the assignment of success exclusively to the other's personal qualities, and the considering the acquisition of his position as a loss without compensation and competition for resources ".

As envy is the image of an extremely unpleasant emotional state, it is doubtful that the effects that intervene in such a case are likely to profoundly influence the day-to-day course of events, "insidious and gradually poisoning the human being and its social relations"¹¹. As a matter of fact, as we can see from the studies of important specialists in the field - we refer, first of all, to P. Salovey and J. Rodin, A. Tesser and J. Campbell, M. Silver and J. Sabini, M. Curelaru and St. Boncu, the effects considered can take one of the following five forms: (a) *self-change in order to reduce the comparison feed-back*, (b) *changing the relationship with the person compared to*, (c) *negating the merits of the person compared to*, (d) *reassessing the performance of the person compared to and* (e) *violent actions against the feedback source of comparison* (SALOVEY & RODIN, 1988, 1991).

In the first case, it is important to reduce the relevance of the comparison field. According to the proofs of P. Salovey and J. Rodin, "a specific adaptation style, which is a type of selective ignorance and which involves minimizing the importance of the field of comparison, is effective in preventing or diminishing envy" (SALOVEY & RODIN, 1984). If the *self-evaluation is strengthened by invoking positive qualities*, the results, in all likelihood, would be rather bad. Emotions that trigger envy "make the attributes

of the individual inferior," making "any strategy based on focusing on one's own person to be ineffective at first." And one more thing: the change in self-definition caused by envy comparisons may, in the opinion of many authors, facilitate *the engagement in comparison with those inferior* ("after being overcome by a dimension, envious individuals may decide that it is more relevant to their self-definition to compare with others, weaker or more disadvantaged than them").

In the second case, experts say, "individuals who receive negative feedback on a relevant dimension are much less willing to have a relationship with the person who is superior to them." Living in such a state, they do their best to reduce the contact with their rivals or - which is equally important - they make the decision that they are not similar, that is, they are not fit to their way of being.

In the third case, we are witnessing the contestation of the merits of the rivals who have come to succeed. From this point of view, according to M. Silver and J. Sabini, envy is undoubtedly an obvious self-protection function: we try to stop the loss of self-esteem, denigrating the opponent as much as possible (SILVER & SABINI, 1978; STĂNCIULESCU-BÎRDA, 1987; TESSER & CAMPBELL, 1983; TONER & FREELAND, 2015).

In the fourth case, we see how individuals governed by envy seek to strengthen their self-esteem by demonstrating that the success of the one they compare themselves to "is due to an advantage that he has created in a dishonest way" , not "the qualities with which he is endowed". Now, reveals Stephen. Boncu, that category of individuals "can even sabotage the performance of the other as far as possible", refusing, for example, to help a friend solve a problem when "the field of performance is relevant to their self-defining" .

In the last, fifth case, the state of envy is solved with the occurrence of reactions that can be said to express physical or psychological constraints, exercised over the performing individuals in order to minimize or even annihilate their importance. Recurring to such behavioral reactions, those who "turn yellow when seeing others happy" demonstrate that "they perceive

the failure to acquire certain possessions or attributes as a result of discriminatory or arbitrary forces." These behavioural reactions, the specialistssay, "grow when envious individuals do not possess something desirable, while others perceive that they have the same." Moreover, the same reactions "seem more probable as possessions or desirable qualities are acquired, not inborn."

What should be done to reduce personal envy? In the opinion of several investigators of the phenomenon - we consider, first and foremost, C. R. Harris and P. Salovey, M. Curelaru or V. Kast - one can speak of the existence of at least three solutions (HARRIS & SALOVEY, 2008; CURELARU, 2015; KAST, 2016; DUFFY & SHAW, 2000; LAZNIK-PENOT, 1995; PLEBAN & TESSER, 1981; TESSER, 1980). *A first solution* would be "to give up, as much as possible, the comparison of one's own results with others, while maintaining the desire to improve our own situation" (or, as we have previously shown, referring to the results of empirical investigations, the high frequency of social comparison correlates with a higher level of envy). *A second solution*, according to the same investigators, would involve "shifting attention from the favored person to the advantage possessed this one (or such a change of focus" would rather stimulate the focus of efforts on acquiring the necessary plus, and less slip in the desire to acquire the attribute or thing that another one possesses "). *The third solution* would be to "valorize one's own person in a dimension other than the one that can elicit or already excite the state of envy" (or, in this way, each of us may, at some point, discover that he is in the possession of some ways of assertion that he did not infer at the right time or which they did not pay the due attention)¹².

May there exist solutions for diminishing envy in organizational environment too? The answer of the specialists is again affirmative. In order to establish "what managers should do to manage the life situations of a company that can give rise to envy," K. Dogan and RP Vecchio, for example, they come to find out that the negative effects that state of envy exerts on the level of organizational performance may be reduced by "taking a more active role of leaders" (DOGAN

& VECCHIO, 2001). By providing the details, the authors quote that, first of all, "in the recruitment process, it is imperative to give greater importance to assessing the emotional maturity of candidates." Then, they say, "it would be advisable to do as much as teamwork, participatory management, designate collective goals," but without giving up "individual responsibility and wider acceptance of both positive outcomes and failures ". Thirdly, "in order to reduce direct competition to a functional value and to encourage positive relationships among employees", it is necessary to resort to "rotation of employees or their regular shift through different jobs within the same organizational environment" "Temporary staying in an organizational position does not allow us to develop a sense of ownership of the resources and processes managed, and will naturally decrease the risk of considering work colleagues as potential rivals or sources of potential personal threats"). Moreover, it is reasonable that, in addition to the strategies outlined above, two types of intervention should be used - "conducting a mentoring program" and "encouraging open communication on prevention of envy in working conditions ".

From the moment on which the dimension of private life or that of one directed to the organizational environment, there is some dominion on the feeling of envy, the life of each of the individuals who were recently characterized by the inability to enjoy the success of another begins to change considerably, acknowledging a new measure and a new beginning. Once out of the unlimited influence of the „neighbor's goat" syndrome, they will realize that they have a healthy path toward constructive relationships, solidarity towards "to be" instead of "to have".

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Endnotes

- 1 In a wider formula, the story of the life of Joseph, the son of Patriarch Jacob, can be found in: The Bible or Holy Scripture. - Bucharest: The Bible and Mission Institute of the Romanian Orthodox Church, 2001; The Bible or the Sacred Scripture: a diortised version after the Septuagint, written and annotated by V. Anania. - Bucharest: The Bible and Mission Institute of the Romanian Orthodox Church, 2001; Mann Th. Joseph and his brothers. The histories of Jacob. Young Joseph / German translation and notes by P. Manoliu. - Volume I. - Top 10+ Collection. - Iasi: Polirom Publishing House, 2013 and / or on the following websites: <http://www.aboutbibleprophecy.com/p34.htm>, <http://www.logon.org/english/c/cb014.html>, <http://www.ids.org/scriptures/gs/joseph-son-of-jacob?lang=eng>
- 2 The quotations are taken from: Iorga N. Cugetări / Edition edited by B. Theodorescu. - The Cogito Collection. - Bucharest: Albatros Publishing House, 1972; Proverbs, Thoughts, Definitions of Education / Edition edited by E. Mihailescu; preface by N. Radu. - The Cogito Collection. - Bucharest: Albatros Publishing House, 1978; Hugo V. Quotes / Translation, anthology, preface, indexes by V. Ungureanu-Cerna; word before C. Ciopraga. - Coogito Collection. - Bucharest: Albatros Publishing House, 1982; The infinite column. From Modern Romanian Thought / Edition edited by A. Stanculescu-Birda. - The Cogito Collection. - Bucharest: Albatros Publishing House, 1987; Schopenhauer A. Aphors on Wisdom in Life / Careed Edition and Post-Impression by T. Vargolici; translation by T. Maiorescu. - Bucharest: SAECULUM I.O. Publishing House, 1997 and a number of websites: <http://www.cuvintecelbre.ro/subiecte/invidie>; <http://www.subiecte.citatepedia.ro/despre.php?s=invidie>; <http://www.citate-celebrecogito.ro/tag/citate-despre-invidie>; <http://www.intelepiciune.ro/despre/invidie/citate>.
- 3 The selection maxims was performed in a stochastic way, based on the following electronic sources: https://www.borcanulcucitate.ro/profil2/proverbe_germane; <https://www.intelepiciune.ro/proverbe-zicatori-romanseti-celebre-217-despre-invidie.html>; <https://www.https://ro.wikiquote.org/wiki/Invidie>; <https://www.zicatori.com/din-proverbele-si-zicatorile-popoarelor-lumii>; <https://www.kudika.ro/articol/special/25626/proverbe-celebre.html>; <https://www.citatepedia.ro/index.php?id=296940>; www.proverb.ro/category/categorii/proverbe-despre-intelepiciune
- 4 The emotion called *schadenfreude*, we will recall, characterizes the situation in which envy begins to be accompanied by a "malicious joy someone can have over the misfortune of another." In such a case, as F.Nietzsche still notes, in 1880, in *Der Wanderer und Sein Scbatten*, "the sense of equality wants to apply its measure in the field of happiness and chance." Or, "the miserable joy of the evil of others comes from the fact that no one feels in its waters in many respects, that each one has his worries, his remorse, his pain, and he does not ignore it: the misfortune that strikes the other makes up his equal, reconciles his jealousy. " "The most vulgar expression in which victory and the restoration of equality is manifested," the genre of joy, is to mention the illustrious German philosopher, "appeared only when man learned to see others in the other men, that is, to the moment of founding society ". For confirmation, see, Nietzsche F. Explanation for mischievous joy // F. Nietzsche. The traveler and his shadow. Human, Too Human / German Translation by O.- I. Petre. - Bucharest: Antet Publishing House, 2000. - P.32.
- 5 How actual it is from the perspective of this ascertained fact, Otto von Bismarck, the great German politician, prime minister of Prussia between 1862 and 1890, was the first Chancellor of the German Empire, who, long ago, on December 7, 1870, in the the famous Letter to his wife said: When you have been in the first position for a long time, and as such by the will of the Lord, you have been successful, then you have clearly felt how the frozen marsh invades and hatred is gradually spreading, much and ends by invading hearts; do not make any new friends anymore, the old ones die or they end up in their vile modesty, and the cold thickens, as it is written in the natural history of the principles, even the most merciful. For confirmation, see, for example, Ph. Braud. Little Treated by emotions, feelings and political passions / Translation by M. Jeanrenaud. - Iasi: Polirom Publishing House, 2008. - pp. 150-151.
- 6 Numerous specialists in the field - we refer first of all to J. Rawls [1971] and GM Foster [1972], G. Taylor [1988] and WG Parrot [1991], CR Harris and P. Salovey [2008] J. Lange and J. Crusius [2015] - are of the opinion that the state of envy can be malignant (= malignant, evil, negative) or admirable (= benign, emulative, positive). In the first case, they say, the individual takes hold of anger, hostility, painful inferiority, dissatisfaction with life and reluctance. In the second case, things get a whole different turn: considering the successes of others, the individual prefers to make efforts to overcome himself, in order to gain his status of power (intellectual, moral, physical etc.) or, in other terms, to take possession of

- "what creates the difference between oneself and another". If the hostility or reluctance only makes you feel isolated, lost and dissatisfied, then the tendency to get "what creates the difference between yourself and the other" fills the "desire for self-refinement and hope in own, family or professional success"
- 7 There are also authors - such as A. Ben-Ze'ev (1990), BT Gold (1996), RH Smith (1999), or Y. Cohen-Charash [2009] possible forms of exteriorization - dispositional and situational, respectively. In the first variant, the phenomenon acquires the expression of a "personality trait, characterized by a relative tendency towards stability and consistency" or a "relatively constant mixture of more emotions, which tends to manifest over time with a certain frequency and intensity. " The second variant, the one referring to the situation, introduces us to the sphere of affective-cognitive manifestations. As a milestone, this time serves the results of a series of experimental research that has made it possible to establish that envy has a negative emotional component (usually reduced to anxiety, depression or hostility) and a cognitive component (expressing the product of one or more social comparisons).
 - 8 In these works, as it is known, various information is presented with reference to the essence, meanings and springs of the social comparison phenomenon. For L. Festinger, for example, we point out that "people are constantly engaged in social comparisons because they are interested in how others are, what they can and can not do to find out how they are themselves, evaluating - and thus their own opinions and abilities. " FX Gibbons and BP Buunk, in turn, indicates that "the phenomenon of social comparison extends to other dimensions or extensions of self, of which the most important are personal achievements, qualities, possessions, feelings and achievements of those who are close or significant ". Approximately the same positions are S.E. Taylor and M. Lobel, adding that "there are three main reasons people want to compare socially: self-evaluation, improvement and self-cognition."
 - 9 The experiment that he performs in 2004, J. Schaubroeck and S. K. Lam, demonstrates this. What did these two known Western psychologists do? Two months before announcing a promotion to the position of supervisor, employees at a Hong Kong bank had to assess their attitudes towards their colleagues in their subdivisions. Subsequently, according to the research program, a group of about 5-6 people was selected in one of these subdivisions - one candidate only! - to fill the vacancy. One month after promotion, it was used to evaluate the attitude towards the person / colleague who was advanced. The results confirmed the presence of envy. In addition, it was noted that the envy that occurred was greater in the rejected people who (i) perceived the colleague promoted as self-similar and who (ii) had previously had higher expectations of their own promotion .
 - 10 In an experimental study carried out in the first half of the 1980s, P. Salovey and J. Rodin offered each member of the sample either a positive feed or a negative one to a fake personality test targeting career choices and which was relevant or irrelevant to the self-concept. Sometime later, the positive (false, of course) results of another participant, "in an adjacent room," came into play. The envy appeared to have been significantly higher when, when confronted with the positive results of the participant "in an adjacent room," the subjects in the experimental group received negative feedback on their own performance and when the comparison was taking place in their area of relevance.
 - 11 The expression belongs to B. Vidaillet. See, in this regard, Vidaillet B. Workplace Envy. - New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008. - p.28.
 - 12 According to C. R. Harris and P. Salovey [2008], "the valorisation of one's own person in a dimension other than that which may stir up or incite the state of envy" should foresee faith in God. This belief, they say, may be an effective way of coping for the tendency to "look at another with evil and enmity." In such a context, "the present unfavorable situation can be accepted as a given of the divine decision, believing that in the future life there will be a restoration of justice, or at least things will be different than now."