

# THE HUMAN ACTION FROM EFFICIENCY TO FAILURE. A CULTURAL APPROACH

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## Abstract

From a generic point of view the human action includes the intentions of the human being that generated it. The obtained results may be identical or resembling in different places of the world. The ways to get to the final results are often different and bear, without doubt, the stamp of the culture of the people who contribute to their being achieved. The specific management and the traditional characteristics are evident in the "product" (object, service, art, science etc). More than that, we have to point out the real contribution brought about by communication. Communication, language, put their stamp not only upon the purpose of the human activity, but also on the speed by which it can be achieved, on the efficiency of the work and especially on preserving the cultural originality and the ethnicity under discussion. Therefore, to obtain the desired efficiency in the framework of globalization, which should involve us all, to avoid actions harmful like non kinetic operations, in order not to compromise the existence as a nation, it is necessary to reevaluate whatever contributes to the social management which is responsible for the future.

**Keywords:** *contribution of communication to human action, one's own culture stamp on the results of the action, anarchy of the white collars, failure to achieve the social objectives, non kinetic actions upon nation*

*If language is incorrect, that is unsuitable,  
what one says is different from what one thinks,  
and what is to be made remains unachieved!  
Confucius (550-470 BC)*

To say that from intention to action there exists communication sounds commonplace for many people. Any human action includes genetically an intention from the human being. We take out of discussion those events which are the result of hazard or those taking place outside normality. Therefore, we will remain with those which, as a rule, are considered to belong to behavioral normality. Along various meridians

and parallels, human action seems to obey the same rules, the same way of acting, as the result of the compulsory interaction of some processes which connect the human intention with its results. The research in the domain of neurosciences pointed out the role played in speech by the so called *Broca's area* from the brain, revealing the medical connection between the capacity of speaking and the *physical source*. We cannot reduce communication only to speaking. The result of the human action may be the consequence of other forms of communication.

If we analyse the human action, we discover that it is here that the cultural targets and those characteristic to each civilization are to be found. It would be an answer to the question "why" regarding the meaning of the human action.

If the introspective analysis goes on to find out "how" things come into being, we have to note the perceptible differences depending on the geographic, ethnical and even sub ethnical environment on a regional level.

Intuitively, we understand and accept the evidence that, as a rule, a person from Ardeal is slower while another one from the South of the country is faster. In the same way, we think that a German is more "technical" than an Eskimo. We can go on giving examples. If we look for a single explanation for such things, maybe, some of us would concentrate upon the characteristic geographical environment. This would not mean to make comparisons which might be considered to be racist.

Nevertheless, it is possible to make objective scientific analyses without going down to racism.

The analysis of an ethnical or geographical area in order to find out the causes determining

the obtained results and the way they are identified, reveal not only the role played by technologies or the production manner, but more than that. The culture specific to those involved in the production of the respective goods and services cannot be ignored. It is evident both in the production of material goods and in those which are the result of scientific, artistic or intangible creation. Globalisation, understood as "...a new name for a process existing from the beginnings of mankind"<sup>1</sup> is a phenomenon which "moves" faster and faster making us get into contact with those characteristic to other nations, civilizations etc. The present day human action is more and more influenced in its features, results and expectations by aspects seen or known from other geographical, economical or cultural areas. It is more evident the existence of a mixture which aims at positive results, but, sometimes, it generates real dramas in the "importing" societies. One explanation could be the fact that "globalization has not expanded to such an extent as to be able to speak about homogenized values unanimously accepted or about an educational system which could allow an identical perception of various events. ...This is the reason that some information, which in western democratic societies, does not create any collateral effects, being part of the daily routine of informing the public, in traditionalistic and closed societies it leads to astonishment, hatred, frustration and other negative feelings, being considered to be real attacks on moral and religious and national values"<sup>2</sup>.

We notice that "... the phenomenon goes on having its own inertia, an inertia based on the value of the information which is related to any social endeavour and to the characteristic feature of the human being, which cannot resist "the temptation" to what is new"<sup>3</sup>.

It is easy to identify the physical features of some goods which indicate their belonging to a certain culture, be it called Japanese or African. It is more difficult to find the characteristics, when we deal with a product from European countries. The flow of changes occurring along many centuries and mutual "contaminations" in all domains have resulted in a mixture, where one can hardly find out the paternity of ideas, actions etc.

On the other hand, an analysis of such a subject would not have too many chances to be useful. But, we think that, in order to find the factors responsible for the efficiency of the social activity, humanities can and must create more ideas, which the social leaders should have in view. Without doubt, communication represents the vehicle for the necessary transfer of information. Without going deep into the core of the problem, we propose some ideas in this respect.

A first example would be the transfer by translation of some management instruments such as doctrines, strategies, plans etc. It is something we must have in view for Romania, if we think of the integrating NATO and EU. The aspects implied by the Latin saying *traduttore-traditore* are insufficient to justify the scarcity of translations necessary for the new reality. Even the physical amount of transfer by translation differs from one language to another one. But, forms do not bring about a change of mentality. It is necessary to do more in order to "get rid of the effects generated by the slow change in mentality"<sup>4</sup>. Not only problems linked to linguistic-semantic correspondence can generate scarcity of information. Without resorting to *Meta Neurolinguistic Model* (NPL) by Richard Bandler or to the *Neurolinguistic Programming and the Art of Communication* by Rene de Lassus, we have to point out some other aspects which mark the human action from the point of view of communication.

From this point of view, word order in German or English may indicate more than the linguistic articulation. We think that it is in word order of the sentence that the core of the individual's future action can be found. It is the place where ideas take shape; it is here that the individual's intentions are organized according to a certain coherence and regularity as an approach to action. In the *decision making bath*, where the individual performs his action and the social one, currents are oriented by this fact and the substance on which it is based bears the mark represented by the culture it belongs to. This might be the place for *the articulation of ideas*. "The articulation of ideas and not their rhetoric, because articulation implies organic structure, if the term is not too euphuistic, it implies life

experience: as some ideas fall inside ourselves, how we express them and how we build them up not as if they were a distant and strange object, but as a possibility for us to exist"<sup>5</sup>.

Without fear to make a mistake, we could say that human action bears the stamp of individual's cultural DNA. Therefore, we have to note that "for as long as, in the *input* process there takes place something different from what occurs in the space from where the instrument has been borrowed, we cannot expect to get in the *output* the same result as in the space of reference"<sup>6</sup>.

In the *input* of the human action we could mention:

- The educational-instructive system, the one which creates the theoretical aspects and the practical skills necessary to the specific management of the reference space;
- The predominant religious background, the one which secures the dominant attitude regarding the management process, in the relationship leader-subject;
- The specific juridical system which indicates the rational and traditional limitations referring to rightfulness of the relationship leader-subject in the way the social sector functions;
- The management traditions and the attitude towards work;
- The numerical dimension of the population which makes sense to development, as far as the quantitative criteria are perceived as accumulations which lead to qualitative leaps.

This seems to be the profound meaning of Constantin Noica's words: "Only in the words of your own language you may remember things you have never learnt. Each word means oblivion and in almost each word there are buried meanings you don't know of. But, if in any word there is some oblivion, this is our oblivion and it becomes our own remembrance. And this is the act of culture: to learn what is new as if it comes out of yourself."

The studies of comparative management<sup>7</sup> present the aspects which may generate more productivity, more efficiency inside the correspondent entities or to present and explain the strong or weak points of the partner involved in the comparison. Nevertheless, it may be not only a comparison, but simply an approach to

understand the behavior of your relationship partner. Sometimes, some aspects characteristic to the behavior of the specific management may not have an equivalent in our own culture or civilization. More than that, there is some amount of ineffable, specific to the cultural space under discussion and to the civilization to which it belongs, which cannot be penetrated unless you act from the inside. We speak about an "interior with barriers which can and are willing to be surpassed, but, which do not always wish and allow changes on this theme"<sup>8</sup>. A real danger to the management of various domains seems to be that of *the anarchy of the white collars!*<sup>9</sup> (this phrase refers to some instruments of management made by some clerks and managers, which do not match their specific scientific determinations, break the principles of a scientific management and result in disturbing effects, harmful to their own systems or to those of the people with whom they interconnect).

Going beyond the studies of comparative management, we will note, that, even when the same result of the human action is obtained, there are deeper determinations, determinations linked to different manners of working. A material or non material product, as well as services are "processed" differently in Japan in comparison with Romania, Russia, Brazil, China or the USA. We deal with the implication of a person placed on the same level, but belonging to a different type of general, professional and organizational culture.

The social background on which it is placed is different as far as the attitude and evaluation of behavior regarding the proposed activity are concerned. It is supported and placed on different mentalities which do not change by applying some imported instruments of management. It is to be understood, that there are differences among the approaches in the community inside the same borders. Fukuyama's assertion supports this: "Although the consciousness of the Black and White population is not separated from a historical temporal point of view, they are separated by the horizon of the culture and experience in which they have grown up and between which there is a minimum communication."<sup>10</sup> Therefore, "it is the culture which individualizes, gives identity and value to



the human being. It places him on a hierarchical system and gives him the feeling of belonging to a group made up by assuming certain value principles"<sup>11</sup>.

We have to make the connection between the things presented so far with the term of acculturation. The totality of transformations taking place in a social group (regarding the way of working and thinking, of behaving and judging etc.) as a result of a permanent contact with another larger social group may lead to a gradual dilution of its own cultural personality, to inestimable losses and to real identity crises. More than that, the result of the human action does not match the intentions declared on the occasion of assuming the value panel. This result does not answer the requirements of the national cultural fundamentals, it is focused on form, which may rather abandon commitments than fulfil them.

### Conclusion

Managerial actions (including those with cultural components), of the type active on the level of communication (*false friends, tradutore traditore, the anarchy of the white collars etc*), those which wrongly use instruments of management, scientific, artistic papers or communications of a different nature decrease the efficiency of the human activity and are harmful to the social structure. Both in the resultant *Babel Tower* and in those described in papers oriented towards acculturacy, these things act as a real *quinta columna* and give in a cumulative way a resultant of the type non kinetic operation upon the nation under discussion. In this way, the human action is compromised on all levels; at best, it leads to waste of energy, to fail the social objectives and to severe consequences for the nation in the long run.

The only solution could be only the cultural one. Such an approach does not mean to go back to the old purists, but to have a pertinent approach, based on the traditional archetypes, included in the modern "technologies" of the cultural practices and in a communication based on the national spirit.

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## Glossary

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- *the anarchy of the white collars*: a phrase referring to the instruments of management made by clerks and managers, which do not match the specific scientific determination, break the principles of a scientific management and result in bad effects harmful to their own systems or to those with which they interact.
- *quinta columna*: a notion promoted by the Spanish general Emilio Mola Vidal, who led the nationalistic army in the time of the civil war (1936-1939). Heading towards Madrid, he addressed the population of the capital of Spain by radio, announcing that beside the four military *columna* which he had, there was another one in Madrid, which at the right moment would attack from behind. The “quinta columna” created panic, making sabotages, diversions, espionage. (Significance – spy, traitor, terrorist, saboteur, agent provocateur, agent of influence.
- *non kinetic operation*: full-sized military operation, which is carried out together with other means that differ from those which imply the use of physical attack on the opponent.