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Editorial

Ioan-Gheorghe Rotaru

Professor PhD. Dr. Habil. 'Timotheus' Brethren
Theological Institute of Bucharest, Romania
dr_ionicarotaru@yahoo.com

People are characterized by rationality, and rationality assumes the ability to think. Thinking has two sides, one informational, which reveals the content of thinking, and another operational, which reveals the functionality of thinking, the fact that it involves the transformation of information in order to acquire new knowledge or to solve problems. It is worth noting that human thinking is not uniform, but it depends on the education received in the family, in school or even through one's own efforts. Some people think that to think critically means to be grumpy, opportunistic, to reject the ideas of others just for your own ideas to be imposed. Obviously, as human beings, this ability to think is extremely important because human life is much more complex than the life of any other creature, and because of this man needs a system of thinking to help him navigate through the complexity of life, and this help comes from critical thinking, which has precisely this role.

As human beings, it is not enough just to reason about the fact that you exist, that you eat, that you have certain needs that must be met, but you need more than that. It is not enough to have certain knowledge in a certain field, but it is necessary for that knowledge to be transposed into everyday life, this being a skill that every human being needs, because the whole quality of our life depends on the quality of thinking, and critical thinking is about that, the ability to be able to understand the range of information that one is approached with every day, to be able to draw the right conclusions and to be able to analyze which information is valuable and which is not, to be able to perceive what is the motivation behind some things that happen to us and then all these conclusions that are drawn to be able to be applied in everyday life in such a way that tomorrow's life is better than today's. Critical thinking is what challenges you to research, to ask questions, to document yourself, to find alternatives. In some societies, functional illiteracy is discussed, and the role of critical thinking is precisely to overcome purely existential situations, not to be concerned only with going to work and then home, but in a world of information it is necessary

to analyze, to think about being able to discover what false information is, what true information is worth listening to and applying in life.

Critical thinking is an ability that is acquired through exercise, we, as people, being rational beings but also emotional beings its possible that certain decisions are made only in terms of an emotional situation. It is not wise for important life decisions to be made in moments of anger, rage, frustration, just as it is just as dangerous to make important life decisions only when everything is fine, when everything is rosy or better than it should be, while a man who develops rational thinking is a man who learns to effectively subject emotions to rational thinking, having a judgment as objective and clear as possible. Certain situations need to be managed very quickly, there may be an opportunity in life, you may be in traffic behind the wheel, situations that require very fast thinking at the moment, and without it you may miss an opportunity or end up in a dangerous situation. In life there are situations that require a faster or slower, more settled thinking (when it comes to career orientation, marriage, investment, choosing a job, etc.), and the big challenge is to know when to use one or the other, because if they are confused the results can be disastrous. In life it is very important to learn to think critically, objectively, because otherwise you can end up in the situation of being a victim of your whole life, of your whole society, always falling behind, with the frustration of finding that inappropriate and unwanted things always happen to you, because all our decisions are related to a certain type of thinking that we use, and the quality of life is related to the quality of thinking. In order for us people to have a quality life, we must be very good, or as good as possible in some essential moments of life when certain decisive decisions have to be made.

One of the fundamental elements of our life is precisely the philosophy of life, which like the wind, which pushes the waves, leads some in the desired direction, while others may suffer. It is very important that in a world like ours, which bombards you with information, you manage to know where to get your correct information, and of great value is the fact not only to have, to accumulate information, but to know how to use it. Critical thinking is a clear and free thinking, which developed allows us to prove that we have the ability to identify, to understand, to make logical connections, to detect certain errors of reasoning in arguments and presentations, to solve problems with high degree of difficulty, to identify the context and implications of an argument or idea, to identify and construct and understand the justifications behind opinions, arguments or beliefs, to construct new arguments and ideas based on those accumulated, to help you to always be a better version of yourself.

A Combined Model of Ecological Systems Theory and Social Learning Theory to Understand the Acquisition of Intimate Partner Violence

Xiaomin Sheng

University of Huddersfield, the UK
Xiaomin.sheng@hud.ac.uk

ABSTRACT: Intimate partner violence (IPV for short), like other aggressive and abusive behaviors, is acquired from observing, interacting with, and engaging in a social environment. Once this violent behavior is learned, it will persistently resort as a way to resolve interpersonal issues during the life trajectories of an individual. Therefore, in order to prevent IPV from being acquired from the risky social environment, it is necessary to look at the trigger factors that can lead an individual into perpetuating or accepting IPV within the context he or she is growing up. To do so, Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (EST) will provide an examination of how an individual's complex inter-relationships within the five layers' environmental systems (micro-, meso-, exo-, macro-, and chronosystems) can result in his or her tendency to form IPV behaviors. Similar to Bronfenbrenner's EST, Aker's social learning theory (SLT) also argues that an individual's interactions with others provide the context in which the IPV learning process occurs. While different from Bronfenbrenner's EST, Aker's SLT exposes an individual's cognitive learning process that either favor or against an observed behavior and whether or not to imitate it. Therefore, this paper attempts to combine Bronfenbrenner's EST and Aker's SLT to provide a theoretical model from which the knowledge in the field of IPV is constructed and to establish a theoretical explanation of an individual's IPV behaviors acquisition.

KEY WORDS: Intimate partner violence, ecological theory, social learning theory, theoretical framework

1. Introduction

Intimate partner violence (IPV for short), like other aggressive and abusive behaviors, is acquired from observing, interacting with, and engaging in the social environment (Burton 2007; Simons, Lin, & Gordon 1998; Ward 2007). Once this violent behavior is learned, it will persistently resort as a way to resolve interpersonal issues during the life trajectories of an individual (Simons et al. 1998). Besides, all aggressive and violent behaviors are commonly correlated, involving in one form of abusive acts associate with individuals' participation in other violence-related activities (Simons et al., 1998). Individuals who witness or are involved in IPV activities not only increase their likelihood of being IPV victims or perpetrators but also their involvement in bullying or becoming bullying victims (Bauer et al., 2006). Therefore, in order to promote awareness and mitigate the risk of IPV being acquired from the risky social environment, it is necessary to look at the trigger factors that can lead an individual into IPV victimization or perpetration within the context he or she is growing up. Bronfenbrenner's EST provides an examination of how an individual's complex inter-relationships within the five layers' environmental systems can result in his or her tendency to form IPV behaviors (Hong & Espelage 2012; Lee 2011; Pittenger, Huit, & Hansen 2016). Similar to Bronfenbrenner's EST, Aker's SLT also argues that an individual's interactions with others provide the context in which the IPV learning process occurs. While different from Bronfenbrenner's EST, Aker's SLT exposes an individual's cognitive learning process that either favor or against an observed behavior and whether or not to imitate it. When an observed behavior is rewarded over punished, the individual is more inclined to model it. On the contrary, if an observed behavior is punished instead of being rewarded, the individual tends to be more against it (Akers & Jennings 2015; Cochran, Maskaly, Jones, & Sellers 2017).

Combining Bronfenbrenner's EST and Aker's SLT, this paper attempts to provide the theoretical foundation from which the knowledge in the field of IPV is constructed in this study. Additionally, to establish an explanation of an individual's IPV behaviors acquisition using Bronfenbrenner's EST by five layers and Aker's SLT through four dimensions. Finally, to unify both theories into a coherent analysis. It is believed that such integration will provide the theoretical scaffold to the critical propositions of IPV behavior learning and illustrate the learning process regarding IPV abuse.

2. Bronfenbrenner's EST

The EST was articulated to understand the lifelong course of human development by Bronfenbrenner as an approach to fully account for all impacts the entire ecological systems have on human growth (Bronfenbrenner 1979b, 1994). Unlike previous theories of human development, which account individual and environment separately for development, Bronfenbrenner proposed that the external influences on the environment even that with which an individual is not able to interact directly, can have just as great effects on individuals' life trajectory (Bronfenbrenner 1994; Pittenger et al. 2016). To investigating all influences the environment both immediate and more remote may have on the developing individual (Bronfenbrenner 1979b, 1994), Bronfenbrenner's theory build up the systematic paradigms which provide a framework for researchers to conduct investigations across diverse disciplines (Bronfenbrenner 1994).

Since the outset of the ecological systems theory in the 1970s, it has been applied to explain the complexities in many situations. For example, Bronfenbrenner's model has been widely disseminated to explore the influence that external environments have on the function of families, childhood development and child maltreatment (Belsky 1980, 1993; Bronfenbrenner 1979a, 1986, 2011; Cicchetti, Toth, & Maughan 2000; Eamon 2001; Grzywacz & Marks 2000; Spencer 2008); many studies have also employed the ecological approach in the context of bullying and aggression (Craig & Pepler 1998; Espelage 2014; Hong & Espelage 2012; Lee 2011; Swearer & Doll 2001). There are a substantial number of studies have

discussed about adolescent development through an ecological perspective (Feldman & Matjasko 2005; Leonard 2011; Lerner & Galambos 1998) and some are relevant to adolescents' problematic behaviors such as drug use and shooting (Brooks-Gunn, Duncan, Klebanov, & Sealand 1993; Duerden & Witt 2010; Espelage 2014; Hong, Cho, & Lee 2010; Lerner, Almerigi, Theokas, & Lerner 2005; Liddle 1999). However, a number of studies have adopted ecological perceptions to understand IPV based behaviors such as sexual abuse (Kotchick, Shaffer, Miller, & Forehand 2001; Miller 2014; Pittenger et al. 2016; Small & Luster 1994), but when it comes to the field of IPV education among young people, the number is scarce.

Although this research does not focus on identifying IPV victims and perpetrators, on passing the IPV-related knowledge among young people, it is beneficial to gain a thorough understanding of what accounts for the IPV behaviors. To fully explore IPV phenomenon, Bronfenbrenner's EST can further enhance our understanding of how the influences of the entire ecological system, along with the individuals' functions within it, can lead to the risk of being IPV victims and perpetrators.

For the purpose of substantiating the IPV phenomenon, IPV should be considered from an ecological perspective, as it enables researchers to examine the multiple interconnections between and within ecological layers that impact the students at the risk of being IPV victims or perpetrators. IPV behaviors acquisition can be better understood when it is considered from the interrelated five layers of ecological frameworks as microsystems, mesosystems, exosystems, macrosystems and chronosystems (Bronfenbrenner 1979b, 1994). The following part examines the multiple causes of IPV victims and perpetrators in the complex social environment within Bronfenbrenner's model.

2.1. Microsystems

Microsystems represent the surroundings with which the developing individual immediately and directly interact, generally in face to face settings, which are made up of structures such as family, peer group and school (Bronfenbrenner 1979b, 1994; Miller 2014). This section presents a microsystem level analysis of the risk factors that can lead an individual in learning IPV behaviors.

2.1.1. Individual's characteristics

At the individual level, an individual's characteristics such as age, gender and self-regulation are examined in this study as predictors of IPV, with the choice of each now justified in turn. As for age, a substantial number of studies indicate that adolescents, especially the age range from 16 to 24 are regarded as the riskiest life stage for suffering IPV (Cornelius & Resseguie, 2007; Cui, Ueno, Gordon, & Fincham 2013; Humphrey & White 2000; Smith, White, & Holland, 2003; Ybarra & Thompson, 2018). As for gender, the majority of studies focus on girls' victimizations and boys' perpetrations (Amar & Gennaro, 2005; Humphrey & White 2000; Shen, Chiu, & Gao 2012; Smith et al. 2003; WHO 2012, 2013), while a few studies indicate that girls who have obtained the belief of female chauvinism can also resort to IPV against boys (Cui et al. 2013). As for self-regulation, an individual's sexual experience frequency, use of substances, and psychological functioning are significant risk factors brought by self-regulatory failure in IPV (Connolly, Pepler, Craig, & Taradash 2000; Devries et al. 2014; Fineran & Bolen 2006). Self-regulatory failure in IPV can be aroused by personal traits and genetic potentials such as hedonistic tendency, aggressive or volatile personality, and depression or suicide susceptibility (Darling 2007a; Espelage 2014; Lee 2011; Spencer, Dupree, & Hartmann 1997).

2.1.2. Family, peer group and school

In the context of the family-based relationship, it is widely disseminated literature on IPV that adolescents whose parents are violent against each other and who suffer maltreatment from parents are more likely to go through violence in their own intimate relationships (Arriaga & Foshee 2004; Moylan et al. 2010). On the other hand, adolescents who have experience dating violence tend to increase the odds of domestic violence when they have a marital relationship (Cui et al. 2013; Humphrey & White 2000; Smith et al. 2003). Moreover, parental monitoring is proposed in a few studies as a positive protective predictor to avoid IPV victimizations and perpetrations for youth development. In other words, parents' supervision is a key element for IPV prevention (Darling 2007a; Espelage 2014). Compared with the impact of family relationships, much less literature has focused on the effects of friends'

IPV in shaping peers' dating violence (Arriaga & Foshee 2004). Young people who have friends with a history of IPV are more likely to get involved in IPV activities, the influence of friends' IPV behaviors can be more powerful than the impact from domestic violence (Arriaga & Foshee 2004). Similar to peers' IPV, additional studies are needed to examine school as an influential factor in predicting IPV attitudes and behaviors. The school environment is related to IPV prevention in the aspect that a negative school environment may increase the occurrence of IPV victims and perpetrators. Moreover, a negative school environment may decrease students' connectedness with the school which may account for more students' involvement in unhealthy behaviors as IPV and may cause students' failure in academic life (Holt, Finkelhor, & Kantor 2007; Silverman, Raj, Mucci, & Hathaway 2001).

2.2. *Mesosystems*

Mesosystems encompass interactions taking place between two or more previously mentioned microsystems, with which the developing individual interacts directly (Bronfenbrenner 1979b, 1994). Studies indicate that schools' engagement is regarded as one of the best approaches to value students' relationships and discourage any kind of violence (WHO 2012). To get schools involved in IPV prevention, IPV-related curriculum into school can be developed in such a way to promote awareness of IPV and in an attempt to mitigate the risk of IPV (Cornelius & Resseguie 2007). For example, students who obtain the knowledge of IPV from school can affect their attitude and behavior to deal with IPV in peer group, family and future relationships. In IPV-related literature, most school-based prevention programs have been put into practice in the US such as the Dating Violence Prevention Programs (DVIP) and the Safe Date Project (Barter 2009; Cornelius & Resseguie 2007; Foshee et al. 2004).

2.3. *Exosystems*

Exosystems consist of interactions taking place between two or more systems, at least one with which the developing individual has no direct connections (Bronfenbrenner 1994; Miller 2014), for example, parents' relationship with children's school or children's relationship with parents' workplace

(Bronfenbrenner 1994). This section presents an exosystematic level analysis of how the effects of policy have on the school's curriculum, which can indirectly impact students' IPV attitude and behavior. In English schools, IPV education suits best into the curriculum of Personal, Social, Healthy and Economic (PSHE) education. PSHE starts to include sex and relationship education (SRE) due to the report of Social Exclusion Unit in 1999 that indicates the UK has the highest rate of teenage pregnancy among countries in Europe (DfEE, 2000). The SRE guidance (2000) focuses on lower the rate of teenage pregnancy, but it neglects the situation that most teenage mothers are from the disadvantaged background and their vulnerabilities can increase their risk of suffering IPV according to the research report of the NSPCC on teenage mothers (Barter, McCarry, Berridge, & Evans 2009; Wood & Barter 2015). While this starts to change since 2018, the Department for Education (DfE) has published the draft of Relationship Education, SRE and Health Education Guidance (2019) for consultation to replace the SRE guidance (2000). In the draft version of Relationship Education, SRE and Health Education Guidance (2019), general forms of IPV, cyber or sext violence, healthy and safe relationships have been added and advised to be taught in all schools including maintained, non-maintained or independent schools (DfE 2018). Therefore, it is expected that the UK students will receive education regarding IPV from a compulsory curriculum.

2.4. Macrosystems

Macrosystems present the cultural factors that permeate micro-, meso- and exosystems, with reference to the developing individual's knowledge, worldview and custom (Bronfenbrenner 1994). At the macrosystems level, social norms and beliefs related to gender inequality and stereotypes are the deep-rooted factors of an individual's IPV behavior learning (Heise 2011; Parkes, Heslop, Ross, Westerveld, & Unterhalter 2016). Since social norms and beliefs are shared expectations of a particular group of people regarding how individuals should behave, therefore, if the country holds the beliefs such as male honour, female obedience and tolerance of violence as a way to resolve conflicts, individuals from the group are more likely to suffer IPV (Heise 2011). According to the WHO multi-country study mentioned in

Heise (2011, p. 13), women who had the attitudes supportive of wife-beating had increased odds of IPV in 13 out of 15 countries. In addition, over 35 population-based studies from Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East have demonstrated that attitude condoning partner violence on the part of both women and men are highly predictive of IPV perpetration.

2.5. Chronosystems

Chronosystems refer to the dimension of time that comprises the consistency or change relate to an individuals' development covering lifelong course (Bronfenbrenner 1994). Studies indicate that individuals who have experienced IPV can result in negative outcomes in later life such as post-traumatic disorder, lower self-esteem, increased sexual experience and academic failures (Amar & Gennaro 2005). Moreover, engaging in the initial IPV perpetration and victimisation at an early stage of life are more likely to get involved with IPV issues again in adulthood. IPV in adolescents have close associations with IPV in a married relationship, which can lead to domestic violence at home such as parent-child violence, children's violent tendency (Cornelius & Resseguie 2007; Cui et al. 2013; Humphrey & White 2000; Ybarra & Thompson 2018).

By using Bronfenbrenner's EST, this research systematically analysed the causes of IPV victims and perpetrators in conjunction with environmental factors from the immediate environment system to more remote systems.

Bronfenbrenner's EST provides us with a systematic analysis of how various factors from the five layers' ecological environment shape the developing individual within it, however, there is a limitation of Bronfenbrenner's theory in explaining how the developing individual at the center reacts and responds to the shaping environment (Bronfenbrenner, 1994; Darling, 2007b). As Darling (2007b, 204) suggested that "*different environments will have different affordances and will be responded to in different ways by different individuals...*". Therefore, in order to complementary Bronfenbrenner EST, Akers' SLT as one of the most influential theory on crime and deviance, adopted by this study to gain a better understanding of how the developing individuals' cognitive system react to the environment in shaping their IPV behaviors.

3. Aker's SLT

Aker's SLT, one of the predominant theories of analyzing deviant behavior learning, has been applied successfully to a wide range of studies (Cochran et al. 2017). In a substantial number of studies, Aker's four core theoretical constructs as differential associations, definitions, imitations and differential reinforcements have been fully operationalized and examined (Akers 1973; Akers & Jennings 2015; Akers & Jensen 2006; Akers, Krohn, Lanza-Kaduce, & Radosevich 1979; Akers & Lee 1996; Bell & Naugle 2008). This research is trying to obtain a conceptual understanding of IPV with the support of Aker's model, the following section discusses the acquisition of IPV behaviors through these four elements as differential associations, definitions, differential reinforcements and imitations.

3.1. *Differential association*

Similar to the ecological perspective, Aker's social learning theory agrees that deviant behavior e.g. IPV behavior, is learned from differential IPV-related associations. According to Aker's theory, these differential associations are supposed to provide the contexts in which the process of IPV behaviors learning happens (Akers 1973, 2017; Akers & Jennings 2015; Bell & Naugle 2008). These associations are differential in the priority, frequency, duration and intensity. Here, priority means in which life stage IPV occurs; frequency can be understood as how often the violence abuse happens; duration is defined as how long the harassment lasts; and intensity relates to the extent of intimacy between the perpetrator and the victim (Cochran et al. 2017). To some extent, the concept of differential associations proposed in Aker's theory is in accordance with Bronfenbrenner's theory. In Aker's social learning theory, differential associations can refer to families, schools, neighbors, churches, legal boards or social media (Akers & Jennings 2015), which covers five layers in Bronfenbrenner's model. However, Bronfenbrenner is in the field of developmental psychology whereas Aker is in the field of criminology. This means that Bronfenbrenner's associations in his ecological perceptions focus on individuals' relationships within communities and the wider society whereas Aker's associations in his social learning theory emphasizes the impacts society

has on learning criminal and deviant behavior. In this research, both concepts are employed to conceptualize the process of IPV acquisition.

3.2. Definitions

Aker indicates that based on these differential associations, an individual usually forms a definition towards a behavior or a situation as approval, disapproval and in between (Akers & Jennings 2015). These definitions consist of SLT concerning an individual's own value, attitude and orientation attached to deviant behaviors as well as conforming behaviors (Akers & Jennings 2015; Cochran et al. 2017). In other words, the more an individual's definition is favorable to deviant behavior, the more likely he or she is to conform that act (Cochran et al. 2017). In addition, natural moral stance and weakly held moral convictions are also proposed as factors to trigger criminal behaviors (Sellers, Cochran, & Branch 2005). Applying this principle to explore IPV, it is likely that intimate partners perform a violent act when he or she considers it as approved, weakly approved, weakly disapproved or neutral. Therefore, altering the individual's definitions towards IPV, from approved, weakly approved, weakly disapproved or neutral to mostly disapproved or disapproved, can be used as a measure to promote the awareness of IPV (Akers & Jennings 2015; Cochran et al. 2017; Sellers et al. 2005).

3.3. Differential reinforcements

Apart from definitions, Aker also proposes that these differential associations are the primary sources for differential reinforcements (Akers & Jennings 2015; Cochran et al. 2017). Differential reinforcements refer to the net balance of observed, participated, or predicted costs and rewards relating to a particular behavior (Akers & Jensen 2006; Cochran et al. 2017; Sellers et al., 2005). In other words, a behavior is more likely to be strengthened when it is observed, participated, or predicted with positive reinforcement over negative reinforcement; while the behavior is more likely to be weakened when it receives more positive punishment than negative punishment (Cochran et al. 2017). Adopting this concept to IPV, the intimate partners who are more inclined to be violent against or towards their partners are those who believe the consequences of IPV behaviors are more reward than cost. Such rewards

might be the way of solving a contradiction or the feeling of having dominant power over another person. Thus, to discourage positive reinforcements and encourage positive punishments in IPV, knowledge about the potential costs of being an IPV perpetrator and risks of being IPV victims should be transmitted to students.

3.4. Imitations

As for imitation, this element refers to an individual's engagement in modelling a behavior which is observed from another (Akers & Jennings 2015; Sellers et al. 2005). The individual observes the consequences of behaviors from an admired role model, extract the general strategies and tactics of the behaviors in an attempt to receive similar rewards (Akers & Jennings 2015). Imitation plays an important part in establishing a novel pattern of behavior (Cochran et al. 2017). Therefore, when an individual observes violence against someone and the act is not punished, the individual may imitate that certain behavior. So, to prevent imitation from IPV behaviors, conflict resolutions and positive examples should be given to students as to mitigate the risk of modelling IPV behaviors.

In summary, Aker's SLT proposes that deviant behavior is primarily learned from a pattern of priority, frequency, duration and intensity interactions (differential associations) where the judgements as positive, negative or neutral towards the rightness of that deviant behavior are formed (definitions). When that deviant behavior is observed, participated or predicted to be rewarded or punished (differential reinforcements), it can alter the attitude (definitions) towards certain behaviors and be served as a role model to be followed (imitations). In addition, the deviant behavior as a product of differential associations, imitations, definitions and different reinforcements also can become differential associations for others (Akers 2017; Akers & Jennings 2015; Akers & Jensen 2006; Cochran et al. 2017; Sellers et al. 2005).

4. A Combine EST with SLT

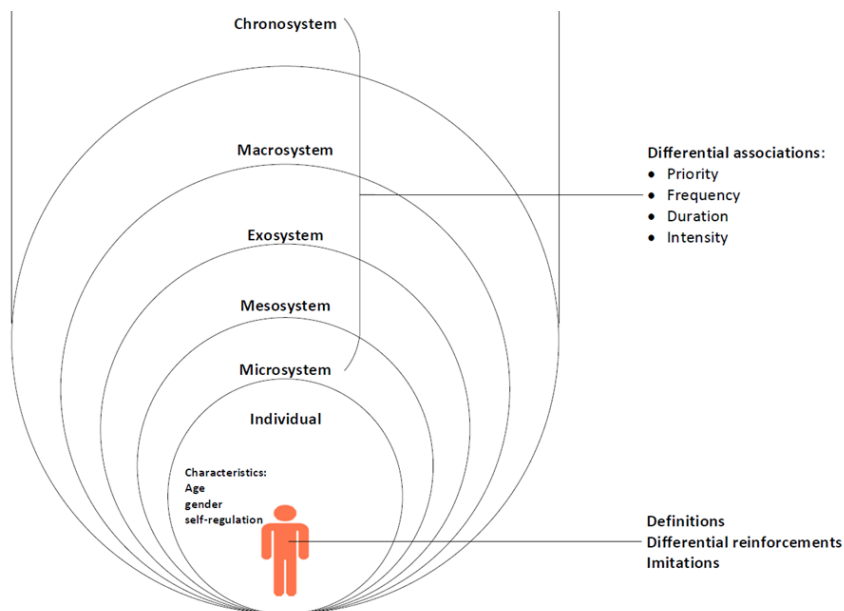
As discussed above, Bronfenbrenner's EST posits multi-layered ecological systems with which the developing individual at the center interacts

directly or indirectly. Within this model, various direct and indirect influential factors on the acquisition of deviant behaviors can be considered comprehensively. However, not all the influential factors in the systems have the same strength on one's behavior learning, the strength may reduce from immediate environment system e.g., microsystems to more remote systems e.g., exosystems and macrosystems. For example, peers, families and schools in microsystems have stronger effects on one's behavior learning than communities, legal system and safeguarding board in the exosystems. Similar to Bronfenbrenner's EST, Aker's SLT also proposes the intensity of differential associations relating to the extent of intimacy between the perpetrator and the victim. Besides intensity, Aker's SLT provides an analysis of differential associations through three other aspects as priority, frequency and duration, which can work as a complementary to further explore the effects an observed behavior has on an individual's IPV learning.

Moreover, to know the process of IPV behaviors acquisition, this research has to consider the joint effects of an individual's stimulus-response mechanism with the complex environment. Therefore, to acquire a comprehensive understanding of IPV learning, Aker's SLT as the dominant theoretical perspectives in crime and deviant behavior is helpful here (Ennett et al. 2008).

Aker's SLT is dominant in the field of criminology and Bronfenbrenner's EST is prominent in the area of developmental psychology, but overlapping concepts exist between the two theories. Although Bronfenbrenner's theory focuses more on a systematic analysis of the environment, Aker's theory put more emphasis on an individuals' cognitive systematic process of deviant behavior learning, both of the theories associated with the impact of society on an individual. Bronfenbrenner's model provides an analysis of individuals' characteristics e.g., age and gender, impact their reactions to the entire social ecological systems. On the other hand, Aker's four elements can complementary Bronfenbrenner's EST as they can explain how the developing individual at the center responds to the outside shaping environment (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. A combined model of EST and SLT on IPV



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Legal Rules in Ancient Rome between Law, Morality and Religion

Marilena Marin, Assoc. Prof. PhD

Faculty of Law and Administrative Sciences,
Ovidius University of Constanța, Constanța, Romania
marilenamarin@yahoo.com

Mădălina Botină, Assoc. Prof. PhD

Faculty of Law and Administrative Sciences,
Ovidius University of Constanța, Constanța, Romania
madalinabotina@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT: We chose as a research topic for our study one of the most important components of society and the legal order: the “norm” and we propose an interdisciplinary analysis. For this reason, we stopped at the analysis of the legal norm in the period of ancient Rome and at the connection between jus (law), lex (law, legal norm), mos (custom, morality, morav) and fas (religious norm). The structure of our paper begins with the presentation of the meaning of legal norms in Roman law, the elements of the legal norm, their significance, and the effects that a legal norm (written or unwritten) produced in the ancient Roman world. Then we continued to analyze the classification of law (jus) and the connection between ius / jus and justice, respectively, the connection between law and justice, finding that the Romans never separated the right from morality, from what they considered to be just. Continuing the idea of the norm, our paper analyzes the oldest source of law, the custom (consuetudo or mos maiorum - the custom of the ancestors). During the Empire, more precisely, during the Principality (classical era), the custom or custom appears as the will of the people, which was considered to come from the gods. In terms of these perceptions, the rules were designated by the term fas, which meant the relationship between man and divinity, but also what people could do or what was forbidden by the supreme will of Jupiter (jus).

KEY WORDS: law, legal norm, custom

Introduction

The Roman legal system is known as one of the most complex legal systems of all time. Roman law has demonstrated its viability by taking over rules, institutions, and legal procedures by the major legal systems. One of the sources of the Roman legal system was the law.

Roman law did not remain only a document of history, like other legislations of antiquity, but it exceeded, in terms of form, the limits of the society that created it. Basically, Roman law plays in history the role of a true “legal alphabet”, the Roman legal concepts giving concrete expression to the most varied and subtle rules of law.

The Romans overcame before other ancient peoples the uncertainty between the two types of norms, delimiting and terminologically the right to religion. The legal norms were designated by the term “*ius / jus*”, and the religious ones by the term “*fas*”.

To talk about the connection between the legal, moral, and religious norms, we recall that, from the perspective of Roman law, there was an undeniable difference between the notions of *lex* and *jus/ius*. Thus, the will of the legislator was designated by the term *lex*, which is not to be confused with the will of the parties at the conclusion of a civil legal act. In the latter case, the will of the parties was censored by law/*lex* and by the social status of the contracting parties who were allowed or not to conclude certain legal acts (for example, we can speak, in this sense, about: natural law/*ius naturale*, gentile law/*ius gentium* or civil law/*civil law*).

We start from the idea that, before the legal norm, there was the social norm which, following the evolution of society, was imposed as a rule that ordered societies. Therefore, when we use the term “norm” we think of the rule, be it legal, moral or otherwise. The legal norm was seen as the foundation of law, which established the model of behavior and the requirements of society towards the conduct of its members in social relations.

When the Western world was covered by a wave of ignorance and primitivism, a people rose to rule this land. Overall, Roman law is the fundamental nucleus on which the legal system was built. So, it turns out that that radius of the set of norms and principles of Roman law has exerted a major influence on the legal system, as its twilight still illuminates the world today.

The relation legal norm - sacred / religious norm

We would like to mention that, in the beginning, the Romans did not make that distinction between legal norms, religious norms and moral norms. It follows that the ancient peoples did not have specific criteria for distinguishing.

Roman society was deeply marked by the religious element and strongly impregnated with morality, the process creating favorable premises for a discrepancy between law (*jus*), divine (*fas*) and moral norms (*mos, mora*). The Romans often confused the notion of religion with that of morality or of law with that of morality. In general, morality represents the set of norms of coexistence, of people's behavior with each other and towards the community and whose violation is not sanctioned by law, but by public opinion.

Moreover, the history of canon law recalls how there was almost always a certain degree of interference of categories and procedures between church and secular law, interference that would have been more sensitive in terms of the influence of Roman law on canon law. This limitation is based on the fact that religious norms primarily support aspects of morality and less of law (Rotaru 2014, 51-86).

Regarding the relationship between the legal norm and the religious norm, nowadays, the two types of norms are usually included in collections of specific laws (of legal or religious nature, as the case may be. In both types of norms, it finds its place "Morality", which intervenes as a balance in perfecting the form of a norm and its correct applicability.

Going back in time to ancient Rome, we can see that the relationship between the legal norm and the religious norm was very close, in the sense that sometimes this confusion was confused, especially by those who elaborated the norm, but in some periods the confusion was intentionally made by those who applied the rules. Using the idea that the norm (whether legal or religious) was transmitted by the gods only to certain persons, the Roman aristocracy (patrician) applied the rules according to its own interest.

An example in this sense is the matter of the right of property, which knew regulations associated with sacrifices that were meant to capture the goodwill or blessing of some deities (Rotaru 2020, 154-160).

Another example is the trial procedure that used magic-religious formulas or the trial with jurors (people who swore invoking deities), in order to establish whose side the truth is in the dispute that had to be resolved by the magistrate or judge, as appropriate - this example can be found in later epochs, but in other forms; to this day, when certain participants in the process (witnesses, experts) have to take an oath before taking statements or receiving their specialized opinion.

The structure of the legal norm in ancient Rome

In Roman law, the legal norm was composed of three elements, namely:

- ♦ *praescriptio* (disposition), which contained the name of the magistrate who proposed the law, the place and date of voting, the order in which it was voted, other aspects related to the introductory aspects of the respective law;

- ♦ *rogatio* (proposal), which contained the actual text of the law;

- ♦ *sanctio* (sanction), which contained the effects / consequences that could occur as a result of non-compliance with the provisions of the law. Sometimes, we encounter the expression “sanction of the law” when we refer to the interventions of Romanian jurists who interpreted the legal provisions and made annotations on the texts of the law.

Making a comparison between the legal norm in Roman law and the legal norm nowadays, we find that the latter also includes three elements, respectively:

- the hypothesis, which represents the factual situation to be regulated by the legislator;

- the provision, being the legal regulation itself;

- the sanction, respectively, the punishment provided by law and which can be applied to the one who violates the provision of the law.

Among these three elements, we encounter the text of the law (legal provision) and punishment in both types of norm and we also encounter the intervention of morality that is the basis of legal regulation, as well as the basis of sanction. The fact that the regulation or punishment characterized the society in which they appeared and applied is undisputed (Covalschi 2013, 38).

The golden law of the Roman world, the law of the XII Tables

In principle, it is claimed that legal ties between people were preceded by religious ties. The religious oath was the means used to keep a promise (Radu 2008,5). The most important law of Roman law was the Law of the Twelve Tables, known as the symbol of Roman spirituality. According to the historian Titus Livius, this is the source of all public and private law. Next, we will briefly present its ethnogenesis and its connection with morality, as this term was perceived by the ancient Roman world.

At first, Roman justice was guided by a series of tribal rules, customs and old procedures, many of which were kept out of the sight of the common people. In 462 BC, Caius Terentilius Arsa requested the drafting of a collection of public laws that the councils were to observe in their legal work. Only in 450 BC., the senate agreed to draft the first written legal norms. Because the Romans had no experience in formulating and drafting such normative acts, they had the idea to send a delegation to Greece to bring children to Rome according to Solomon's laws and other Greek laws.

The Roman delegation no longer had to travel to Greece, they found models in the southern part of the Italian peninsula also called Magna Graecia. From the beginning, 10 magistrates called decemviri (consular decemviri imperio legibus scribundis) were elected and they had the power to write the first legal norms. Among them were only patricians (but could also be elected commoners), led by Caius Claudius Appius. For a year, the deceders wrote only 10 tables of laws, requiring the re-election of the commission.

One of the laws written by the new commission was the prohibition of marriage between patricians and commoners, „which is why Cicero described this clause as inhuman” (Beard 2016,133).

In the specific field of Roman law, according to an ancient tradition, the commission charged to draw up the Roman code of the Twelve Tables (451–450 BCE) traveled from Rome to Athens to study and analyze in depth the laws of Solon, and they actually incorporated some of those precepts. The conception of the law of nations (*ius gentium*) and the aedilician edict (“caveat emptor”), with important innovations in the law of sale, are also,

among other things, good examples of the influence of Greek law upon Roman law (Domingo 2017, 5).

“One of the fundamental principles of legal liability is that everyone is responsible for their own deed. By crime, the Romans understood any harmful deed, sanctioned by civil or praetorian law. The Romanians distinguished public crimes from private ones. Public crimes affected the interests of the community as a whole (desecration, murder, betrayal). Public crimes were punishable by corporal punishment, up to the death penalty. the disproportionate and uncontrolled repression caused by the crime. Thus it was decided that private revenge should be carried out with certain formalities and not to surpass the evil produced by crime (the law of retaliation). For that old and ancient period, the notion of responsibility did not exist in its modern sense, but meant the fixation in the person of a certain individual of the reaction produced by the committed fact. Private crimes were punishable by a fine - a sum of money fixed by custom or law. It is the monetary equivalent of forgiveness from the victim. Only the perpetrator paid the fine and not his successors. When the act was committed by several perpetrators, the victim had the right to prosecute all perpetrators and receive a fine separately from each. The victim’s right was extinguished by reconciliation. The actions arising from private crimes were: criminal; persecuting kings; mixed

During an evolution that spans millennia, illustrious Romanian lawyers have asserted themselves on the political arena and approached the topic of law. One of them was the famous jurist Consul Ulpian, in whose conception the principles of law are: „*iuris praecepta sunt haec: honeste vivere alterum non laedere, suum cuique tribuere*” (the principles of law are these: to live honorably, not to harm another, to give each one what is his), where we have presented principles related to both morality and law.

In the book „*Justinian’s Institutions*” we also find the definition of jurisprudence: „*iurisprudentia est divinarum atque humanarum rerum notitia, iusti atque iniusti scientia*” (right and wrong), being confused the definition of law with that of religion in the first part and with that of morality in the second part. Another famous classical jurist is Celsus who defined law as the science of what is good and fair (*ius est ars boni et aequi*), where we also see this confusion of the principles of law with those of morality (Pîrțac 2013, 22).

Conclusions

Following the comparative analysis of law, morality and religion, we distinguish both similarities and differences.

During Rome we have great differences between law, morality, and religion. If we refer to the similarities between law and morality, we notice that both tend to be rules that must be respected. The only difference, in our opinion, is that the legal norms are contraventions and the violations are punished according to the law, while the moral norms can be violated only by a sanction.

Roman law reached an unprecedented balance between justice and fairness, natural and civil justice, private and public interest, moral authority (*auctoritas*) and coercive power (*potestas*), judicial flexibility and legal certainty, grammar and intention, tradition and innovation, simplicity and scholarship, and abstraction and casuistry. Roman law constitutes a perennial model for the appropriate development of legal systems for all times, as well as a foundational pillar of emerging global law. Roman law offers a good example of how a legal system can be developed and modernized based on equitable ideas and principles. For these reasons, among others, Roman law still commands the respect and admiration of independent legal thinkers and practitioners of different legal traditions as a unique tradition of legal thought (Domingo 2017, 3).

In conclusion, if the legal norm is the basic cell of law, then it is easy to understand that they are particularly important for our society. Or, the social activity is carried out on the basis of some rules, and between people there are a multitude of relations of an extreme diversity which, in their totality, form the social life. If human activity does not affect the legitimate interests of another person, this activity is lawful, all other activities being illegal.

Roman law remains immortal being indestructibly implemented in the historical and rational structure of modern law because it gave rise to some principles and legal rules that allowed the creation of forms and structures political-legal that represents the matrix of many systems of private law existing today (Gidro, R., and Gidro, A. 2018, 7).

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Gender Gap in Digital Skills in Greece

Maria Perifanou

University of Macedonia, Thessaloniki, Greece
mariaperif@gmail.com

Anastasios A. Economides

University of Macedonia, Thessaloniki, Greece
economid@uom.gr

ABSTRACT: Inequalities between men and women exist not only in the economy and society but also in education all over the world. Many initiatives are launched to empower women with advanced skills in many countries. This paper describes the policies and initiatives to foster gender equality in Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)-related education and employment in Greece. National and European Union (EU) statistics show that there exists a wide gender gap in ICT-related higher education participation, employment, and salaries in Greece. Various policies and initiatives aim at empowering women with digital skills. The paper suggests a framework to fight gender discrimination in ICT across four (4) dimensions (ICT education & training, digital tools & infrastructure, people networking, ICT jobs) and three (3) levels (access, use & participate, create). The resulting framework consists of twelve (12) areas. The paper gives example strategies for some of the areas. Finally, the paper presents conclusions and suggestions for future research.

KEY WORDS: digital skills, digital competence, employment initiatives, equality policies, gender differences, gender gap, gender inequality, ICT skills, equality policies

Introduction

The proliferation of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in everyday life brought up the need to equip all people with digital skills. This is even more pronounced during the COVID-19 period since distance isolation dictates that most activities (e.g., communication, shopping, education, work) should be done from a distance using computers and the Internet. However, in most countries there are gender inequalities in using ICT across all sectors of society. Countries have taken actions to overcome such inequalities but more drastic interventions should be enforced.

According to European Unions (2020), although women count for 54% of all tertiary students in the EU in 2017, they are particularly underrepresented in the digital professions. Women hold only 17% of tech sector jobs. Although girls generally perform better than boys in the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) and International Computer and Information Literacy Study (ICILS) international skills tests, they do not prefer ICT jobs. Even though 53% of companies who are trying to recruit ICT specialists report difficulties in finding qualified people, only 1 to 6 ICT specialists in the EU is a woman. That means that only 17% of the almost 8 million employees in ICT are women. Reasons that discourage women to follow a digital career include their low digital skills and the female-unfriendly working conditions. The European Council (2018) called on the EU Member States and the Commission to prevent and combat gender stereotypes, to reduce gender segregation in the labour market, to promote the participation of women in ICT jobs, and to promote the development of basic digital skills for both women and men.

EIGE (2019) found the following: i) although young women and men have similar digital skills, young men indicate higher confidence in their digital skills; ii) digital spaces are male-dominated spaces which obstructs young women to participate; iii) political activities online are more fraught for girls and young women; iv) exposure to online harassment has far reaching effects on young women's online engagement; v) gender norms are intensified online. The study on Women in the Digital Age (iclaves 2018) reports that there is a growing gap between men's and women's participation in the digital sector in

education, career, and entrepreneurship. More specifically, the study found the following: i) There are four times more men than women in Europe having ICT-related studies. There is a decrease in women following ICT-related higher education when compared to 2011; ii) The share of men working in the digital sector is 3.1 times greater than the share of women; iii) The annual productivity loss for the European economy of women leaving their digital jobs to become inactive is calculated to be about EUR 16.2 billion; iv) Although female-owned start-ups are more likely to be successful, there is a decrease in participation, leadership, and investment in the entrepreneurial digital sector. The recent study *Women in Digital Scoreboard (2019)* reports that only 17% of ICT specialists are women. The same ratio for STEM graduates is 34%. Women in the information and communication sector earn 19% less than men. In digital skills, there is a gender gap of 11%. The gap is higher for “above basic skills” and especially for those above 55 years. The proportion of women among doctoral graduates in the fields of ICT is 21% (European Commission 2019b, *She figures 2018*).

So, the European Union’s (2020) top priority is to ensure that girls and young women are equally represented in digital studies and careers. Therefore, the European Commission aims to support the development of higher education curricula which attracts women to engineering and ICT. Recently, CEOs of European tech firms signed a CEOs Declaration (2019) expressing the intent to achieve gender balance and provide equal opportunities in their companies. The *European Network on Women in Digital (eurogender.eige.europa.eu)* aims to promote greater participation of girls and women in digital studies and careers across the EU. Connecting organizations that work to combat gender stereotypes, encourage ICT related studies and promote diversity in digital professions can help pool efforts and create critical mass.

Digital Skills and Greek Women

In Greece, a variety of authorities promote gender equality in all society and economy sectors. For example, the Greek law protects working women with respect to discrimination before, during and after employment. Furthermore, the law protects maternity, motherhood, child care and nurture, treatment of sick and/or special needs child, as well as other cases.

In Greece, there are various authorities that promote equal treatment with respect to gender (among others). For example, the “Greek Ombudsman” (www.synigoros.gr) investigates cases of violation of the law against gender discrimination either in the private or in the public sector. Specially, the “General Secretariat for Family Policy and Gender Equality” (www.isotita.gr) plans, coordinates and implements policy and projects for gender equal treatment. Its research division “Research Centre for Gender Equality” (KETHI, www.isotita.gr) implements interventions for eliminating gender discrimination.

Regarding Internet skills, 68% of women are regular Internet users (versus 71% of men); 27% of women have never used the Internet (versus 23% of men); 33% of women use online banking (versus 42% of men); 7% of women use professional social networks (versus 9% of men); 7% of women are doing an online course (versus 7.2% of men); 4.8% of women use online consultations or voting (versus 5.5%); 33% of women use e-government services (versus 40% of men) (Women in Digital Scoreboard 2019).

Furthermore, 44% of women have at least basic digital skills (versus 49% of men); 20% have above digital skills (versus 23% of men); and 50% have at least basic software skills (versus 55% of men). According to the recent Gender Equity Index 2020 (EIGE 2020), among Greek people aged 25-29 year, women have above basic digital skills at 46% (versus men at 37%). Among Greek scientists and engineers (aged 25-64 years) in high-technology sectors, there are 21% women (versus 79% men) (similar to the average EU gender gap). The gender pay gap in ICT in Greece is 12% (similar to the average EU which is 11%) (EIGE 2020).

According to EIGE (2019), less women than men use computers daily (a gap of 16%). Also, fewer women than men post opinions on civic or political issues or take part in online voting. More specifically, the gender gap is over 10% regarding youth who in the last 3 months had posted opinions on civic or political issues online, or participated in online consultations or voting, for example, to decide or express their opinion on urban planning, or signing a petition.

Gender differences in Informatics Education

In Greece, gender inequalities start appearing even at the lower secondary education, where less female students than male students engage in coding/programming activities, and this trend continues in upper secondary education since 85 % of female students never or almost never engage in coding/programming in comparison to only 66 % of male students (European Commission 2019a). During EU Code Week, a total of 368 coding activities were held throughout Greece, covering 37.200 participants whose average age was 11, and 44.4 % of participants were girls or women (DESI – Greece, 2019). In a national activity to promote the inclusion of coding in school curricula, organized by the Greek Coalition for Digital Skills, females were 52% of the participants (108 children aged 8-11, and 27 ICT teachers from primary schools all over Greece).

Berdousis and Kordaki (2014) found that more male than female students studied in Informatics departments at Greek Universities in the decade 2003-2012, while there were more female students in the Universities. Furthermore, this gender gap widens over the years. Kordaki and Berdousis (2017) found that there were fewer female students than male students in computer science and engineering university departments (freshmen, graduates, master's degree graduates, and Ph.D.s) during the decade 2002–2012 in Greece. Similar result hold for informatics teachers in secondary education. Investigating the views of Prospective Computer Engineers (PCE) regarding gender issues in computer science and engineering (CSE), Tsagala, and Kordaki (2005) found that one out of three male PCEs do not trust women as University Professors in CSE while half of the female PCEs feel uncomfortable with the absence of female faculty members; one out of three male PCEs would prefer a job in Industry, while the same percentage of female PCEs expressed that they would prefer a job in the Public Sector. Another study involving Greek computer science students, reported that female university students preferred courses focusing on theoretical computer science, and social and human aspects of CS, while males preferred courses concentrating on hardware and software engineering (Berdousis and Kordaki, 2018). The proportion of women among doctoral graduates in ICT dropped

from 23.2% (2013) to 13.6% (2016) (She Figures, 2018). The compound annual growth (%) of women doctoral graduates is -25.8.

Gender differences in ICT Professions

According to Women in Digital Scoreboard (2019), 0.4% of total employees are women ICT specialists (versus 2.5% men). In 2019, there were 17,900 Greek women and 47,400 Greek men employees with ICT education (Eurostat, 2019). Women counted 27.4% of all Greek employees with ICT education compared to an EU average of 17.3% (Eurostat, 2019). A significant gender gap is also observed with only 10.9 % of employed people in the ICT sector being women (DESI - Greece, 2019). Pappas et al. (2017) found that there are large gaps and mismatches between the supply and demand for ICT skills in Greece. Women believe that they are under-represented in the ICT sector, and there is a gender gap in ICT-related professions. The “Greek Chapter of the ACM-W” (ACM’s Council on Women in Computing, acmw-gr.acm.org/index.php/en) association strives to promote the role of ICT women in society, education, research, and professions in Greece.

Gender differences in ICT professorships in Greek Universities

Berdousis and Kordaki (2018) reported that women represent only a small percentage of Greek university faculty in Informatics for every year during the decade 2003-2013. Furthermore, this gender gap was even wider at the highest rank positions of professorships.

Public policies and initiatives to support Greek women in ICT professions

During the last years, the Greek government recognized the importance of empowering women with digital skills and enabling their integration in men-dominated sectors. The “National plan for gender equity 2016 - 2020” (NPGE 2017) issued as Objective 5 ‘Motivating women to use ICT’ urging for immediate implementation of actions to raise awareness, motivate and train the female population in ICT and digital skills.

The “*National Action plan for Digital Skills and Jobs in Greece*” (GNAP 2018) initiative aims at fostering the dialogue between Greek women and companies by promoting the attractiveness of ICT careers among women and strengthening the trust of ICT companies, especially SMEs, in women as employees. One of its objectives is to increase the digital skills of girls and women in order to integrate the female talent into the workforce. It also sets up the following two priorities to promote gender equality: i) Priority 11: Empower Women & Girls to Go Digital (WGGD) in Greece; ii) Priority 12: Better Employment Conditions for Female Talent with Digital Skills. In addition, it sets up the following three Strategic Objectives (SO): i) SO 16: Re-starting for the WGGD Pledge; ii) SO 17: Upskilling Female labor force with Targeted Training activities; iii) SO 18: Innovation Hub for Women in Technology.

The “*Women and Girls Go Digital initiative*” (WGGD), coordinated by the General Secretariat for Family Policy and Gender Equality, brings together 22 Greek and 4 European stakeholders desiring to support women during all steps in their career enhancing their digital skills and jobs, and strengthening the women’s role in the digital economy. It organizes workshops and training, promotes women’s involvement in digital activities and employment, transfers knowledge from best EU practices, and participates in related projects. For example, in the e-Women project, European Centre for Women and Technology (ECWT) provides knowledge-transfer based on best practices from Norway with the goal to promote, in Greece, women’s new employability paths through digital skills, support tech startups and prepare a new business innovation center (hub) in Athens.

More specifically, with regards to “SO 17: Upskilling Female labor force with Targeted Training activities”, “Action 30: Targeted Training activities a Digital Upskilling of Greek Female labor force” plans the following activities: 1) ICT training; 2) Exploiting the Internet to find information and work; 3) Updating existing public digital services and exploiting e-learning; 4) Exploiting ICT software and applications in the culture sector; 5) Creation of workshops to produce ideas and proposals for the creation of innovative tools tailored to the needs of vulnerable populations; 6) Training in e-entrepreneurship and social

networking tools; 7) Provision of certifications which would be very useful in finding a job.

With regards to “SO 18: Innovation Hub for Women in Technology”, “Action 31: Development of an Innovation Hub for Women in Technology” aims at: i) Monitoring the use of ICTs by women and men in the framework of the “Gender Monitoring Observatory” and the preparation of a relevant newsletter on a yearly basis; ii) Specialized actions for the development of digital skills for special population groups. Also, “Action 32: e-Leadership promotion for women in the public sector” aims at: i) promoting e-Leadership for women in public sector; ii) Developing Career Days for Women in the Public Sector in the context of which women will encourage to design a carrier path based on digital skills and e-Leadership.

Besides the aforementioned public initiatives to support Greek women in ICT professions, many more projects which had similar objectives have been launched such as the following:

a) The “*Innovation and Employability for Women*” (“*ie-Women*”, iewomen.iit.demokritos.gr): This project organized educational programs in entrepreneurship and social media for improving employability of women and female entrepreneurs in digital economy. It aims at ICT training accompanied by the development of women self-confidence and the breaking of negative attitudes towards computer use. It promotes ICT professions to be made more attractive as a career choice for women, and encourages the strengthening of collaboration across relevant stakeholders;

b) The “*women4it*” project (www.women4it.eu): The project’s goals include the following: i) To create attractive employment opportunities for young people in the digital economy; ii) To provide access to an online employability profiling tool for individual testing; iii) To ensure free and available digital training and opportunity so as to help individuals access a community of leading European digital workforce; iv) To promote IT jobs for women as a source of economic growth and role models;

c) The “*eSKILLS4ALL*” project (www.eskills4all.eu): This project aims at empowering unemployed adults (with a focus on women) through training. The project supports low-skilled unemployed adults (with a focus on women) to increase their digital literacy, and helping them in their search for employment.

A Proposal for Gender Digital Equity Strategy

Analyzing the various policies and initiatives, it is clear that most of them plan and provide to women ICT training, Workshops, Career Days, Marketing, Awards, People Networking, Hubs and similar actions. Organizing all these activities under a common framework, could be helpful to anyone interested in this area. This paper proposes a framework for Gender Digital Equity Strategies (Table 1) which encompasses four (4) dimensions: 1) *ICT Education & Training*; 2) *Digital Tools & Infrastructure*; 3) *People Networking*; 4) *ICT Jobs*, as well as three (3) Activity Levels: 1) *Access*; 2) *Use & Participate* and 3) *Create*.

More concretely, at the first level, having *Access* means that women can only find and watch opportunities for *ICT Education & Training*; *Digital Tools & Infrastructure*; *People Networking*; *ICT Jobs*. For example, they can only read a book about computer networks, or watch a video lecture on artificial intelligence, or know that there are digital tools, e-communities, and jobs (and their requirements, obligations, roles, salaries) on specific ICT areas (e.g., cybersecurity). The fact that they can have *Access* to resources does not mean that they are also free to use, participate or even create new ones.

The next level proposes to give women the opportunities and tools to *Use & Participate* in *ICT Education & Training*; *Digital Tools & Infrastructure*; *People Networking*; *ICT Jobs*. For example, they should be able to fully participate in a class (i.e., interact, communicate with teachers and peers, make assignments & projects, take exams, etc.), in an e-community (interact, communicate, and collaborate with others in the community) or in a business environment/job (work).

Finally, the third level proposes to provide women with the opportunities and tools to *Create* *ICT Education & Training*; *Digital Tools & Infrastructure*; *People Networking*; *ICT Jobs*. For example, an initiative could give women the ability to *Teach ICT subjects*, or to develop new *digital tools*, or create *networks* of professionals and businesses in specific ICT areas, or even create new *ICT businesses* as e-entrepreneurs.

In each of these 12 areas (3 levels times 4 dimensions), the proposed strategies promote and propose appropriate activities for the benefit of the women. For example, in the area of *Create ICT Education & Training*, women should be given the opportunities, resources, and tools to develop

new educational material and teach them to others. In the area of *Create ICT Jobs*, women should be given the opportunities, resources, and tools to create new businesses and ICT jobs.

Table 1. Framework for Gender Digital Equity Strategies

| | ICT Education & Training | Digital Tools & Infrastructure | People Networking | ICT Jobs |
|----------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------|----------|
| 1. Access | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| 2. Use & Participate | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| 3. Create | √ | √ | √ | √ |

Conclusions and future research

This paper describes policies and initiatives to decrease gender inequalities in ICT-related education and employment in Greece. Various studies show that there exists a wide gender gap in ICT-related higher education participation, employment, and salaries in Greece. In addition, the paper proposes a Framework for Gender Digital Equity Strategies across 12 areas (3 levels X 4 dimensions) (Table 1). Future research may consider comparing the female participation in various ICT sectors (e.g., ICT user support, digital marketing, software development, managing networks, cloud computing, databases, artificial intelligence, business analytics, security). Also, future research may examine the relationship between women holding an ICT degree and their job type, their job level as well as their employment sector (e.g., commerce, finance, education, research, telecommunications, transportation, logistics, energy, utilities).

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Remedies for Abusive Religiosity: An Interdisciplinary Conversation

Daniel G. Oprean, PhD

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences,
Aurel Vlaicu University of Arad, Romania
daniaoprean@gmail.com

ABSTRACT: It is the aim of this article to analyze a few remedies that could contribute to the cure of abusive religiosity. Promoting a conversation between philosophy, psychology and theology, the article focuses on three such remedies. The first one is the holistic understanding of human nature, in all its complexity and with all its paradoxes. The second one is the proper understanding of the phenomenon of conversion with the contrast between conformation and transformation. The third one is the proper understanding and practice of authority, with all the danger that come with the exercise of power.

KEY WORDS: religiosity, abuse, holistic, conversion, transformation, authority

Introduction

Religion is one of the driving engines of human existence. Human being was created as a religious being, her needs for spiritual communion being one of the most essential. Religious communities are therefore meant to contribute to the fulfilment of human beings need for spiritual communion. They are meant to be communities where where human beings are to find safety, comfort, and help, a community distinguished by faith, hope and love (Stott 1991, 29), a community learning to make the love of God a reality, toward each other and toward the people not knowing God (McClung 1985, 142).

However, in human society, religiosity could become abusive and therefore toxic for human beings. Given the seriousness of such unfortunate transformation of religiosity, there is a need not only for a proper diagnosis of it, but also for remedies that could contribute to the cure of abusive religiosity that endanger the well being of the human beings, not only spiritually, but also psychologically and emotionally. It is, therefore, the aim of this article to underline three of such remedies for the cure of abusive religiosity.

We will start with the holistic understanding of human nature, we will continue with the proper understanding of the phenomenon of conversion, and we will end with the balanced understanding and practice of authority. The analysis of the three remedies for the cure of abusive religiosity, will be conducted in the conversation of philosophy, psychology and theology.

A Holistic Understanding of Human Nature

One of the remedies for abusive religiosity is the holistic understanding of human nature's complexity (Rotaru 2016, 29-43). Man is the most complex being, the masterpiece (Wyatt 1998, 20) of God's creation, and the last word of God in creation. As a special creation of God, being in a special relationship with God, man is paradoxically a being „with broken relationships with God, with others, with the created order and with himself (Hurding 1992, 245-246).

Thinkers in the contemporary modern history have interpreted differently this paradox, from the cynical perspective to the realistic one. Mark Twain quoted by Hurding said: "man is God's creature made at the end of the week when God was tired" (Hurding 1992, 250). John Stott arguing the realism of the Bible concerning the paradox of human nature says: „The Bible preserves the paradox that expresses the glory and also the shame of our humanity." (Stott 1996, 145). Nikolai Berdiaev said that man is „one of the phenomenons of this world.... with two images: royal one and a slave one (Berdiaev 1992, 70). Erich Fromm describes this paradox in terms of the dialectic between the two tendencies inherent in human nature: the normal tendency to growth and the pathological tendency to regression. Fromm synthesizes the two tendencies in two opposite syndromes: growth syndrome

(characterized by the love for life, independence, and love for others); and the decay syndrome (characterized by love of death, narcissism and incestuous symbiosis). Every man, continues Fromm, chooses his own direction, to life or to death, to good or to evil (Fromm 1965, 17-23). Fromm points out also the paradox of man as a product of history and as the maker of history (Fromm 1991, 10).

Based on Karl Barth's argument that the image of God is the best seen in the partnership between man and woman and in the community of human beings; and continuing with Paul K. Jewett, who affirms that the man created in the image of God is man-in-communion (Hurding 1992, 246). In the same line Stanley Jones considers:

We have dissected life and desiccated it in the process. We have picked the flower of life to pieces, petal by petal, and have lost its beauty in the procedure. We have handed the body over to the doctor, the mind to the psychiatrist, and the soul to the minister, treating these three parts as separate entities. They are not separate. Life is a whole. You cannot affect one part without affecting all three (Jones 1942, v).

To sum up, from the above considerations, we understand that philosophy, psychology and theology could meet, concerning the paradox and complexity of human nature on a common ground. Based on this, we can state that a dichotomic perspective of the human being, could lead to the idea that spirituality and religiosity concerns only the soul, that faith regards only the spiritual things, the religious activities, the sacred domain of life. Rather, to speak of human being implies a remembering of the fact that human being is a relational being (Fromm 1950, 7).

A Proper Understanding of Conversion

We have argued in the section above that one of the remedies for abusive religiosity is the avoidance of the black and white approach of human nature and life that creates a dichotomic life, divided between the sacred and profane. In this section we will discuss another remedy for abusive religiosity, that comes from a proper understanding the crises of human being's life. One of the most important of such moments is the phenomenon of conversion.

To be sure, conversion is a necessary happening in the spiritual experience of a person. The human necessity to grow includes transformation but is equally true that the conversion phenomenon can suffer deviations that affect the human being's personality and character. One of the errors that can lead to the distortion of conversion phenomenon is the view that conversion is a moment that confers *spiritual immunity*. In many cases baptism is considered as being such a determinant moment.

What can happen and indeed happens many times, is the beginning of a process of external conformation, or „automaton conformity” (Fromm 1991, 159) to a set of rules (confession of faith!), rather than the normal and biblical process of transformation after the image (eikon) and example of Christ, which is the characteristic of the real conversion (Sider 1993, 101-118). When conversion is regarded as a moment rather than a process, there is a tension between two opposite models, the *external conformation model* (usual in many churches) and the *internal transformation model* in a long-life process. Most of the times the external conformation model requires a „holiness” of separation, the isolation from the dirty world outside, based on the desire of remaining pure.

Although it is true that being pure in an impure world is clearly a biblical requirement, yet it is equally clear that nobody can achieve purity in another way than Christ was pure and holy. Christ' holiness is beautifully expressed by Michael Ridell:

For Christ holiness was not only external but internal, grounded in his relationship with God. For Jesus separation is a separation to rather than separation from.' Jesus is holy not because he isolated himself from either people or the world, nor because some elaborate system of ritual purification. He is holy because he is consumed with passion for both God and the world. Because the love of God is burning in his heart, Jesus is holy. And because he is holy, the entire world has become clean to him (Ridell 1998, 80).

There are also psychological effects of the external conformation model that requires separation from the world. This is clear in the psychologist's argument of the importance of social network for the recovery from psychological problems. For example, the Romanian psychologist, Lazarescu,

says that “social isolation can be a socio-psycho-pathogenetical factor.” He also points out the importance of the social network for the psychological welfare of a human, saying that even in case of psychic illness „the bigger the social network is the quicker the recovery is” (Lazarescu 1994, 96-101).

The openness to the world is a necessary part of the human development. From the psychological point of view, the isolation could lead to regression in earlier human development stages. In this regard, Erich Fromm says that when the individual is exposed fully to the world outside there are two possibilities: First, he can progress on positive freedom, namely, “relating to the world in love and work, in genuine expression of his emotional, sensuous, and intellectual capacities.” Second is the possibility “to fall back, to give up his freedom, and to try to overcome his aloneness by eliminating the gap that has arise between his individual self and the world. This escape is characterized by the more or less complete surrender of individuality and the integrity of the self” (Fromm 1991, 120-121).

Yet not only the social isolation (as a consequence of external conformation model) is dangerous, psychologically and spiritually, but also the phenomenon of subculturalization, namely, the tendency to oppose Christ to the culture (Niebuhr 1951, 45-82), the result being the creation of a denominational subculture that will lead to differences that the Bible does not require, to legalism, and to escapism (Jurca 2002, 9). When legalism passes the personal level and becomes in respect to, the norm for somebody else’s spirituality, then this could be a form of spiritual abuse, because it could develop a „world of fantasy” disconnected by the reality of the present world (Inch 1972, 30).

In this context, the conversion of an individual is many times, a conversion to a denominational culture and not to Christ, whom not only that did not create a subculture of his own but also confronted energetically those who did that, as exemplified in Matthew 23. The mission of such churches could be described in the words of John Stott, as „irresponsible escapism.”

Too many of us evangelicals either have been, or maybe still are, irresponsible escapist. Fellowship with each other in the Church is much more congenial than service in an apathetic and even hostile environment outside. Of course, we make occasional evangelistic

raids into enemy territory (that is our evangelical specialty); but then we withdraw again, across the moat, into our Christian castle (the security of the Evangelical fellowship), pull up the drawbridge, and even close our ears to the pleas of those who batter on the gate (Stott 1979, 14).

Such churches become often spaces where people are rejected or accepted according with their performances required by the denominational subculture. Such churches are important candidates for the following judgment: Churches where tired, wounded people are given formulas and advices to help in time of need, or are shamed for having a need, do not represent the true King” (Johnson & VanVonderen 1991, 206). The result at the personal level could be perpetual immaturity or even deconversion. Or in the words of Stanley Jones:

Many start out with high aspiration toward the Tree, God, and then they stop at some dead branch of religion and fasten themselves on that. They stop at a good resolution and fasten themselves to that; but no mere good resolution can hold anyone up amid the storms of life. Others fasten themselves upon an institution – a good thing, but not good enough to fasten one’s life upon. Nor will a rite or ceremony do; it will let one down in the crisis. Others fasten themselves upon a favorite minister and pin their faith to him. No man is good enough to be the center of one’s faith; he may let one down. Others fasten on ideas about God instead of their acquaintance with God. Go clear to the central trunk-God. Don’t stop short (Jones 1942, 21).

A Balanced Understanding and Practice of Authority

Another remedy for abusive religiosity is a balanced understanding and practice of authority (Nash 1997, 46). When a leader uses his position of authority to manipulate, to hurt others, consciently or unconsciently this could be categorized as spiritual abuse. Johnson & VanVonderen in their book argue: „In abusive spiritual systems, power is postured, and authority is legislated. Obedience and submission are two important words often used” ((Johnson&VanVonderen 1991, 11). Speaking about the need for balance concerning authority, Paul Negrut says: “...authority means *autoritas* that denotes “wise word”, but also *imperium* that means order, power, and

government” The two (*autoritas* and *imperium*) has to coexist if the progress of community is to be preserved (Negrut 1996, 9-10). In the same line Michael Ridell writes:

In pre-modern times the hierarchy was accepted as divinely ordained. Under modernism the basis of authority was knowledge, and post-modernism is characterized by an alliance between power and knowledge (Ridell 1998, 65).

One of the causes of authority abuse is the narcissism of leaders (McIntosh&Rima 1997, 94-103). The danger of narcissism is real for people in a position with almost unlimited power (Fromm 1965, 66). Fromm speaks about the dangers for the persons in position of authority, namely, *moral hypochondriasis* (the fear to be guilty). Such a person is preoccupied with himself, does not listen to the others, is very sensitive to any critic, and all these can be hidden under an artificial attitude of modesty and humility (Fromm 1965, 69-70) whilst the reality behind is that of „skilled incompetence” (Thomas 1999, 160).

It is necessary to note also another aspect of the authority abuse. Many communities are in such a way structured that the decisional power is concentrated in the hands of one man or in the hands of few. Many churches are pyramidally structured in such a way that in the top of the pyramide is the pastor, the priest, the leader, or a group of people, who are „called” to do the ministry. In many cases, to have a theological degree is the only necessary and sufficient condition to be „called.” Not underestimating the importance and the necessity of the divine call-in ministry, we are aware that this can be falsified, and the mechanism is that presented above.

In such pyramidally structured communities all members are looking toward the top for the solutions for all their problems. In the fortunate case when the leader has vocation for his ministry, soon he will be exhausted both, emotionally and spiritually. In such cases the church is the one that exercises the spiritual abuse. When the person in the top has no vocation for his ministry and is not equipped accordingly (the degree does not offer the required expertise!) the danger is that in order to maintain his position, that person could create a system in which paradoxically everybody is dependent

on what he says or does. In the same time, nobody else does enough in order for the „ministry to work.“ The institution becomes more important than persons (Warner 1999, 123), their families and their lives (Fromm 1965, 85).

To sum up, in such communities the result is fellowship without relationships, a compartmentalistic view of life that leads to poisoned relationships (Hurding, 1992, 252), rather than to helping relationships (Brammer 1973, 25), based on the induction of feelings as guilt and shame, and to the acceptance of „appropriate behavior“ and not of persons. If the individuals in such communities are coming from families, where they were abused physically, emotionally or spiritually. Instead of maturation people are kept in „emotional illiteracy“ (Goleman 1995, 231), or they even could develop sado-masochistic relationships between them and the abusive leaders. In such cases, the church instead of being the space of helping them to deal with their traumas, rather it is the space where their problems become more complicated. Communities, in which relationships are rather pathological, often propose high aims for their members and when those are not reached the guilt of the community is invoked. Consequently, the fear of failure not only that paralyzes any creativity, but also could lead to resentments and anxiety (Goleman 1995, 229). The faith and life of such men could become toxic leading to alienation from themselves and from others (Fromm 1965, 50-51). Those people could become more in touch with their religious ideas, than with God (Arterburn&Felton 1991, 31). Such people could end by suffering of what is called „the cult of personality,“ being extremely egocentric, jealous, proud, and even developing „the infallibility syndrome“ (Sanders 1993, 211-216), and ending by worshiping power (Fromm 1965, 53).

Conclusion

We have argued in this article that there are remedies for the reality of abusive religiosity. We have tried to reveal them in the necessary conversation of philosophy, psychology and theology. First remedy that will be efficient for the cure of abusive religiosity is the *holistic understanding of human nature*, considering its limits but also its potentials for achieving through development and growth, the plenitude of its capacities for good. To have a

holistic understanding of human being means to acknowledge that different domains of life are inter-connected and influence each other, in such a way that dealing with one domain means to consider the entire network of human nature. The second remedy that will be efficient for the cure of abusive religiosity is that of a proper understanding of conversion. The third remedy that will be efficient for the cure of abusive religiosity is that of a balanced understanding and practice of authority.

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Married Couples' Perception of Faithfulness

Ciprian Corneliu Ciurea, Ps. PhD Candidate

„Aurel Vlaicu” University, Arad, Romania

cipriancorneliuciurea@gmail.com

ABSTRACT: The dynamic character of the marital interactions often guides the marital couple either towards stability, cohesion, and progress or towards instability, discord and sometimes, even dissolution. The biological, physical, and spiritual forces ensure matrimonial faithfulness. Starting with the internal and external factors, we have analyzed the progress of the individual from realizing his psycho-sexual identity to entering the marital couple, and therewith emphasizing, from a sociological and psychological viewpoint the numerous theories that highlight the marital option. When establishing the different marital typologies, we took into consideration only the relationships between the partners of marital couples, analyzing the marriages through the criteria which define the family life: cohesion, stability, tension, belligerency, adjustment, integration, and development.

KEY WORDS: couple, marriage, fidelity, traditional, modern, erotic behavior, marital typologies

Introduction

This article represents a subchapter from the Dissertation titled *Married Couple's perception of infidelity*, unpublished, presented in front of the Evaluation Committee of The University of Bucharest, Faculty of Sociology and Social Work, in June 2011, in Bucharest. This article is meant to enrich the reader's understanding regarding different particularities of the functional marital couple, seen from a traditional and modern viewpoint, accentuating

aspects which relate to sexual identity, such as choosing the partner, all in the context of marital fidelity. In addition to this, we have proposed to elaborate a short analysis of the different marital typologies such as they are presented in the published literature, therewith capturing directions and changes in the sexual initiation behavior.

1. Defining the notion of “couple”

In general, the notion of **couple** describes the frame within which a man and a woman “communicate, know each other, perform self and inter evaluation, grow, and become complete and mature human beings, one with, for and through the other” (Mitrofan & N. Ciupercă 1998, 246-247). In many cases, the relationship between the partners becomes permanent and there are chances to transform into a marriage, involving multiple aspects that clearly differentiate it from a simple couple relationship.

Therefore, **marriage** marks the beginning of the first sequence of the family life cycle and appears as “a fundamental experience of psychosocial coming-of-age, developing at the intersection between the tendencies and needs of fusion and autonomy” (Mitrofan & N. Mitrofan 1996, 105-106). From a legal viewpoint, marriage represents the freely consented union between a man and a woman, according to the legal provisions, with the purpose of starting a family (Mitrofan & N. Mitrofan 1991, 66). Since it is the starting point for the existence and functioning of the family, the marriage must be contracted based on some strict conditions regarding the legal consent of the two spouses, different sexes, legal age for marriage, physical and mental health, none of the spouses being involved, at the moment of marriage, in another uncompleted marriage and having sexual relations that “consume” the marriage. From a psychological perspective, marriage represents the psychological transformation of the personality, it represents personal growth through the matrimonial and parental experience. Also, from a sociological and demographic point of view, the act of marriage represents the union between two families which have no consanguinity, in this being comprised of a biological side (procreation and raising children) and a social dynamic one (legal and ethical regulations, economic and educational aspects)

(Voinea 1996, 7). Not in the least, from a historic viewpoint, marriage can have two forms: polygamy and monogamy. In other words, the two spouses are united by ethical rights and obligations, legal, economic, religious, and social regulations, including sexual rights or prohibitions.

In short, **the marital couple** represents “a generating core of the family micro group, expressing structurally and functionally the way in which two opposite sex persons model each other creatively, after they get married, growing, motivating, and determining each other through adjusting and assimilating each other, simultaneously on a biological, psychological, and social plan” (Mitrofan & N. Mitrofan 1991, 97). The dynamic character of the marital interactions often guides the couple either towards stability, cohesion, and progress, or towards instability, discord and sometimes even dissolution.

2. Particularities of the couple

2.1. *The couple – between traditionalism and modernism*

Traditionalism and modernism represent two concepts that cover a very extended period in history, symbolizing two stages of evolution, particular through their values, manifestations and manner of understanding and explaining social reality. To highlight them we shall analyze the two concepts from the perspective of lifestyles and family types characteristic to these two large stages.

The **traditional** society was a rigid one when it came to the stability of values, family type or lifestyle. Since supreme value was given to family and community, conservatism was favored, the family lifestyle being a very authoritarian one. Hierarchy, conformism, repression, immobilism and localism were defining a lifestyle which was giving parents superiority over their children, elders superiority over youngsters and men over women. The hierarchy was very well established, and those who would not obey could become a target for repression in any form of its manifestation (Mitrofan & Ciupercă 1998, 186). Traditional monogamy was legitimated by religion and customs, “the women often being a trade object on the marital market” (Kontula & Haavio-Mannila 2004, 79). The husband held the power and responsibility when it came to decision making as he was the one responsible

with earning and administrating family's incomes. At the same time, the crucial distinction between the modern and traditional family was given by the primordality of its obligations and affection (Iluț 2005, 87). Historically speaking, in the traditional societies, the woman was a birth giver "machine" and an "object" for a husband's pleasure with almost no rights and almost no participation in the spiritual and social life. In other words, the woman was just a sexual being, but who had no power to dominate through her sexuality because she was obedient to her husband, her sexuality being more of a matrimonial duty (Kontula & Haavio-Mannila 2004, 79). When talking about intimate relationships, the woman was attributed the role of seductress, a representative of sin and sensual pleasures. The unfaithful woman was undoubtedly socially condemned when her infidelity was discovered, the mother of an illegitimate child was despised and an outcast. The man was enjoying a totally different treatment. Although he accepted the ethical and sexual norms of his time, publicly declaring his marital fidelity, he could bend the rules without losing the respect of the others. The father of an illegitimate child would never be socially punished, but he would remain an honorable man (Stekel 1997, 228). All these led to a double ethical measure, one for men and one for women. Applied as such both socially and legally, the ethics made that the battle between the sexes be, in fact, an uprising against this double standard. Thus, the feminist movement was a far-reaching social phenomenon, which had the merit to liven up a society patriarchal in general (Buțureanu 1921, 217-235), the national versions being of great diversity and originality (Stiger 2002, 43). In the inter-war period, women had proven their indispensability by practicing some manly professions, they won their right to vote, even becoming a social phenomenon: "the unfaithful woman". In the post-war period, the most numerous divorces were provoked by women. For many of them the adultery was not a social need, but mostly a weapon used in the battle between sexes to declare their own personality.

The modern couple is on the opposite side, this couple emerges against the background of failure of old structures and marital motivations and in the context of the battle between sexes and the changes generated by it, which accentuated the equality between sexes, sexual liberty, celibacy over marriage, all around women's rights (Collins 1988, 3).

When talking about family values, being modern implies a great openness to change, to new experiences, to risk, to being dynamic and flexible. The modern couple is profoundly marked by the freedom of choice, more than anytime, the notion of “couple” being actually based on considerations regarding feelings and sexual affinity (Mitrofan 1989, 22). The marital lifestyle changed, cooperation took the place of authority being fueled by equality, change and communication. By equalizing the roles, both partners won the freedom to express their own interests, without being tributary to the social demands specific to the sex-role. So, the modern man shares the household chores and child caring activities with his wife, the woman performing tasks which in the past were strictly a man’s job. The modern woman is strong, she is educated, she has a job and represents an important source of income for her family (Voinea & Apostu 2008, 222). No one finds it odd today that a woman votes or that a man expresses his feeling and fears.

Relationships are more rarely based on external, formal obligations, and more often on love and mutual trust, being more dependent on feelings and sexuality. Both sexes start to express their love through sexuality. Women emotionalize their sexuality, transforming their sexual feelings into verbal communication, while men sexualize their emotions, sexuality becoming a channel through which a large spectrum of emotions is being expressed, emotions such as stress, anger, sentiment, frustration, and love (Træen & Stigum 1998, 52).

Socially, a lot of options appeared in terms of marital relationships, diversity taking over the uniformity of the past. The present society imposes different types of man-woman relationships. Therefore, today one can be married, divorced, widow(er), single, we can live “together with someone”, “around someone” or “amongst someone’s relationships”. We can choose a lifestyle without children or we can stay with the child renouncing the partner. In the contemporary society, more than ever, the problem of marital fidelity is present, and all this against the background of multiple extramarital temptations. The occasions to meet someone (work, holidays) are now many, the temptations are more and more explicit (clothes, make-up) and, even more, the entire society lives under the sign of sexuality. Besides all these, the moral constraints are gone (religious and laic) and the legal ones that

somehow managed some time ago to plant in people's minds the concept of sin, shame or offense regarding adultery are also gone. Contraception and abortion are no longer taboo. So, it seems like nothing in the society forces one to be faithful (Leleu 2003, 12). In the West, sexual tolerance has grown very much, becoming "more hedonistic, pleasure and leisure-oriented as the reproductive role in the sexual life has diminished" (Haavio-Mannila, Kontula and Rotkirch 2002, 194).

Starting with the internal factors (the psychological, individual, and interpersonal dimension) and continuing with the external factors (the sociological, social, and intergroup dimension) we shall present the evolution of the individual from becoming aware of his psychosexual identity to his entering the marital couple

2.2. Sexual Identity

By **sexuality** we understand "the ensemble of psycho individual and psychosocial phenomena related to the dynamic of sexual life" (Cristea, 417). Sexuality is, also, an "act of intersexes relational culture", an "act of knowledge and self-knowledge, an act of discovery and confirmation of self through the other sex, an act of identification and growth of the masculine and feminine role" (Mitrofan & N. Mitrofan 1996, 37).

Every individual's **sexual identity** is not an optional issue. Although, initially, the sexual differences are a result of biological processes determined by the role of chromosomes and hormones, the society acknowledging the individual as being part of one of the two sexes based on the exterior aspect of his/her genitalia, achieving a sexual identity implies the interaction of psychological, psychosocial, and cultural factors. The individual's sexual identity does not form by itself, but it requires a process of assimilating experiences, of learning some habits and a capacity to live up to the role of man or woman (Rădulescu 1996, 41). This identity is formed gradually, under the influence of the environment, entourage, and name, but also through the roles and experiences every individual integrates in a cultural-educational context. Sexual identity also implies that the individual is aware of his belonging to a sex or the other, based on his own perception of this belonging, and confirmed by the interaction with other individuals. At the

same time, the biological-sexual component of the identity is formed easier and earlier than the vocational, ethical, or religious identity.

The process of distinction between masculinity and femininity was and still is interpreted differently, within two main concepts. On the one hand, the Freudian concept that mostly accentuates the importance of parents' presence in the first years of a child's development, and on the other hand, the concept that gives the social learning process the main role in assimilating the characteristics of masculinity and femininity (Rădulescu 1996, 42). In our society, because of the changes in the social optics, and the permissiveness or restrictions imposed by family, religion, and ethic, we are now witnessing an identity crisis, a blending and even erasing of behavioral differences between sexes, aspect which sometimes creates ambiguity and discomfort when assuming the sex-role by the adolescents. Today, the traditional masculine/feminine roles have changed a great deal compared to the past, the new marital ideal relates to equality between sexes in all aspects of life, including intimacy. These changes have modified both marital and premarital relationships (Mitrofan & Ciupercă 1998, 207). However, harmonizing the personal and social life implies, mostly, assuming the sexual role.

2.3. Choosing the partner and marital faithfulness

The choosing of a partner represents the starting point in creating the couple, it is the result of a long and complex process, not always understood, based on being aware of one's own feelings, but also, a great deal influenced by parents, friends, circumstances, and society. From a historic perspective, the choosing of a marital partner has traversed big transformations, the criteria for a marital option have changed from the relational-institutional ones to the socio-emotional types, sexual-emotional, communication, self-fulfillment through intimacy. In traditional societies, marriages were contracted for the financial status of the family, the control of the elders over the youngsters being profoundly serious. "Arranged marriages" dictated who should marry whom, the purpose being to increase the fortune and to ensure the survival of the family lineage. Today, the choosing of a marital partner is, in general, a decision of the individual, any "arrangement" regarding the marriage being considered shameful by the society. The modern family places first the

persons' intimacy, affection, and marital fulfillment, with equal rights in sexual satisfaction, socialization and children caring and financial involvement in the family life.

Sociological and psychological research, meant to highlight the motivations that explain the choosing of a partner, has been highlighted in numerous theories of the marital choice.

One of the most renowned theories is **Stimulus-value-role Theory** of B. Murstein, according to which have been distinguished three successive stages in the marital decision. **The Stimulus stage** states the ways in which people feel attracted to each other, underlining the power of first impression, based on physical attraction. When in the **stage of values**, the persons involved discover that their attitudes and beliefs are compatible. As many values are, to a large extent, personal and closely related to the view of self, rejecting these values is perceived as factually rejecting the person. Not in the least, **the stage of roles** indicates the period of testing the compatibility in roles, establishing how well the two spouses match each other (Mitrofan & N. Mitrofan 1996, 90-91).

Another theory that concerns the marital choice is **the theory of Davies and Kearckoff**, which claims that the marital decision is the result of a selection in five steps. A minimal condition to become someone's beloved is to meet that someone. Nevertheless, **the space proximity filter** tends to work when choosing a partner in a traditional manner. It is difficult for people who live in closed communities, mainly the rural ones, where the sphere of choice is reduced, to choose a partner (Iluț 2000, 139). In the **similarity-complementarity filter** there are called into question factors such as: age, religion, race, social class, beliefs, shared interest, purposes, or values. Similarities can be physical, intellectual, geographical, social, cultural, and psychological. It has been frequently noticed that people with disabilities marry each other (deaf-mute people marry amongst themselves) or even people with the same marital situation (marriages between widowers or divorcees), between people with similar experiences and situations during their childhood or with similar financial problems. Basically, the individual looks for a partner like himself (Voinea 1996, 10). Complementarity is the opposite phenomenon which defines the choosing of a partner as a result of

the way in which people manage to mutually satisfy their complementary needs. **The personal attraction and compatibility filter** does not follow an objective evaluation, through verifiable criteria. Irrespective of the related preconceptions, the physical attraction remains still an essential condition when choosing a partner. We want our partner to be intelligent, sociable, wealthy, well mannered, only after what he/she is first – attractive (Mitrofan & Ciupercă 2002, 28).

Besides all this, we can also note **the need for affiliation** as a main factor that can explain the interpersonal attractions. C. Hazan and P. Shaver described the types of adults' attachment in their relationships with their life partners as follows. There are **adults sure** of their love attachment, they very quickly come to close relationships with others. Very rarely manifest the fear of being abandoned, and their love experiences are based on mutual trust. On the other hand, there are **anxious/ambivalent adults** who are eager for an extremely high affection and intimacy with their partner, but, at the same time, are always consumed by the thought that the partner will not answer in the same manner. Not in the least, **the familiarity criterion** is founded on the idea that, when facing the unknown, the natural reaction is of discomfort, caution, or restraint. As the contact with the said stimulus is repeated, the anxiety vanishes. Therefore, the familiarity enhances the possibility that two people get to love each other, although the repeated contact itself does not automatically generate a stronger attractivity, on the contrary, it may generate the opposite effect, of rejection (Iluț 2000, 132-133).

A particularly important criterion, one considered both by men and women, when choosing the partner, is the partner's faithfulness. Consequently, it is necessary to approach **the marital faithfulness**, by which we understand the strict observance, in the couple, of the rules of monogamy (Rădulescu 1999, 54). It also represents "a constancy in beliefs and feelings, the permanence of devotion and fidelity, of positive attitudes towards the marital partner" (Mitrofan & Mitrofan 1991, 147). Being faithful means having only one partner sexually, emotionally, and psychologically. In other words, it means to have sexual relations only with one person, to love only one person and to have intimate exchanges and confessions only with the one who is your marital partner. By definition, sexual relations are a symbol,

a sign of the marital relation. Faithfulness can be a state of grace in which the two spouses love each other deeply, are happy and overwhelmed, not wishing for someone else both emotionally and sexually. In this case, faithfulness comes naturally. Such feelings of love, reciprocal desire and exclusivity usually characterizes the relationship at the beginning, and this could stay the same for the rest of their life. Nevertheless, faithfulness can be chosen based on a spiritual approach. From a secular perspective, the spouses make a commitment to live their couple relationship as a means to fulfill themselves and to help each other to reach this fulfillment. In addition, on a religious level, faithfulness appears as a commitment related to sacred and it can be reached within a religion (Leleu 2003, 52).

The couple is the result of the direct interaction between the cohesion forces, which tend to consolidate the relationship, and the discord forces which tend to break the connections between spouses. The forces that ensure the marital faithfulness are the cohesion ones, and they can be biological, physical, and spiritual. On the biological plan, we can say that there is an attachment instinct inside every one of us, a need to be connected to other people, this instinct is the one that keeps the couple. Moreover, there is, in every individual, the drive to cling, by which we understand that irresistible need for contact, the need to be close to our fellows on an emotional level. On a physical level, both man and woman feel a legitimate need for security and fulfillment, a need for a stable and exclusive relationship, that forms an optimal space for growth (Leleu 2003, 42-45). Love can lead to spirituality, spiritual, in this case, meaning not part of a religion, a belief in a deity. Moreover, spirituality inspires faithfulness, on this level faithfulness reaches a new dimension, that of metaphysical recognition of the other. By believing in a deity or adhering to a set of moral principles, the spouses can make commitments to remain faithful, spirituality being both the source and the means through which it survives.

It may happen that the spouses lose the feeling of unity, the faithfulness becomes just a routine. In the case of ordinary faithfulness, feelings survive, but they cannot maintain the spouses' faithfulness, but the emotional, sexual needs, the pleasure of routine, lack of ambition, obedience towards social and religious norms or the attachment to money. The couple does not reach

dissolution because the spouses fear complications, fear of change or a bad reputation. This is the most common case of faithfulness amongst domestic persons, psychologically rigid, or repressed persons. Or the spouses may end up not loving each other anymore, or being indifferent to each other even hostile, remaining together only for fear of consequences (Leleu 2003, 51-53).

2.4. Types of erotic behavior display

The erotic behavior is a complex one, having different expressions, with extremely different and unpredictable reactions and expressions. Basically, love is not measurable, and this brings a great deal of problems in the way of investigating it. **Passionate love** is that type of love “predominantly esthetic and of opinion, a physical love” (Evola 2002, 41), characterized by a tumultuous emotional state, a mix of affection, sexual attraction, exaltation, pain, anxiety, relaxation, altruism, and jealousy. As is predominantly emotional-affective, reason is overwhelmed, the behavior escaping the control of reason. The partner is idealized, possible flaws are turned into qualities (“blind love”). If the relationship between the erotic couple is long-standing and more permanent, still guarding a great emotional weight, it shall take the form of **long-lasting love**, true or companionate, as is also known. This type of love is that type of affection felt by those who have a very interconnected life, and it manifests itself as a more settled, rational, practical relationship, based on trust, care and mutual support, understanding and tolerance. Although with a less “noisy” erotic display, the companionate love is not opposed to passionate love, the attenuation of passion makes way for other factors: a system of values, attitudes, preferences” (Mitrofan & Mitrofan 1996, 118). The reason imposes itself over uncontrolled passion, generating steady relationships.

Apart from these, the published literature, mentions other types of love, in which we can find, in different proportion, parts from the two main categories. **Romantic love** is characterized by that “love at first sight”, the physical attraction being essential. Should the couple be characterized by jealousy, the two being excessively preoccupied and dependent on the partner, we can talk about “**possessive love**”. **The love between best friends** is often generated by friendship and founded on comfortable intimacy, confidentiality,

harmony, care, mutual respect. When talking about **pragmatic love**, we must mention the fact that, when looking for a life partner, the most important are aspects such as: functionality of the relationship, meeting the needs of one another. **Selfless love**, in exchange, implies care, unconditional giving to the partner, it means giving, understanding, forgiving. There are also persons who **play for love**, in such a relationship one or both spouses like “to play” and win, just like playing a simple game (Iluț 2000, 148-149).

The psychologist Robert Sternberg envisioned love as a triangle whose edges, with different lengths, are passion, intimacy, and obligation. By making different combinations of these dimensions, it results more forms of manifestation of love, namely: **associative love** (intimacy/obligation), **romantic love** (intimacy/passion), **complete love** (intimacy/passion/obligation), and **empty love** (just obligation) (Mitrofan & N. Mitrofan 1996, 115).

Not least, sociologist John Alan Lee identified six primal style of love display that can be combined, just like the primary colors, resulting in secondary styles: **eros** (passion), **ludus** (game – „busy bee”), **storge** (friendship, tenderness), **mania** (compulsive love), **pragma** (pragmatic style of love – economic) and **agape** (selfless love) (Dinu 2004, 132-136).

2.5. Trends and changes in sexual initiation behavior

Looking at the last century, we can easily notice major changes in the relationships between men and women when it comes to sexual initiation. Up until the middle of the last century, both girls and boys had clear boundaries regarding the limits of sexual exploration. Until marriage, girls were, usually, virgins, and would never “go all the way. A girl would allow a boy to have sexual relations only if, prior to this, they got engaged, and very rarely would expose this fact. Girls’ social reputation was mainly based on their capacity to withstand the sexual advances of boys, sexually active girls were despised both by the other girls and by the men who took advantage of them. Also, the boys, as future husbands, were actively participating in observing the same ethic codes related to sexual rights and prohibitions. Today we see a clear tendency in the sexual initiation behavior, noticing that there is a separation between love and sex, participation of young people in premature and libertarian sexual relations, without emotional background. From being

prohibited and taboo, sexuality became mandatory and necessary. More often and at earlier ages, both boys and girls expect that, through psychosexual initiation, to confirm their identity, autonomy, maturity, trust in themselves, to eliminate their anxiety and to free their sexual tensions. Even though it is still used the distinction good girl/bad girl, girls today believe they have the right to have sexual activities and relations at any age, not refraining from these until marriage. On the other hand, boys are also content that girls have become more available sexually speaking. Most people, men and women, have, at the moment of marriage a significant baggage of sexual knowledge and experiences. Even inside the marriage both spouses expect, on the sexual level, more than the older generations (Giddens 1992, 13-16).

2. 6. *Marital typologies*

When establishing the marital typologies, we take into consideration only the relationships between spouses, analyzing marriages using the criteria that define family life: cohesion, stability, tension, conflict, adaptation, integration, and growth.

Every couple is unique, with the spouses having specific ways to prove their trust inside the relationship. Depending on **the expression of trust**, there were highlighted some themes in the styles in which the spouses do this. **“Strong hand” relationship** is mainly characterized by anxiety related to the spouse’s faithfulness. When losing confidence in one’s spouse, in despair, a person can accompany the spouse everywhere, can take safety precautions that the spouse is where he/she said it would be, can call the spouse to check on him/her. For those who have such a spouse, the situation is intolerable, becoming incapable to live a normal life. Those who are perceived as untrustworthy persons can decide to act as such, since they are unjustly accused (Cole & Relate 2005, 64-65). **The “ostrich” relationship** is similar to the behavior of these birds. When a couple knows they have delicate problems concerning their mutual trust in the relationship, they ignore them, hoping they will disappear. Unfortunately, this approach leads to difficulties up to a moment when they cannot be ignored (Cole & Relate 2005, 69). **The “level of trust scale” relationship** is specific to couples in which each spouse constantly measures both his/her own capacity to have confidence and his/

her partner's capacity, all this leading to a constant battle on who has more confidence (Cole & Relate 2005, 74).

Looking at the types of marriages analyzed by F. Kunkel, it can be revealed both the dynamic of **marital adjustment** and **the dysfunctional dangers** which the couple faces. **The tempestuous marriage** is characterized by the alternation of affection and fusion moments with those of distancing. Couples like this do not have the courage and the strength to change the course of their marriage. The spouses continue to live their life as a couple through emotional hostilities with a great deal of tension. **The idle marriage** is based on the mutual selfishness of the spouses, each of them putting the difficulties of life on the other's shoulders, without being responsible for them. **The tough marriage** is characterized by almost no communication, given the fact that the spouses see and valorize each other as potential aggressors to the other's intimacy, this behavior hides the inner fragility (Mitrofan & Ciupercă 1998, 193).

A more complex typology of marital lifestyles was given by F. Cuber, who wanted to present **the concept of marriage** rather than the spouses' personalities. **The marriage of those used to conflicts** is a type characterized by the frequency of conflicts, unconcealed from children, but poorly externalized to people outside the couple. Although the conflict is permanently amplified, the couple rarely reaches dissolution, after the crisis the marriage re-enters normality. The main constant of the **devitalized marriage** is the erosion of harmonious, communication and love relationships, now in strong contrast with the images of "the first years". Little time spent together, and unsatisfactory sexual relations are just a few of the coordinates of this type of relationship. The only thing that keeps them together is the shared interest for raising and educating children. However, it is rarely concluded by ending the marriage, the spouses just indulging in this atmosphere of indifference. In the case of **passive-cordial marriage**, the passivity has characterized the relationship from the very beginning. These persons just do not want to get emotionally involved in a man-woman relationship, this family model facilitating a minimum of inconvenience against the spouse when it comes to personal independence. **The vital marriage** is based on an authentic relationship between the spouses, relationship that become essential for their

life. Any activity makes sense and is important only if the spouse takes part in it, they find satisfaction by living one for the other, the spouse dominates their interests, thoughts, and actions. **Total relationship marriage** is similar to the vital relationship, the mutuality points being more numerous. The spouses never lose their unity or the sense of their relationship's centrality, this being the main source for preserving the marriage (Mitrofan 1984, 69-71).

Helmuth Schelsky gave a historical classification of the most common types of marriages depending on the sexual freedom or constraint imposed to spouses by ethical or legal regulations and he distinguished several marital types. In the case of **relative polygamy**, the husband seems to have more than one wife, and the wife has the right to leave her husband, none of the spouses being forced to live together for life. The main characteristic of the **absolute polygamy** is that the woman is the one forced to dedicate, sexually speaking, exclusively to her husband while he has the legal right to have more legitimate sexual partners. Within a marriage founded on **moderate monogamy**, both spouses are forced to subordinate to monogamic sexuality, but they have the right to change their partners by divorcing. This is not the case with **absolute monogamy** when both spouses are forced to live their entire life within the couple. However, unlike his wife, the husband enjoys more sexual freedom and has more chances to remarry in case his spouse dies (Rădulescu 1999, 302-303).

Conclusions

Although within the married couple, time may wear out the feelings, diffusing the euphoria from the beginning and slowly, but surely, bringing the crisis, there still remain, in both spouses, immutable wishes. In every human being we can identify the need to have a faithful spouse, who can intercept the need to love and to be loved unconditionally, the desire to form a whole, to be inseparable, to share emotions, events, and projects, to understand and be understood. Regardless of the changes proposed by the modern and postmodern society, these have been the premises from which people entered the covenant of marriage, physical intimacy being the climax of the union between the two spouses, and these should still be the fundamental values for starting a functional marital couple.

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Transmission of Moral, Moral-Religious and Religious Values through the Educational System

Mihai Stoicescu, PhD Candidate

Aurel Vlaicu University, Arad, Romania

mihai.stoicescu2017@gmail.com

ABSTRACT: The Protestant Reformation of the 16th century brought, among other things, the development of the educational system, through which it transmitted its moral, moral-religious and religious values. The United States of America was formed as a Protestant society, its values influencing the lives of Americans. However, not only American society was influenced by Protestantism, but also the whole of modern society. Therefore, this study aimed to investigate if there are significant differences between Protestant values and those of traditional churches (in this case, the Romanian Orthodox Church). The results of the study demonstrated the existence of these differences in favor of Protestantism.

KEY WORDS: ethic, morality, values, education, Protestantism, Adventism

Introduction

In recent years, it has been clearly shown that the cultural dimension of development has become increasingly evident, in the sense that all cultural components have a causal role in the development of societies. That is why we talk about non-economic factors of development, about the importance of the education system, as a strategic place where the future of society is being prepared (Georgiu 2004, 153).

Referring to the non-economic factors of development, the American sociologist Daniel Chirot states that social changes are determined by these factors, which have their source in the fields of knowledge and education, where possible solutions and responses to the demands of society are formed. In his view, the most important factors of social change are the assimilation of science and new technologies, education and the ability of a culture to change within, producing new ideas, ways of thinking and representations. These new ideas must accumulate until they put pressure on society to change it (Chirot 1996, 214).

This study was born from these factors of non-economic development, this study was born, more precisely the way in which moral values are transmitted through the educational system. The Protestant Reformation was a 16th-century religious movement that not only sought to reform the Catholic Church in Western Europe by returning to the original purity of New Testament Christianity (Cairns 1997, 270), but transmitted moral-religious values by developing the Education. Therefore, the present study analyzes to what extent there is a significant difference between moral, moral-religious or religious values, transmitted through the Orthodox (the majority religion in Romania) and Protestant educational system.

A number of authors and/or researchers have confirmed the existence of significant differences between Protestant values and those of traditional Christianity (Catholic, for example). Thus, although England and France are, in many respects, similar societies (approximately the same profile of the population, with comparable socio-economic levels and technological developments), their educational systems are different due to contrasting cultural traditions: Protestant fundamental values in England, respectively Catholic in France (Sharpe 1997, 329-331).

America was founded as a Protestant society. For about two hundred years, almost all Americans were Protestants. This proportion began to decline as Catholic immigration increased. Thus, in 2000, about 60% of Americans were Protestants. However, Protestant beliefs, values, and dogmas continued to permeate and shape American life, society, and thinking. Firstly, the Protestant values, which are the core of American culture, have profoundly influenced both Catholicism and other American religions,

and secondly, they have shaped the Americans' attitudes toward public and private morality, economic activity, government activity, and public policies (Huntington 2004, 49).

However, it was not only American Protestantism that influenced Catholicism and other religions. The analysis carried out by Ronald Inglehart on the data from the World Values Survey (conducted between 1990-1993), has shown that, in fact, Catholics living in societies shaped by Protestantism throughout their history - Germany, Switzerland, the Netherlands and the United States - have similar values to those of their Protestant compatriots rather than those of Catholics in other countries (Huntington 2004, 73).

A major theme of Western scholars and Sociology, in particular, is the idea that Protestantism, compared to Catholicism, has historically been favorably inclined toward modernity and especially to accompany the development of capitalism and science (Lehman and Witty 1931; Knapp and Goodrich 1952; Knapp and Greenbaum 1953; Lenski 1963; Ben-David 1965; Feldhay and Elkana 1989). The best known author who promoted this theory was Max Weber, in his famous book *The Protestant Ethics and the Spirit of Capitalism* (also known as Weber's theory).

At the end of the 19th century, Martin Offenbacher examined the denominational composition of secondary schools in the state of Baden, Germany. The results of his statistical study are often cited to support this statement, that there is a link between Protestant ethics and the development of capitalism and science (Parsons 1968; Knapp and Goodrich 1952; McClelland 1967; Weber 2003, 25-35). This study shows that Protestants, compared to their representation in the German population, frequently outclass Catholics in various secondary schools, on various subjects: science, mathematics or other practical subjects (Becker 2000, 311-312).

Both Max Weber (2003, 28) and Robert K. Merton (1968, 628-660) reproduced Offenbacher's statistics from Baden (1885-1895) and demonstrated the superiority of Protestants regarding the capitalist entrepreneurial spirit (Weber's thesis) and the scientific efforts (Merton's thesis). Becker disputes these results, saying that in fact there is no significant difference between Protestants and Catholics (Becker 2000).

Several other authors have denied Weber's theory. Thus, a study conducted in 1990, World Values Survey, found that Weber's theory does not work in Latin America, at least in cultural terms of defining the role of Protestantism (Gill 2004). Studying the economic situation of Protestant countries in the 19th century, Delacroix and Nielsen concluded that the connection between Protestant ethics and the emergence of industrial capitalism in 19th Europe is an illusion (Delacroix and Nielsen 2001, 510-511).

However, a number of authors have confirmed the link between Protestant ethics and the emergence and development of industrialized capitalism in 19th century Europe (Barclay, 1969; Buck, 1993).

A study in post-colonial Africa has shown that the failure of Western capitalism in this region was explained by a lack of Protestant ethics. Traditional values and religions in sub-Saharan Africa are an impediment to the acceptance of Western capitalism. This is because the Western economic system is based on individualism, which is in conflict with communitarian-oriented African economic relations. Thus, Protestant ethics is indispensable for the development of capitalism (Murove 2005, 390).

In another US study, Wayne Baker and Melissa Forbes concluded that Protestants tend to have a pro-market attitude (that is, people need to take more responsibility for themselves), given the latest legacy of Protestant ethics and the spirit of capitalism. This suggests that the market is embedded in the moral system, just as it is embedded in the networks of social relations. The historical role of Protestantism in the development of modern capitalism suggests that today's Protestants may have a pro-market attitude compared to non-Protestants. Studies have also shown that moral values influence pro-market attitudes (Baker and Forbes 2006, 23-26).

Methodology

The study aimed to investigate the issue of moral, moral-religious and religious values transmitted to the individual through the education system. The aim is to see if there is a significant difference between Adventist and Orthodox high school students in terms of moral, moral-religious and religious values in the 2008-2009 school year.

The study was attended by 94 high school students, half from the Adventist religion (from the Adventist theological high school in Bucharest, Romania) and the other half from the Orthodox religion (the majority religion in Romania). The tool used was the “Inventory of values” made by the university lecturer Dr. Daniel Duta, who uses the Likert scale in five steps, from 5-very important to 1-unimportant. The inventory of values contains three subscales: moral values (friendship, love, intimacy, sincerity, sacrifice, modesty, responsibility, diligence, creativity, optimism), moral-religious values (happiness, hope, forgiveness, altruism, tolerance) and religious values (God, faith, prayer, Church, Bible, worship, service, sin, repentance, icon).

The measurement scales of the two variables are one of interval (moral value, moral-religious, religious) and the other nominal (religion). For testing the hypothesis we applied the “t student” test.

Results and discussions

Regarding the moral values, the significance threshold is 0.001 (less than 0.05), which means that the hypothesis is 99.9% true. In other words, there are significant differences between the two categories of students in terms of moral values in favor of Adventist students. They obtained higher scores than Orthodox students, as it can be seen in the graph below.

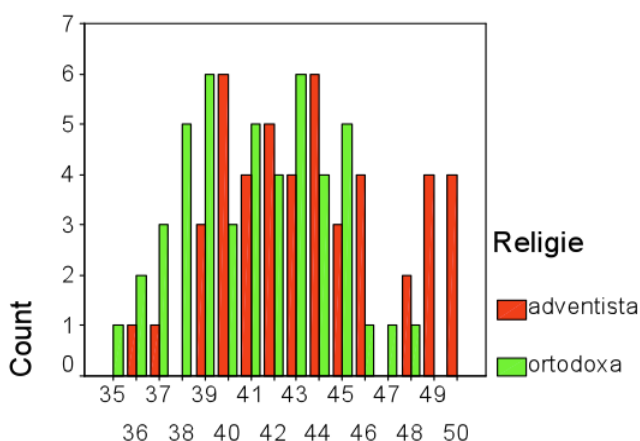


Figure 1. Moral Values

Analyzing each moral value separately, it is found that there are no significant differences between the two categories of students in terms of moral values such as: friendship, love, privacy, responsibility, creativity, optimism. Orthodox students obtained a higher sum of ranks than Adventist students in two moral values, friendship and intimacy. Adventist students obtained a higher rank than the Orthodox in the following moral values: love, responsibility, creativity and optimism.

Significant differences occur at moral values such as: sincerity ($p = 0.046$, the probability that the hypothesis is true is 96.4%), sacrifice ($p = 0.001$, the probability that the hypothesis is true is 99.1%), modesty ($p = 0.004$, the probability that the hypothesis is true is 99.6%), diligence ($p = 0.001$, the probability that the hypothesis is true is 99.1%) in favor of Adventist students, due to the higher scores obtained.

Following the analysis of the data, it is found that there are significant differences between Adventist and Orthodox students in terms of moral and religious values. According to the “t student” test, the significance threshold being $p = 0$, the probability that the hypothesis is true is 100%. As we can see in the chart below, Adventist students scored the best, which means that significant differences in moral and religious values are in favor of Adventist students.

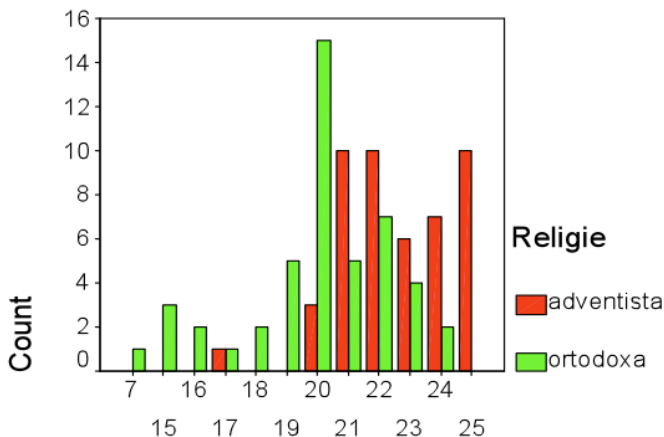


Figure 2. Moral-religious Values

Analyzing each moral-religious value separately, it is found that there are no significant differences between the two categories of students in terms of “happiness”. At this specific value, Orthodox high school students scored slightly higher than Adventists.

There are significant differences between the two categories of students regarding the following moral-religious values: hope ($p = 0$, the probability that the hypothesis is true is 100%), forgiveness ($p = 0$, the probability that the hypothesis is true is 100%), altruism ($p = 0$, the probability that the hypothesis is true is 100%) and tolerance ($p = 0.009$, which means that the probability that this hypothesis is true is 99.1%), all of these values being in favor of Adventist students.

Even regarding religious values, it is found that the hypothesis is true. The significance threshold, by performing the “t student” test, is $p = 0$, which means that the probability that the hypothesis is true is 100%. The differences are significant in favor of Adventist high school students who scored higher than their Orthodox peers, as can be seen in the chart below.

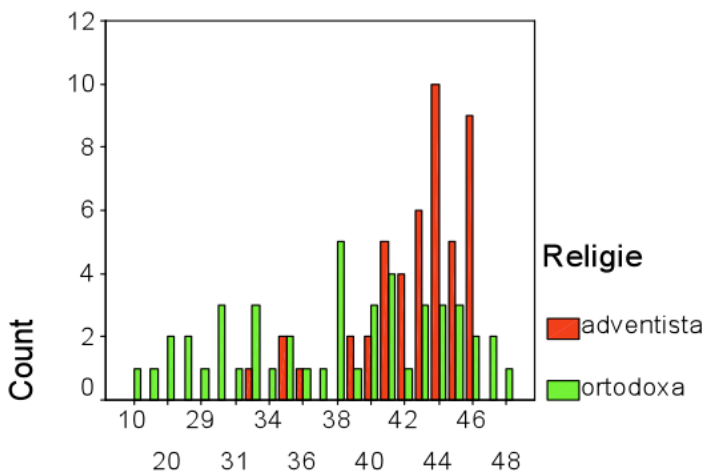


Figure 3. Religious Values

Analyzing each religious value separately, it is found that there are significant differences between Adventist and Orthodox students in favor of Adventist students regarding the following religious values: God, faith,

prayer, church, Bible, worship, service, sin and repentance. At all these values the significance threshold is $p = 0$, which means that the probability that the hypothesis is true is 100%.

We also notice significant differences between Adventist and Orthodox students in terms of the last religious value, the “the icon”. The significance threshold is $p = 0$, which means that the probability that this hypothesis is true is 100%. Significant differences are, this time, in favor of Orthodox students, who scored high on Adventists.

Conclusions

The study, conducted on the two categories of high school students, shows that Protestantism has influenced and still influences society through the values it transmits to the individual through the education system.

In terms of moral values, Adventists are more sincere, ready to sacrifice, more modest, and more diligent than Orthodox. At these moral values, significant differences were found between the two categories of young high school students. Although no significant differences were found in the other values, Adventists still have an extra love, responsibility, creativity and optimism towards the Orthodox (the latter having an extra friendship and intimacy).

Regarding moral-religious values, Adventist students have more hope, are more forgiving, more selfless, and more tolerant than Orthodox students. In terms of happiness, both categories are about equally happy.

Regarding religious values, God, faith, prayer, the church, the Bible, worship, ministry, the issue of sin, and repentance mean much more for Adventist students than for Orthodox students. The exception is the icon, which means a lot to Orthodox high school students, and this is because there are major doctrinal differences between the two religions regarding this religious value.

All these moral, moral-religious and religious values that have arrived in society through the individual can produce, at some point, changes for the better in today’s society, where respect for values, authority or work almost no longer exists.

Acknowledgment

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Understanding Borderline Personality Disorder

Lidija Ušurel, PhD Student

Doctoral School of Evangelical Theology, "Aurel Vlaicu" University of Arad,
Romania, lidiausurelu@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT: The central Christian presupposition underpinning the theme of this article was that while not all the diseases are a direct consequence of sin, the fundamental source of the entire human suffering, including that of mental disorders, is rooted in man's alienation from God. The goal of the article was to present a holistic, theologically grounded, psychologically attested and contextually relevant approach to borderline personality disorder, a particularly prevalent psychopathological disorder in South-Eastern Europe. The proposed goal was achieved by presenting the clinical picture of BPD, by listing the different perspectives on the etiology of BPD, and by identifying several ways in which this disorder could be approached and treated both psychologically and spiritually. To this end, the biological, socio-cultural, psychodynamic, cognitive-behavioral, and Christian theoretical approaches *to understanding* BPD were presented, and a description of several therapeutic approaches *to the treatment* of BPD was also offered.

KEY WORDS: hypersensitivity, emotional dysregulation, maladaptive core-beliefs, fragmented sense of self, impulsive behavior, relational instability, deficient parenting

Introduction

Strange, odd, eccentric, anxious, dangerous... Messing up life and all relationships, endangering oneself and others, scared of being alone but even more frightened of getting close to the other, suspicious, self-centered, moody and unpredictable, violent, self-harming, suicidal ... And the list may continue. What is the cause of that which in psychiatry and psychology is known as Personality Disorders – genetics or environment, childhood experience or learning, socio-cultural factors and current triggering circumstances or sinful humanity?

Since highly prevalent in South-Eastern Europe but often not yet acknowledged as a severe difficulty that needs professional assistance and intervention, the focus of this article is on Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD). The choice of the topic is mostly due to an attitude of ignorance towards BPD, but also due to the recent vast professional research of the phenomenon worldwide. Thus, BPD will be predominantly approached from a psychological perspective, not overlooking the theological aspect either. This article presents the clinical picture of BPD, the way this disorder could be approached and treated psychologically, and a short spiritual intervention plan, since humanity is God's creation endowed with "functional, structural and relational" resemblance to its Creator (McMinn and Campbell, 2007, 34).

The goal of this article is not, however, to find out whether sin has or does not have a contribution to psychopathology, for psychopathology is the effect of the original sin, a state of being "not the way it is supposed to be" (Plantinga 1995, 14). The intent of this article is rather to shed some light on the particular role each of the agents play in establishing the etiology, development and treatment of BPD as a complex network of biological, social, cultural, psychological and spiritual factors. Nevertheless, without a proper understanding of the nature, cause and purpose of the human existence, dealing with BPD would be just another exercise of structural improvement and maintenance of a system, in accordance with the relative standards set up by and acceptable to a society.

Who we really are? Created in God's image

If humans would have been the result of “mindless, unguided natural processes”, then the “reliability of human cognitive faculties and therefore (...) the validity of any belief that they produce – including (...) science” (Lennox 2011, 54) – would be undermined. Without being able to trust rationality because it is but *mindless, unguided brain activity*, truth and science is “left without any warranty” (Lennox 2011, 55). If, however, becoming a living being is the result of the actions of an intelligent and loving God, the inevitable implication is that the basic understanding of the true human nature and identity cannot be achieved outside its ontological rootedness in the divine intentionality. Thus, coming into being by the *intentional* action of the Sovereign Creator endows humanity with *value, meaning and purpose* (Jones and Butman 1991, 42).

According to the creation account, the value bestowed upon humanity results from its *resemblance to the Creator*, a gift freely received from God. Being created in His image speaks about a *personal, compound* and yet *united* human being (material and immaterial; spirit, soul and body; embodied soul and ensouled body), invested with *rationality, freedom and morality, emotion and motivation*, responsible for *stewardship* over the entire creation, and meant to thrive in *loving relationships* – with God and fellow humans.

And yet, by entering humanity, sin nearly compromised the initial divine plan, leading to structural, functional and relational distortion of the image of God in humankind. As the rebellion estranged the creature from its Creator, all cosmological stability was shaken – human finitude interwove with moral and natural evil, and the result was a world deeply affected by wrong choices, decay, diseases, suffering and death.

What have we become? Borderline Personality Disorder

While not all diseases are the direct consequence of sin, the fundamental source of the entire human suffering is rooted in man's alienation from God. All disabilities, including mental disorders, are bearing the mark of the lost paradise. The desperate yearning for intimacy, relatedness and love, are but the signs of a weary soul entangled in its own weakness as a result of living in and being affected by a sinful world.

Recently, borderline personality disorder ranked among the most researched psychological disorders, alongside with antisocial personality disorder (Halgin and Whitbourne 2007, 313). The term *borderline* originates with the clinicians' observations that clients with this disorder function somewhere at the border between neurosis and psychosis. The main characteristic of the borderline disorder is *hypersensitivity to rejection* and the resulting generalized *instability* that permeates one's *interpersonal relationships*, one's *sense of the self and identity*, the *emotional (affective) sphere* and the *behavioral (impulsivity) domain* of the individual (APA, DSM-5TM 645, 663; Nietzel, Speltz, McCauley and Bernstein 1998, 420).

Individuals suffering of BPD develop particularly turbulent and unstable *interpersonal relationships*. Most BPD clients report pervasive, chronic feeling of *emptiness* and *loneliness*, which forces them to desperately seek inner fulfilment by getting involved in sudden intimate relationships. They typically rush into intense and passionate relationship with individuals that are initially almost idealized, but very soon, at the first disillusionment and appearance of threatening signs of abandonment, those very "idols" become targets of the harshest criticism and devaluation. Since BPD clients cannot tolerate to be alone, they invest an enormous *effort to avoid real or imagined abandonment*. So, when the slightest feeling of rejection or a dim suspicion of being neglected arises, the uncontrollable *anger* erupts, and BPD individuals become self-destructive and/or violent against the others. The intense behavioral outburst leaves the BPD clients with an acute sense of *guilt* and *evilness*, because of their belief that abandonment insinuates that they are "bad".

Another distinctive feature of individuals with BPD is proneness to mood shifts. The dramatic shift from a *normal* emotional state to *depression*, *despair*, *panic* and/or *anger* usually represents an extreme response to *interpersonal difficulties*, often perceived/interpreted as intentions of abandonment. An emotional state of being typically lasts between a few hours and several days. These dramatic and sudden shifts also mark one's *identity* and *sense of self* that fluctuate because of the feelings of uncertainty. In an attempt to find their real self and to get rid of the disturbing feeling of "being bad" and of "not existing at all," clients with BPD rush into sudden

change of values, goals, career, friends, even sexual identity (Halgin and Whitbourne 2007, 320).

Emptiness and fear of abandonment are not the only factors that motivate BPD individuals to engage in *impulsive behaviors*, but also *boredom*. In search for stimulation, these individuals get involved in substance abuse, perverse sexual activity, reckless driving, irresponsible money spending, gambling, excessive eating, and self-mutilating behavior (burning themselves with cigarettes, cutting themselves with knives), although not always with suicidal intention. Self-mutilating behavior helps the individual “feel alive” or “real”. When connected with feelings of rejection and abandonment, self-mutilating behavior provides release from psychological pain, and represents atonement for the “sense of being evil” while retaliating (Holmes 2001, 348).

An interesting feature of BPD is the presence of the self-undermining pattern that starts functioning when the individual is just about to achieve a certain goal (regressing after a significant improvement, quitting school just before graduation, spoiling a relationship when it has become promising) (APA, *DSM-5TM* 2013, 665). Some individuals experience thought disturbances similar to psychosis (hallucinations, delusions, distortions), but these symptoms hardly require additional diagnosis because they appear in close connectedness to stressful situations, and clients are aware of the oddness of their experience. Stressful experiences are particularly difficult for BPD because their otherwise high vulnerability increases even more, and the paranoid ideas of being monitored or conspired against, intensify.

BPD may involve a wide range of symptoms, or a combination of symptoms interweaving with other Personality Disorders, and with Depressive or Bi-polar Disorders. As such, BPD is a highly challenging disorder for both researchers and clinicians, acknowledged by some as one of the “most severe” personality disorders (Nietzel, Speltz, McCauley and Bernstein 1998, 421).

How did we get here? Theories of Borderline Personality Disorders

There are many theories about the development of BPD. Although most psychologists agree that both nature and nurture are working together to

cause the disorder's settlement, each particular theoretical approach gives priority to one of the underlying causal factors. Therefore, besides the biological theoretical approach, there is also the Psychodynamic, Cognitive-Behavioral, and the Learning Psychological Theory, whose contribution in the field are recognized as significant not only for theoretical but also for practical, clinical purposes.

Biological Theoretical Approach

Until recently, mental health professionals have agreed that biology does not have a *clear causal role* in the development of BPD. Although it was noticed that organic, neurological brain damage may result in symptoms resembling to BPD (unstable moods, impulsivity, attention and learning difficulties), the mere similarity between the symptoms could not support the assumption that the cause of BPD is biological (Gagnon, Bouchard, and Rainville 2006, 1-28). Also, there were many clients with BPD who were not diagnosed with neurological damage (Nietzel 1998, 429). Consequently, neurological brain damage could not be considered the main cause of BPD.

However, some recent studies pointed out that genetics has a significant role in describing *higher prevalence of similar personality disorders among relatives*, and particularly a "higher rate of borderline personality disorder for monozygotic versus dizygotic twins" (Amad, Ramoz, Thomas, Jardri, and Gorwood 2014, 40:6-19). Also, there were studies researching the role of *neurotransmitter dysregulation* in the setting of BPD that have indicated that early childhood *trauma* (neglect, abuse, domestic violence, the loss of a parent) *tends to produce a lasting damage in sympathetic functioning of the brain* and thus, to *sensitize* individuals to overreact to events later in life (Nietzel 1998, 429-430). These studies seem to indicate that there may be a certain genetic predisposition/vulnerability toward the development of BPD, as well as an interconnection between early childhood traumatic experiences and neurological dysregulation, that may contribute to the development of BPD later in life (Halgin and Whitbourne 2007, 321-322).

Socio-Cultural Theoretical Approach

Another perspective that deals with the etiology of BPD is the Socio-Cultural Theory. Proponents of this approach believe that the main reason for BPD

development is *deficient parenting, family conflict, and socio-cultural instability* (environmental change of norms and expectations) (Halgin and Whitbourne 2007, 321-322). These authors describe how individuals exposed to chronic parental conflict develop a sense of uncertainty, of pervasive instability and unpredictability of life, which lays out the foundation for the disorder. When, in addition to negative family influence, social non-cohesiveness reinforces the pattern of instability, the path leading to BPD development in these highly sensitized individuals becomes smooth. The underlying mechanisms of BPD development are, in this case, *perpetual transmitting and social learning*.

Psychodynamic Theoretic Approach

Psychodynamic theories are largely known for emphasizing the role of the family of origin and parenting in the development of personality disorders. The object-relation approach formulated by Klein, Fairbairn, Kernberg, and others, presupposes that the major underlying problem of BPD is an inadequate and *unstable self-identity* (Kernberg and Michels 2009; Volkan 1987, 14). The main assumption of the theory is that essential characteristics of personality are determined by one's intrapsychic dealing with "internalized images" of the external "objects", usually parents or caregivers of the child. These relationships model one's representations of the self and representations of others which can be either healthy or abnormal. While a healthy, mature adult creates integrated and adaptive images of the self and others, "the lack of integration of self-representations and of object-representations under contradictory loving and hateful affect states" (Kernberg, Michels 2009, 506) leads to a *fragmented, split, ambivalent, and immature sense of self*. The *contradictory and chaotic identity* that results impairs the capacity of the individual to maintain healthy and pleasant relationships.

Object-relation theorists also focus on the quality of the *early attachment and disturbed (harmful) patterns of parenting*. They emphasize how early attachment shapes the child's *expectations* regarding appropriate or inappropriate responsiveness of others. By the same mechanism, attachment sets up the child to develop *basic needs and vulnerabilities* that will permeate all of his or her relationships in life, and these may become habitually resistant to change. Representing the core of personality, the child's expectations,

needs and vulnerabilities are perceived as mutating into disorders only when becoming *extreme and rigid*.

The psychodynamic approach considers that harmful patterns of parenting are *over-involvement* and *emotional withdrawal* of the mothers. These patterns include emotional inconsistency and over-protection, a combination that causes the instability and crossfire of emotions in the child. Inadequate and unbalanced satisfaction of the child's emotional needs, both in terms of closeness and in terms of independence, leads to ambivalent and split emotions – the need for intimacy is obstructed by the fear of being overwhelmed by the suffocating parent, and the need for independence is blocked by the fear of abandonment. Due to these harmful patterns of parenting, the child cannot develop a stable identity, and a sense of integrated self that would be capable for both intimacy and independence, and would capacitate the adult to initiate and maintain stable, spontaneous, and sharing relationships.

Cognitive-Behavioral Theoretic Approach

The cognitive-behavioral approach regards all psychical events, including disorders, as interactive processes between *cognition, emotions and behaviors* (Ellis 2008, 187). The presupposition of this theory is that rational or irrational inner beliefs of the BPD client determine the interpretation of an external event which further conditions the rising of appropriate or inappropriate emotions and, consequently, of adaptive or maladaptive behaviors (Ellis and Dryden 2002, 13-14). Thus, cognitive-behavioral approach focuses on assessing *maladaptive thoughts* that are fueled by strong desires and preferences that interpret reality in terms of absolute “shoulds” and “musts.” CBT is also concerned with addressing the *dichotomy in one's sense of self* that is connected to maladaptive thinking in terms of “all or nothing” (“I must succeed in this enterprise, or I worth for nothing”; Halgin and Whitbourne, 2007, 322). The more so, as the dichotomized oscillation of the client between extremes (initial idealization and subsequent extreme depreciation) is generalized, and applied both to the self-evaluation process (affecting general self-image, lowering self-confidence and decreasing motivation) and to all one's interpersonal exchanges, further complicating one's relationships.

A Christian Theoretic Approach

Constructing upon Adler and Young's theories, Clinton, Hart and Ohlschlanger have developed a Christian theoretic approach to dealing with BPD. Clinton et al.'s Christian cognitive-behavioral model focuses on the evaluation of maladaptive thinking from a biblical truth's perspective. The assumption of the theory is that while searching for *identity and significance*, the child operates on the basis of healthy or unhealthy beliefs, and healthy or unhealthy behaviors, and develops a particular "personality-style". When personality style is underlined by mistaken beliefs that precipitate unhealthy behaviors, the foundations of the BPD disorder are laid (Clinton, Hart, and Ohlschlanger 2005, 226-227).

According to these authors, there are three factors responsible for the formation of the personality style: *cognition* (cognitive content – core-beliefs, intermediate beliefs, and automatic thoughts; cognitive processes – selective attention, fallacious interpretations, and ego-defense mechanisms), *emotions*, and *behaviors*. Authors assume that early traumatic experiences lead to the establishment of one's erroneous cognitive patterns and core beliefs, often discordant with reality, which further contribute to the formation of a poor self-image, wrong images about the world, and inadequate images of one's relationships. There are eight categories of core-beliefs that require an assessment from the biblical point of view – beliefs about the self, beliefs about the other, beliefs regarding one's relationships, beliefs about intimacy and sexuality, beliefs about morality, and beliefs about God, and life purpose.

How can the healing take place? Assessment and Intervention

An important step in dealing with BPD is to apply an appropriate personality assessment. Clinical assessment represents "an indispensable link in the chain of treatment, a process of solving problems in which tests are often used as a method of collecting important information" (Clinton, and Ohlschlanger 2002, 302). Although human beings are extremely demanding for evaluation enterprise because of their bio-psycho-social-spiritual complexity, the key to doing an appropriate personality assessment is gathering data from as many sources as possible.

Broadly speaking, there are two ways of doing assessment, subjective and objective. The objective assessment refers to the application of *standardized psychological tests*, while the subjective approach gathers data from *interviews and observation of the client*. The most often used *psychological tests* are the *intelligence tests* (Stanford-Binet test and Wechsler intelligence test), and *personality and diagnostic tests* (self-report inventories, MMPI, projective testing - Rorschach and Thematic Apperception Test) (Aiken 2003). The most common techniques of the subjective approach to assessment are *clinical interviews* (Ledley, Marx, and Heimberg 2005, 39-40) *observation of the client (mental status examination, assessment of emotion and perceptual experiences)* (Lineham 1993, 41-44), *self-assessment of the client, secondhand reports, expressive tools, checklists and questionnaires, and multimodal inventories*.

The psychophysiological assessment is another evaluation technique that follows changes appearing in client's cardiovascular and muscular system, on the surface of the skin and in the brain, changes that are associated with emotional or psychological experiences (electroencephalogram – EEG, magnetic resonance imaging – MRI, computed axial tomography – CAT) (Aiken 2003, 203-208). All these serve as good indicators of possible brain damage and neuropsychological conditioning of personality disorders.

Currently, there are many approaches to BPD treatment. This research will focus on the ones most commonly applied, such as the psychodynamic, cognitive-behavioral (dialectic-behavioral and schema-focused), pharmacological, and the Christian therapeutic approach.

Psychodynamic Therapeutic Approach

The object-relation therapy is prominently applied in the treatment of BPD. The core assumption of BPD is that the fragmented sense of self is shaped by the infant's dichotomous experience of the maternal figure – “the loving and nurturing mother who provides for the child, and the punishing ... mother who deprives the child” (Chapman, Jamil, and Fleisher 2020); if this contradiction is not integrated into a more balanced concept, it will ultimately lead to a fractured sense of self.

The focus of the object-relation therapy is to examine client's relationships, and the way his past feelings and attitudes for the significant

other are *transferred* on the current therapeutic relationship. Therefore, a present *healthy relationship* should be perceived as incorporating high therapeutic potential because it may precede a healthier development of personality. In a context of spontaneous and mutual therapist-patient relationship, the distorted, internalized images of the patient may surface. This allows the therapist to subtly confront and redirect patient's *interpretations of the self and of the others* by means of *countertransference*, toward a more *reasonable, objective and integrated* ones. The psychodynamic approach emphasizes the connectedness of the childhood experience and particularly of *traumatic experiences* (neglect or abuse) with identity modeling, emotional instability and self-mutilating behaviors, characteristic to BPD (Winston 2000, 211-212).

Cognitive-Behavioral Therapeutic Approach

Dialectic Behavioral Therapy

Formulated by Marsha M. Lineham, the dialectic behavioral therapy (DBT) presupposes that reality exists as two opposing forces (thesis and antithesis). The main aim of the therapy is for the clients to acquire synthesis. Lineham perceives BPD individuals as stuck in dichotomized polarities and attempts to enable them to reconcile their opposite ideas while moving toward synthesis (Lineham 1993, 1-4).

According to the DBT approach, the basic dysfunction of clients with borderline personality disorder is *emotional dysregulation*, which includes emotional vulnerability (oversensitivity), inappropriate emotional reaction (over-reactivity), and inadequate emotion *regulation strategies*. DBT also assumes that the *invalidating and abusive families* fail to teach the child how to “modulate arousal, to tolerate distress or to trust his own emotional responses as valid interpretations of events” (Lineham 1993, 2-4). Also, these chronically dysfunctional families foster the interference of the environmental unpredictability with the child's weak emotional regulation and with his low sense of self, resulting in maladaptive, impulsive and destructive behaviors. Thus, adults from invalidating and abusive backgrounds lack the capacity to handle intense emotions, to settle realistic goals, and to cope with life difficulties.

The dialectic behavioral therapy seeks to enable the client to develop greater tolerance to painful emotions, to gradually reduce high risk-behaviors, and become more comfortable with change. The DBT also helps the client to face past traumatic experiences, to work on the elimination of self-blame and to reshape the interpretation of the trauma (while working to the reduction of symptoms). The maintenance of a genuine, positive, highly supportive and collaborative relationship between the therapist and the client is crucial in this process. By providing a *supportive* environment and by *balancing validation of the client's current state* (emotions, cognitions and behaviors) with promoting *change*, the DBT accomplishes the goal of synthesis, i.e., of reshaping dysfunctional behaviors and thoughts of the client.

Schema Focused Cognitive-Therapy (Young)

Another integrative approach to BPD treatment is Jeffrey Young's schema focused therapy (Young 1994). Combining elements from cognitive, behavioral, object-relation and gestalt therapy, the basic assumption of the SFC therapy is that "early maladaptive schemas," formed during the childhood and maintained throughout the adult life, underlie BPD. Young's therapy operates with four major concepts - maladaptive schemas, schema domains, coping styles, and schema modes.

Maladaptive schemas represent "broad pervasive themes regarding oneself and one's relationship with others" (Winston 2000, 214). They are shaped by traumatic childhood experiences and are connected with the significant other's response to the basic emotional needs of the child. These schemas are organized in five *schema domains* related to the *child's expectation that his particular needs will not be met*. Young (2012) speaks about the *disconnection and rejection* schema domain, *impaired autonomy and performance, impaired limits, other directedness, overvigilance, and inhibition* schema domain (. Maladaptive schemas develop into particularly unhealthy, self-defeating, rigid and pervasive patterns that individual keeps repeating throughout his life.

Each child, while attempting to survive in a difficult environment and to make sense of his traumatic experiences, also develops a particular

coping style. The most common coping styles a child may use are surrender, avoidance, and overcompensation. *Schema Modes* are the predominant states of being of an individual, and represent a composition made of one's schemas, emotional states and coping behaviors, activated when responding to the ongoing life events. While acting out of one schema mode, the other modes exist in a dormant state. Also, in healthy individuals, shifting from one mode to another is a smooth process, but in individuals with BPD, there is a dissociative relationship between different coping modes. There are four categories of schema modes, the Child Modes, the Maladaptive Coping Modes, the Maladaptive Parent Modes and The Healthy Adult Modes. Schema therapy is focused on helping BPD client to strengthen one's Healthy Adult mode.

A Christian therapeutic approach

Clinton, Hart and Ohlschlanger's Christian therapeutic approach to BPD requires an assessment of the client's thoughts and behaviors. Identification of *maladaptive schemas* and *maladaptive core beliefs* by recognition of the automatic and/or *intermediate beliefs* has the purpose of enlightening the root problems of the individual. The therapy is basically concerned with detecting mistaken beliefs regarding personal sense of worth and lovability, issues concerning predictability and trustworthiness of others, relationship related issues, and God related issues. Among the last one, authors mention general beliefs about God, beliefs about God's attitude toward oneself, moral beliefs, teleological beliefs, and beliefs about intimacy and sexuality (Clinton, Hart and Ohlschlanger 2005, 227-228).

After identifying maladaptive core beliefs (cognitive content), the therapy concentrates upon detecting *unhealthy cognitive processes* (misinterpreted data by selective attention, the misuse of defensive mechanisms) and *maladaptive behaviors*, which interfere with one's everyday living and reinforce a particular lifestyle. Through Socratic questioning and behavioral skills, the therapist guides the client toward the acknowledgement of his own disabling self-talk, and helps him to replace it gradually with a healthier and biblically rooted thinking. The final goal of the therapy is to

reshape client's core beliefs, so that the distorted image of the self and of others, as well as images of one's relationships with others and with God, may be changed (Clinton, Hart and Ohlschlanger 2005, 234-238).

The therapy is led by symptoms reduction, and aims to increasing the general cognitive, emotional, relational, and spiritual well-being of the individual. The entire process is assessed from a biblical perspective and applies biblical truth for addressing both psychological features of the disorder and the spiritual ones.

Psychopharmacological Therapeutic Approach

Besides psychotherapy, some clinicians also suggest medication in treatment of BPD. Being aware that no medication by itself can effectively deal with BPD, and also that some interventions are more successful when particular symptoms are targeted, these clinicians recommend medication whenever impulsive and depressive symptoms of borderline personality disorder require such an intervention.

Conclusion

The borderline personality disorder is a complex phenomenon. As such, it requires a comprehensive and holistic approach to the assessment and treatment of the maladaptive state of being which encompasses one's entire personality with its biological, psychological (cognitive, emotional, volitional, and behavioral), socio-cultural and spiritual dimensions. Consequently, Christian professionals should be more attuned to finding a cross-disciplinary approach to dealing with mental disorders in general, and with the BPD, in particular. Keeping in mind a century-long dispute about whether theology and psychopathology are related and how they mutually influence each other (Butman 2002), the need for acknowledging the distinctiveness of the two, and to find an eclectic approach which would be theologically assessed, biblically based and pathology including, becomes more obvious. For if it is dangerous to overlook a sin, it is futile to repent a symptom (Dueck 2002).

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Do You See What I See? Assessing the Relationships between Demographics, Street Trees and Visual Recognition of Urban Buildings

Yuen T. Tsang

Department of History, Sociology, Geography and GIS, Tarleton State University, Stephenville, Texas, United States, tsang@tarleton.edu

ABSTRACT: As more “green” cities are emerging in the 21st century, human recognition of urban buildings can be obstructed by increasing amount of vegetation in urban areas. While the architectural designs of urban buildings are more complicated than before, architects often seek the maximum exposure of the design to public. If vegetation obstructs significant portions of an innovative design of a building, the visual value and attractiveness of the building can diminish greatly. People may not be able to retain much visual and spatial memories about a building or even a city because their views are obstructed. This paper begins with a thorough review of current and past literature about the relationship between buildings, street trees, and visibility in urban environments. The purpose of this research is to identify factors that influence visual recognizability of buildings in an urban environment such as distance away from buildings, presence of vegetation, frequent downtown visits, and physical forms of buildings using a geographic approach. The result can be beneficial to urban planners, architects, city planners, urban geographers, and city tourism board for better integrating vegetation and buildings in a cityscape. The goal of understanding people’s visual recognition and perception of urban objects is to raise inhabitant’s satisfaction, capture their attention, and make strong impressions towards the city.

KEY WORDS: Environmental Perception, Human-environment geography, Urban Planning, Urban Geography, Urban Design, Human perception, Urban Buildings, Urban Morphology

Introduction

Visibility and viewshed analyses have been applied to many disciplines to identify and solve spatial problems regarding which objects can or cannot be seen from observation points across natural terrain or a built environment. With the availability of the Geographic Information System (GIS) toolkits, visibility studies have become increasingly accessible in different disciplines, such as architecture (Turner et al., 2001), archaeology (Fisher et al., 1997 ; Paliou, 2011), urban planning (Danese, 2009), human behavior, (Pearson et al., 2014) and forestry (Dean et al., 1997). The current approaches used in visibility and viewshed studies heavily focus on the accuracy of viewshed delineation techniques. The accuracy of these techniques can be affected by different sources of error.

Riggs and Dean (2007) suggest that errors from digital elevation models (DEMs), the limited spatial resolution of DEMs, and differing algorithms used by different GIS packages may have possibly contributed to the inaccuracy and non-repeatability in viewshed analysis. They tested their ideas by comparing predicted viewsheds, which were produced by a variety of DEMs and algorithms, to survey DEMs in several natural mountainous areas. The same DEM and GIS-based viewshed analysis techniques evaluated in natural areas by Riggs and Dean are also used to delineate visibility in rural environments (Floriani & Magillo, 2003). Little research exists in the evaluation of the accuracy of these techniques when they are applied to an urban environment. A lack of studies concerning how these techniques empirically reflect actual human perception and recognition toward urban environments can be observed.

In addition to the concepts of visibility and viewshed, one of the fundamental concepts explaining an individual's perception and navigation across space in an urban environment is their ability to identify and recognize surrounding urban objects. Lynch (1960) suggests that structuring and identifying the environment is an important trait shared by all mobile animals and man. As most of the previous research heavily focuses on the visibility and viewshed delineation, little research exists regarding the expansion of the scope of studying how an urban object is perceived spatially with the

investigation of recognizability of urban objects. It can be argued that the recognizability of urban objects such as buildings can be at least perceived as an important element of wayfinding, similar to visibility (Lynch, 1960).

Lynch asserts the strategic link in the process of wayfinding is what he considers as the environmental image, which indicates the generalized mental picture of the exterior physical world held by a person. In a cluttered environment, permeated with innumerable high-rise buildings and skyscrapers, a person may use recognizable buildings as landmarks for spatial and navigational references. Numerous buildings can be seen from any vantage point within an urban area, but not all of them are recognizable—many are nondescript and could be confused with another. The recognizability of a building is a function of the surrounding topography, characteristics of the structure, the building's architectural design, and personal experience. The latter is in a realm of psychology and human behavior and does not serve as the primary focus of this research.

Echoing Lynch's ideas in the 1960s, cities today are concerned about their "image" as a tourist destination (Heath et al., 2000). Heath et al. (2000) stated that tourist publications, postcards, souvenirs, and shows on television indicate that the form of the urban skyline is an extremely important component of the city's image. Investigating how the spatial configuration of a city creates this kind of image for both inhabitants and tourists is vital. Buildings are anchors in many urban realms, and, therefore, their unique recognition and visualization contribute to a city's visual signature. While the spatial configuration of a modern city in the 21st century contains more trees and parks than before, the visual signature of a city does not just rely on the silhouette of skylines. Vegetation can significantly complicate the creation of such visual images, as vegetation may block critical parts of buildings; hence, recognition and visualization of building structures is reduced. Urban planners, landscape designers, and geographers may be able to preserve the image of a city by scrutinizing the attributes of the recognizability of urban buildings. In simple terms, they can ensure that buildings, especially the iconic ones, are clearly recognized and visualized from various distances without hindering the view of vegetation. As a result, it is vital to understand how buildings can be recognized in such a complex urban environment.

Again, despite a considerable number of scholarly works devoted to visibility analysis (Bartie et al., 2011; Yin et al., 2012; Fisher et al., 1997), as yet no research the author is aware of has addressed recognizability of urban buildings from the perspective of geospatial information science. This paper offers a preliminary research of the subject of the recognizability of spatial objects in a geospatial context. The result of this paper can be applied in the areas of the perception of landscape, cities' image creation, visual quality assessment, urban planning, building design, and spatial configuration of a city.

By offering methods to better understand and quantify recognizability of spatial objects in urban environment, this research aims to investigate the spatial relationship between the observer, obscuring vegetation, and the targets (buildings) and how this relationship influences one aspect of the recognizability of the targets in an urban setting.

The research presented here specifically attempts to provide answers to the following questions:

1. How buildings are recognized by inhabitants in an urban environment?
2. How can the "recognizability" of buildings be defined and quantified from a geospatial perspective?
3. What are the factors that may potentially influence and predict the recognizability of buildings in an urban environment?
4. What are the implications of investigating factors of the recognizability of buildings in an urban environment?

This study attempts to predict the potential attributes that influence the recognizability of buildings in New York City. This research is conducted to better understand how distance, socio-demographic factors, and vegetation influence the recognizability of buildings within the study area. The goal of this research is not to develop a comprehensive and exhaustive model of predicting recognizability. Instead, this paper is a preliminary exploration that attempts to investigate factors of recognizability and suggests how they might be developed and tested through various approaches from a statistical and spatial perspective.

Literature review

One of the main scopes of geospatial information sciences is providing the necessary tools and techniques to better understand the interaction between humans and their surrounding environments. Lynch (1960) stresses that structuring and identifying the environment is an important ability that is shared by all mobile animals and humans. The need to recognize and pattern our surroundings is equally vital (Lynch, 1960). Human perception toward landscape features has long roots in the realm of geography (Mark et al., 1999; Suleiman et al., 2011; Swetnam et al., 2016; Pardo-García et al., 2017), landscape perception (Sadalla et al., 1980; Zube et al., 1982; Heath & Smith, 2000), urban planning (Daniel, 2001; Bruce Hull et al., 1989; Downes et al., 2015), and architectural studies (Appleyard, 1969; Chang et al., 2018). As the recognition of objects in an environment leads to the interaction between humans and their surroundings, it can be also studied through the lens of geospatial information sciences, which encompasses one of the main scopes of this research.

Human interactions with their surroundings are profoundly complex in a cityscape or an urban environment. A three-dimensional (3D) approach is able to ratify and capture the multi-dimensional reality of how human beings recognize and perceive their surroundings. Urban landscape elements, such as the topological relations between spatial objects, spatial configuration of the city, and visual observation of spatial objects, create the image of a city (Lynch, 1960; Appleyard, 1969; Heath & Smith, 2000). The image provides city planners, designers, and officials a reference to better construct the urban form of this city and improve environmental quality or aesthetics.

The topological relations between spatial objects are widely studied in the field of city model creation (Brenner et al., 2001; Frueh et al., 2004; Shibasaki, 1992), however, these studies overlook the obstruction of vegetation during the process of model creation. The presence of vegetation can also serve as a major obstacle in conventional isovist and visibility studies. Vegetation can become one of the potential factors that influence the recognizability of urban buildings. The literature review below attempts to investigate how previous researches have failed in recognizing the power of vegetation in diminishing one's ability to recognize the target object.

After all, it is necessary to differentiate “seeing the object” from “recognizing the object.” This difference is particularly influential in urban studies. As the previous scholarly works heavily relied on the studies of visibility (Turner et al., 2001; Yang et al., 2007; Yin et al., 2012), recognizability of urban objects can help better to construct the form of a cityscape by city planners and officials, where it mimics the reality of how humans perceive the city (Appleyard, 1969; Zube et al., 1982). Appleyard (1969) in his early study mentioned that planners and architects will possess a powerful design tool if one can predict how well the buildings and structures of the city known. To do this, it is vital to study why buildings are known by discovering the attributes of buildings and structures that capture the attention of the inhabitants of the city.

Understanding how buildings are recognized is equally important in the visualization of landscape on ex ante photography during the planning and design phases of landscape architecture projects (Downes et al., 2015). Different depictions of urban elements on an ex ante photo can impact the accuracy, representativeness, visual clarity, interest, legitimacy, and access to visual information for a professional landscape or architectural project (Downes et al., 2015). Downes et al. (2015) attempted comparing the visualization of different urban elements, such as streetlights, vegetation, street furniture, built structures on ex-ante photographs, and ex-post photographs of architectural and landscape projects. Existing trees and background shrubs are often omitted in these photographs to improve the view of proposed buildings.

In fact, the presence of trees and shrubs may add positive and appealing visual effects on the ex-ante and ex-post photographs of architectural projects. It is thus necessary to include trees and shrubs in these photographs to achieve a genuine background. One of the critical solutions to this dilemma is to understand the spatial relationship and the arrangement between surrounding trees and buildings to create an unobstructed view of the building development in the ex-ante photographs. The following questions can be raised regarding this issue: 1) How are buildings and structures recognized? 2) Which part/parts of the building should not be blocked by vegetation in order to communicate and highlight the iconic feature of the building under development?

Isovist and visibility

To further understand the theme of recognizability of this research, one must understand conventional geospatial concepts about perceiving space. The concepts of isovist and visibility have been studied for many years. Many scholars have devoted their lives to investigate these concepts with the application of GIS. Unfortunately, very little research has contributed toward the concept of recognizability with the application of GIS. The following sections illustrate and differentiate the concepts of isovist, visibility, and recognizability in the context of geospatial information science.

Isovist

The isovist concept has been used for spatial analysis and architectural purposes for several decades. Benedikt (1979) coined the term “isovist” to define a set of points that are visible from a vantage (observer) point in space. He applied the notion of isovist in interpreting the perception of architectural space, where the set of points in a polygon region A (area in yellow color) are visible from a point X (Figure 1). Suleiman et al. (2012) illustrated applications of the isovist approach in the field of urban planning, navigation systems, visual surveillance, publicity placement, and wireless network architecture.

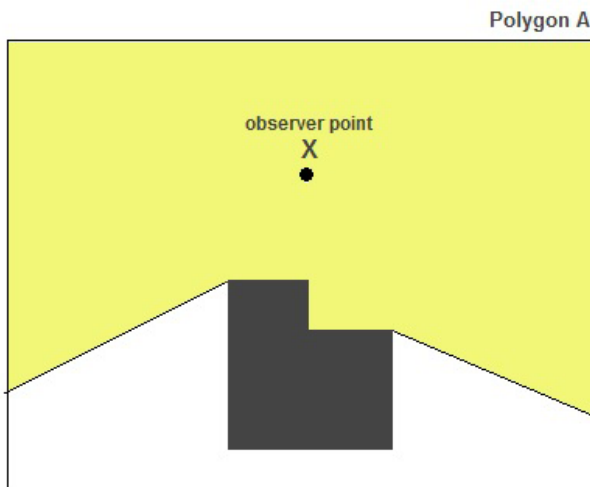


Figure 1. Illustration of isovist

In a real-world application, the isovist approach should consider the terrain when computing the visibility field in both rural and urban landscapes. While the natural terrain in many mega-metropolitan cities of the world is relatively flat, densely clustered buildings have the most significant impact on its visibility. Lake et al. (2000) attempted to solve this problem by creating a digital terrain model (D TM) that combines the elevation of land with building heights. They did not incorporate vegetation effects in their “urban DEM,” as they believe that vegetation is difficult to represent due to its semi-transparent nature and seasonal variation (Lake et al., 2000). Both Benedikt (1979) and Lake et al. (2000) lacked attention in understanding how vegetation potentially hinders the viewer’s perception and recognition of urban buildings spatially across a 3D urban space.

Despite the fact that Benedikt (1979) developed a novel concept of “isovist,” the urban environment of the 21st century is far too complicated from the late 70’s, when he had first published his work. According to the recent publication by the World Economic Forum 2 (2018), there is a global movement to encourage cities to grow more trees and plan more parks. The spatial configuration of 21st century cities complicates the simple isovist concept proposed by Benedikt (1979).

Visibility of Buildings

A complex and populous urban environment such as the New York City comprises a matrix of skyscrapers with different heights, shapes, and designs. Skyscrapers and buildings can be easily accessed by pedestrians, tourists, or New Yorkers within walking distance. However, objects, such as urban trees, overpasses, or signs, which may be situated between an individual and the building may act as an obstruction in clearly seeing and recognizing the buildings. Technically, a line of sight (LOS) is “a line between two points that shows the parts of surface along the line that are visible to or hidden from an observer” (Bratt & Booth, 2002). The viewshed, according to Bratt and Booth (2000), identifies the cells in a raster database, which are visible from one or more observation points and/or lines. Lines of sight are used for constructing this viewshed.

Yin et al. (2012) incorporated the concept of LOS in the visibility analysis of buildings through a two-step process: first, they determined which are the buildings that need to be evaluated in the analysis. The diagram shown in Figure 2 demonstrates the position of three buildings along the projected LOS, from V' to T' . The first building a_1 is the nearest to the vantage point and completely blocks the LOS. As a result, the following buildings in the sequence (a_2 and a_3) are not considered for calculation in the visibility analysis.

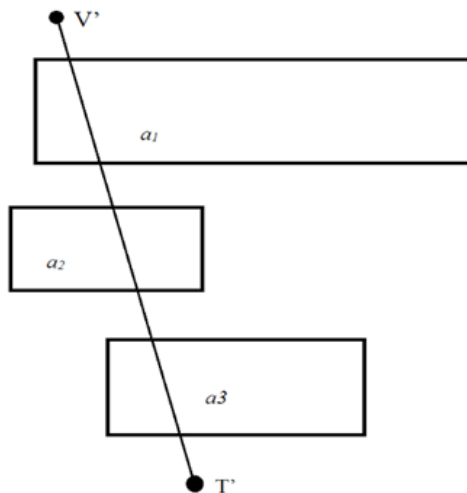


Figure 2. Projected LOS from V' to T' and building profiles

Yin et al. (2012) also used the parallel projection approach to find the building polygons that blocked the LOS. This approach applies the simple logic that if there is a building or object intersecting with the LOS, the observer's view of the target object is blocked and, thus, neither the observer point nor the target point is visible. A projected plane is made perpendicular to the LOS. The building polygon is then projected on the projected plane. If V' is located inside the projected polygon of the building, the LOS is blocked by that building. A drawback of this approach of visibility analysis is that it takes a lot of time to construct projected planes in complex urban environment with thousands of buildings.

Yin et al. (2012) also highlighted that technical challenges exist when calculating the visibility across urban buildings with this projected plane approach. Their approaches are not well-suited in the actual urban environment, as many other vision-obstructing objects such as vegetation are situated between the V' and T'. These vision-obstructing objects can completely or partially block the visibility of the target from the viewer. For instance, an individual still can see the target building partially through spaces between tree branches and underneath tree canopies. Visibility also varies seasonally during "leaf-off" conditions. Oftentimes, the viewer has managed to correctly recognize and identify the building even though only a small portion of the building is visible. An individual can easily recognize the famous Empire State Building in New York City from different observation points in the city, even though only the roof line of the building may be visible. This indicates there is some sort of spatial relationship between the observation points, the target building, and the ability of an individual to not only see but also recognize the target. Yin et al. (2012) and other authors' findings do not explain this spatial relationship in the context of recognizability in their studies.

Visibility and vegetation

Vegetation not only provides a significant scenic value in a concrete jungle; it also acts a local landmark and tourist attraction in a mega-city. For instance, Central Park in New York City is not only considered one of most famous parks in the world but also serves as a popular landmark and icon of the Big Apple. As urban trees and other vegetation have been widely introduced in metropolitan cities, vegetation has become an essential element in high-density urban areas (Yuan et al., 2017). Architecturally, trees increase visual diversity and complexity to an urban environment (Rapoport & Hawks, 1970). Vegetation in urban environments also functions as a screen or buffer between incompatible land uses (Smardon, 1988). Past studies that have investigated the function of urban vegetation have mostly focused on human's cognitive, psychological, and physiological wellness (Sheets et al., 1991; Smardon, 1988). As already mentioned in the previous section of this paper, no research has yet identified the spatial relationship of urban

vegetation and observer's ability to recognize the building accurately along the line of sight.

For instance, the presence of dense trees in urban parks in New York can pose a significant obstacle on the generated visibility and the result of viewshed. Joggers and visitors in Central Park may not be able to see or distinguish the number of neighboring buildings on 5th Avenue correctly, as canopies of trees and vegetation may block the view according to different seasons and various degrees of the transparency of trees. Rød et al. (2009) developed a weighing function to express the transparency of trees in calculating the total visibility at a point. The following formula shows that weight "w" is the relative blocking magnitude of trees while V_{bf} is the visibility of based on a surface that includes both buildings and forest:

$$V = w_{bf} V_{bf} + w_b V_b$$

where V_b is the visibility based on a surface that only includes buildings (Rød et al., 2009).

Weights are relatively subjective according to one's interpretation of transparency. Rød et al. (2009) did not mention in detail the criteria to determine the weight or the blocking magnitude. Dean (1997) proposed another approach to improve the prediction of visibility of trees in forests using estimates of opacity and visual permeability value. The density of trees in an urban park is not uniform in reality. Some areas may have patches of dense vegetation and trees. The variation in the tree density during spring and fall seasons can be much greater than that in summer and winter. Instead of differentiating regions with different vegetation density, Dean's permeability coefficient is applied to the entire region, assuming the density of vegetation is constant.

On the other hand, a high density of vegetation or full foliage can block significant portions of faces of urban buildings. An urban environment comprises complicated built structures and developments, all of which can introduce complications in visibility analysis. As mentioned in the previous section, increasing the numbers of trees and parks in cities not only obstructs the view of many built structures but also obstructs a significant portion of a structure, thus, reducing the recognizability of that structure to inhabitants.

The concept of “Recognizability”

In simple terms, an innovative concept of “recognizability” can be defined as the ability of a viewer to correctly identify and recognize an object across a geographical space. It is also the ability of a person to identify an object from their knowledge of its appearance or characteristics. While GIS can map visibility to demonstrate how a point is visible, no previous research introduced the application of GIS to investigate the attributes of influencing recognizability of urban objects.

The distance between an observer and the target objects (buildings) serves as an essential variable in visibility analysis (Pearson et al., 2014). Principally, the visibility of an object declines when the distance between the observer and the target object increases. However, the recognizability of the same target object operates in a different fashion. Recognizability comprises spatial components as well. In a complex and clustered urban environment, the target building such as a skyscraper appears as visible to an observer at a near distance.

Heath et al. (2000) explained the “distant view” of a building can be defined as the one in which the building forms only one element of a larger scene. In Heath’s early study (1971), he suggested that the scene and the building itself at a distant range of 1 kilometer are perceived as flat patterns. Color variations are insignificant compared to tonal variations. The finer detail of that building is lost as well. Heath et al. (2000) stated that distance also tends to decrease involvement.

However, the recognizability of this target can be low, although the distance between the observer and the target is small. Heath et al. (2000) mainly focused on quantification of the visual complexity of tall buildings at a distance range. They did not consider the surrounding vegetation, which may increase the visual complexity, because the observer may have difficulty identifying or recognizing the target accurately (i.e., correctly naming the building or identifying the numbers of the building). This is because vegetation obscures the significant portion of the target along the line of sight. This illustration explains a twofold scenario: first, the fundamental concept of visibility is dissimilar to recognizability; and second,

the distance and the recognizability of objects may not always conform to a linear relationship. Figure 3 further explains the relationship between visibility and recognizability. The building in the center of the Figure 3 is visible within the entire region (both blue and shaded areas). However, it can only be completely recognized by observers within the shaded region. One of the key concepts presented here is that the building can be visible from far away but not from the observer's location at the blue region. The spatial relationship between the observer, the trees situated along the line of sight, and the target building can be the potential factor influencing the recognizability of the target building.

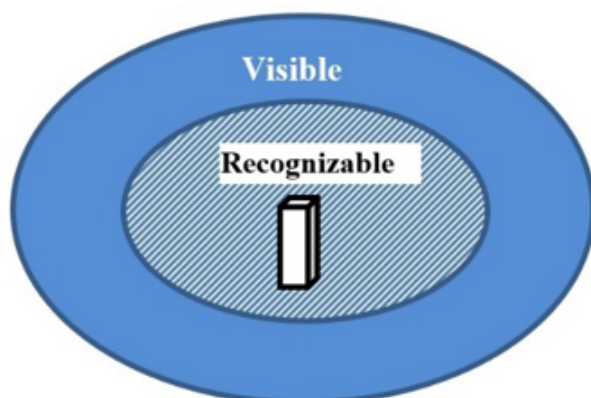


Figure 3. The spatial relationship between “visibility” and “recognizability”

Recognizability, physical attributes of buildings, and surrounding vegetation

Heath et al. (2000) found that the perceived complexity of buildings can be attributed to their silhouette and the articulation or subdivision of their façade. Figure 4 demonstrates the different building profiles proposed by Heath et al. (2000). They suggested that changes in the profiles of urban buildings can be linked to changes in the perceived complexity of building façades. Heath et al. (2000) agreed that fog obscures details of building façades or if the building is backlit by the rising and setting positions of the sun. Either of the above may alter the perceived complexity of buildings. The

work of Heath et al. (2000) first links the profile and façades of buildings to human perception by quantifying the concept of complexity. Their work attempts to assume that the perceived complexity of tall buildings from a distance depends on three variables: the number of elements, the asymmetry of shape, and the asymmetry of arrangement.

In fact, the surrounding vegetation near a tall building may increase or decrease its perceived complexity. For instance, if the vegetation obscures the most complicated section of the building façade, the perceived complexity may diminish. Heath et al. (2000) proposed a qualitative and quantitative approach to investigate such an inter-relationship between human perception and physical attributes of tall buildings. Unfortunately, Heath et al. (2000) did not provide any information regarding how vegetation may alter human perception in this context. This flaw of their research encourages this research to investigate how vegetation can obstruct human perception and recognition of buildings. Even though Heath et al. (2000) overlooked the vegetative factor in their study, they demonstrated how human perception of an urban object can be determined by the physical attributes of that object.

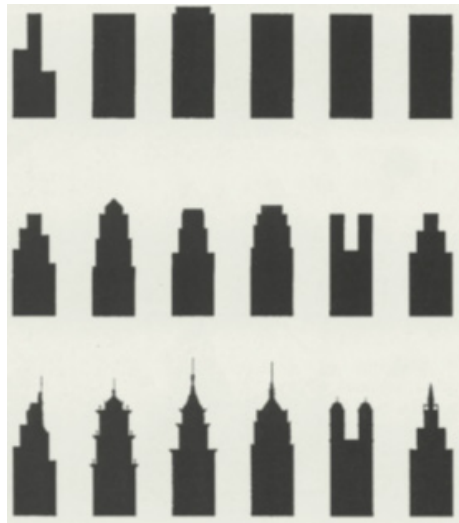


Figure 4. Different building profiles proposed by Heath et al. (2000)

Indeed, buildings are considered important in creating a memorable view of a city. Considering this role, buildings can make significant visual contributions to a city. Samavatekbatan et al. (2016) claimed that tall buildings are among the most important factors of a city's settings. According to their study, regarding the visual impact of tall buildings, their height is considered primary followed by the complexity of their top. The physical features, shape, and profile of a building not only influence the aesthetic quality but also how people remember and recognize the building (Lynch, 1960).

Similar to the concept of complexity illustrated in Heath et al.'s (2000) study, the concept of the recognizability of a building can also be understood through the human perception and the physical attributes of buildings. In regard to building shapes, as demonstrated by Heath et al. (2000) in Figure 4, some buildings have different towers that are not linked through a shared ground base (figure 5). A method of obtaining good recognizability is determined by learning how viewers correctly identify one basic aspect of a building's recognizability — whether or not the observable portions of one or more buildings are connected and hence constitute a single building or are not connected and hence constitute two or more buildings.

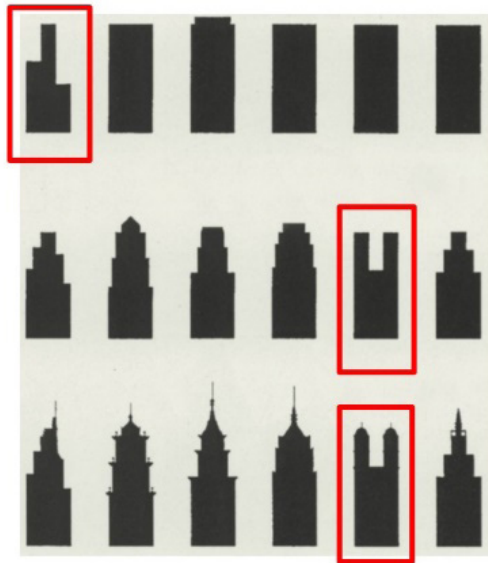


Figure 5. Buildings with towers and shared ground base

By using the simple method mentioned above, recognizability can be better quantified. This method assumes that if an observer cannot clearly see the entire structure of a building due to the obstruction of trees along the line of sight, then the observer may predict the number of buildings incorrectly. Under this scenario, the shared-base of a building is blocked while only the towers are visible. This may confuse the visual perception and recognition of an observer because then one building may appear as two separate buildings. If the shape of this building comprises significant values to visual aesthetic value and iconic status to tourists or inhabitants, its low recognizability definitely hampers the “image” of a city. Lynch (1960) and Appleyard (1969) emphasized how the “image” of a city is important to architects, city planners, and inhabitants; however, until now, no approach has been seen to integrate the attributes of recognizability of a building into the creation of “image” of the city.

As mentioned earlier, geospatial information sciences focus on studying the spatial relationship between humans and objects on Earth. Such relationships can be incorporated into a unique spatial configuration for each city. Karimimoshaver et al. (2018) explained that the way by which an urban element is related to other surrounding elements in a city defines the meaning of that element. They implied that the meaning of an element (a building) is not a derivation of itself. Hasting (1944) in his early study suggested the pattern on an urban scale is to be found “in the visual relationships of buildings with buildings or buildings with trees” (Hastings, 1944; Gassner, 2013) , . As more cities are moving toward a “greener” planet by planting more trees (World Economic Forum, 2018), relationships or association between buildings and trees are gaining more importance and complication.

Recognizability and human factors

Previous scholarly works that studied and evaluated the visual effects of vegetation in urban environments have been mostly based on quality (Schroeder et al., 1986; Tyrvaïnen et al., 2003). Different sets of videos and photographs of urban forests are ranked by a group of people. The goal here is to evaluate the visual effects of urban forests according to the respondents’

preferences. Yang et al. (2009) argued that this method of ranking can provide variable results, as the cultural backgrounds and personal or psychological attributes of respondents vary (Yang et al., 2009; Aoki, 1999). They found that people with British and Asian origins react differently to shady trees and open spaces. Consequently, the function of recognizability of urban objects seems to include an additional dimension—the socio-demographic profile of respondents. For instance, a resident of New York City may be able to recognize the correct number of a building because they are familiar with the surroundings of this city. Contrarily, a resident from a rural area may recognize the same building in a different manner.

Dean and Lizarraga-Blackard (2007) attempted to quantify the magnitude and spatial distribution of aesthetic impacts of the objects in a non-urban environment and suggested that the aesthetic impacts of forest clearcuts diminish with increasing viewing distance. Their study involved developing a GIS-base model to estimate how screening vegetation affects the magnitude and spatial distribution of the aesthetic impacts of clearcuts. Respondents with different socio-demographic characteristics are asked to rate photographs of the clearcuts taken from Colorado forests. Their research inspires and assures the possibility of applying spatial modeling to quantify intangible values, such as scenic beauty and aesthetic preferences.

Dean and Lizarraga-Blackard (2007) developed “perceived-scenic-beauty” rankings for each photograph in accordance with the Law of Comparative Judgments (LCJ) technique. The main goal of this technique is to allow respondents to compare all possible pairs of photographs and decide which photograph in each pair is more scenic. The LCJ method has been recognized to be one of the most important approaches to rank the perception of scenic beauty in non-urban environments since its development by Buhyoff and Leuschner in 1978. Until now, only a few researchers have used this approach to rank the perception of other intangible values such as recognizability in an urban environment. On the other hand, one of the pitfalls of Dean and Lizarraga-Blackard’s (2007) research is the lack of consideration of potential influences that are induced by socio-demographic differences of the respondents to the result. This echoes the conclusion by Yang et al. (2009) that research conclusions can vary due to differing cultural backgrounds, and personal attributes of survey respondents.

Recognizability and distance

Apart from the demographic factors of the respondents, the distance between the observer and the target serves as one the most important factors of governing recognizability. According to the conventional distance decay model in geographic literature, the interaction between two locales or objects diminishes as the distance between them increases. Nekola and White (1999) restated the distance decay gravity function as:

$$I = A * d^{-c}$$

where I is an amount of interaction,
 A is a constant,
 d is the distance, and
 c is the coefficient of friction.

As explained earlier in this paper, there seems to be a non-linear relationship between the recognizability of the target building and the distance between the observation point and the observation target. The recognizability of this target can be low, although the distance between the observer and the target is small. One major reason behind this is the presence of urban trees along the line of sight. Urban trees may block the critical part of the observation target such that observer loses ability to correctly recognize the building.

Figure 6 explains a conventional distance decay model in geographical studies. This conventional distance gravity model illustrates that the level of interaction reaches minimum if the distance is large. In fact, contrary to this model, the recognizability of the target may increase at a long-distance observation locale. Urban trees may no longer obstruct the critical and iconic part of the target and, hence, the target may be clearly visible and recognizable from a long distance.

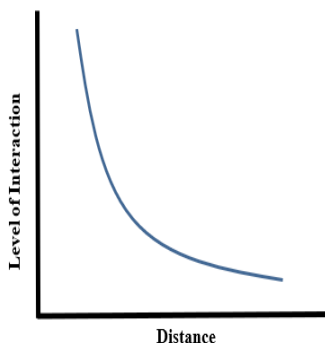


Figure 6. The distance decay model

Appleyard (1969) developed a qualitative and quantitative study to predict how buildings are recalled by respondents. According to his research, the major assumption that an inhabitant would recall a building are due to four reasons: (1) the distinctiveness of the building's physical form, that is, its "imageability" (Lynch 1960); (2) its visibility when one is traveling around the city; (3) its role as a setting for personal activities, use, and others; and (4) the inferences made by an inhabitant on its cultural significance to the population at large.

For the first reason, Appleyard suggests that the distinct form of a facility in general was accessed from a viewpoint in front of its main entrance or within an inhabitant's line of sight. Any noticeable qualities which made that building stand out were rated. For the second reason, Appleyard defines "visibility" as three tenets: viewpoint intensity, viewpoint significance, and immediacy. High visibility in terms of viewpoint intensity is expressed, as the building is visible from main east-west roads. If a building has a high visibility, then it comprises a high viewpoint, from where it is visible to major destination points, intersections, bus stops, and ferry landings on major roads. If a building is close to the axis, cutting across the line of vision on major roads, then it has high immediacy and visibility.

Based on the assumptions and definitions provided above, it can be said that a building's recall rate is determined mostly by its visibility from the main road system. Some locations given in his study are remote, unseen, and open only to an exclusive few (such as the socially prestigious Country Club

in Ciudad Guyana); yet these locations are widely known by the respondents of his research. The result of his study concludes that the locations of the building or its relative distances from the respondent do not correlate with the significance of the building. Appleyard (1969) study explores other historical, social, and human attributes that significantly influence the recall rate of the building.

Methodology

Photo Inventory

Previous scholars have been working with perception-related parameters of urban objects with photographs for recent decades (Pardo-García et al., 2017). Karimimoshaver et al. (2017) use photographs from Frankfurt, Germany to assess impacts of tall buildings on the city skyline; Dean and Lizarraga-Blackard (2007) study aesthetic impacts of burn scars in rural Colorado by developing a quantitative approach to analyze photo transects; Nasar and Hong (1999) ask respondents to judge physical features of 19 photographs of retail sign scenes in order to investigate the role of sign obtrusiveness and complexity in the perception and evaluation of urban signscapes. As the main scope of this paper is about recognizability, real photographs can well represent to how an urban scene is perceived and recognized from a ground perspective.

Pardo-García et al. (2017) mention several photo-taking techniques such as depth field, focal angle, and panorama view for their GIS study. It cannot be denied that the photo-taking techniques may influence their research conclusions, but the techniques they mentioned are not the focus of this paper. In this paper, 36 photos of 12 buildings (3 photos for each building) were taken in lower Manhattan in the New York City in late June in 2017. 12 Buildings are selected randomly within a 0.5-mile radius of the high pedestrian volume locations according to the bi-annual pedestrian traffic counts report from the New York City Department of Transportation (figure 8). It is assumed that the selected buildings may have high exposure to pedestrians on weekdays. Buildings near these high pedestrian volume locations are important to pedestrians' visual memories and recognition of the surrounding area for wayfinding or navigation (Lynch 1969).

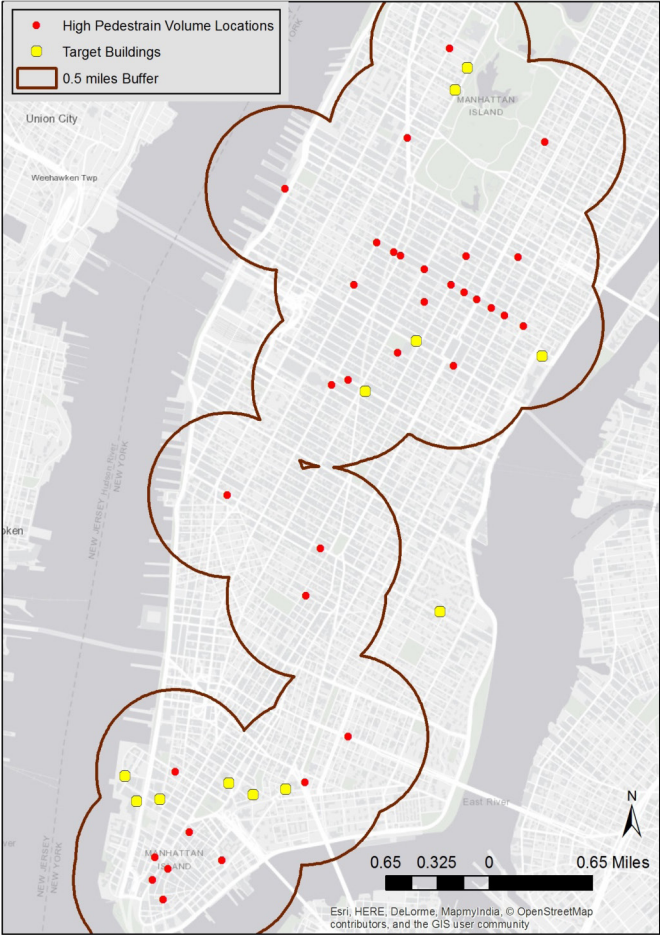


Figure 7. Locations of high pedestrians' volume and 12 target buildings

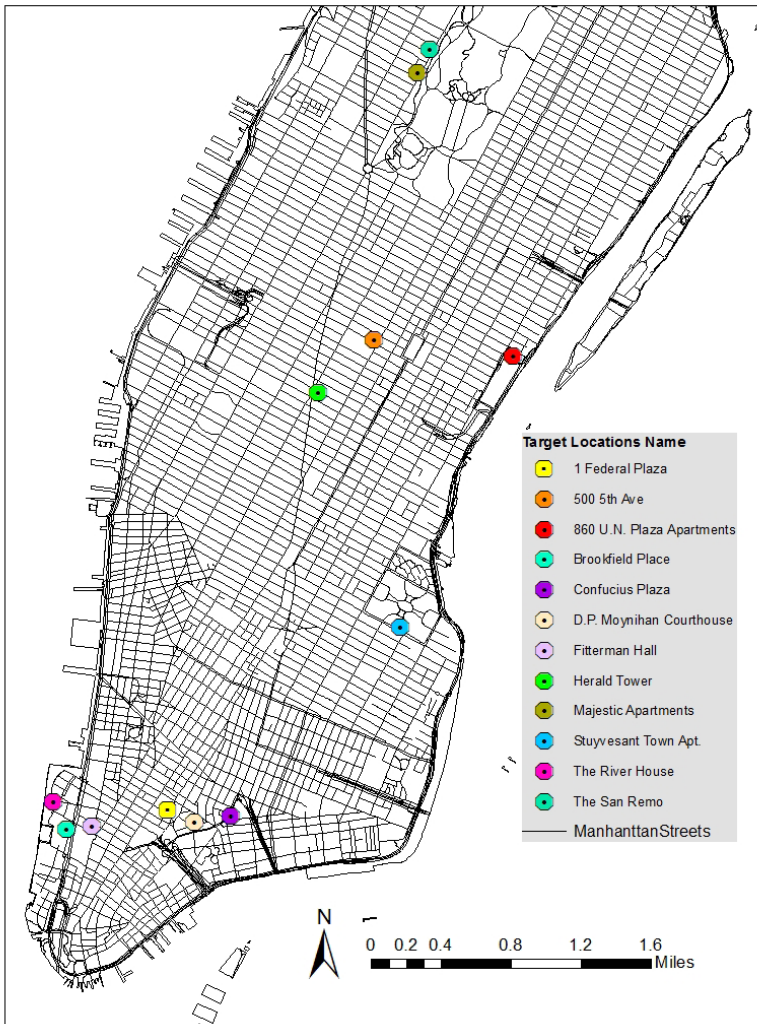


Figure 8. 12 Locations of target buildings

The 12 buildings are in fact of different usages of commercial, residential, and governmental activities (figure 8). All these buildings are not the worldly renowned buildings such as the Empire State Building, or the Chrysler Building to minimize the recognition bias. It is nearly impossible to take photos of 12 buildings from uniform ranges of viewing distances in a clustered and compact urban area like Manhattan. Different widths of

pedestrian pathways, high traffic conditions and ongoing construction all constrained the standardization of viewing distances. Table 1 and 2 lists the distances between the buildings when the photos are taken. The distance is measured using the measurement tool in Google Earth.

Table 1. Building Information

| Building Alias | Building Names | Address |
|----------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| BF Place | Brookfield Place | 250 Vesey Street |
| CF Plaza | Confucius Plaza | 2-68 Division Street |
| Bryant C | 500 5th Ave | 500 5th Ave |
| Fitterman | Fitterman Hall | 245 Greenwich Street |
| DPM | Daniel Patrick Moynihan Courthouse | 500 Pearl St, New York, NY 10007 |
| River Terrace | The River House | 2 River Terrace |
| Foley Square | US Court of International Trade | 1 Federal Plaza |
| Herald Tower | Herald Tower | 1282-1300 Broadway |
| San Remo | San Remo Apartments | 142-148 Central Park West |
| UN | 860 U.N. Plaza Apartments | 860-874 1st Avenue |
| Majestic | Majestic Apartments | 115 Central Park West, New York, NY 10023 |
| PC | Stuyvesant Town Apartments VI | 535-545 East 14th Street, 521-525 East 14th Street, 627-633 East 14th Street |

Table 2. Viewing Distance from buildings

| | BF Place | CF Plaza | Bryant C | Fitterman | DPM | River Terrace |
|-------------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|-----|---------------|
| Close-range | 100 | 60 | 90 | 30 | 100 | 80 |
| Mid-range | 150 | 200 | 250 | 200 | 200 | 200 |
| Far-Range | 320 | 500 | 380 | 300 | 300 | 450 |

| | Foley Square | Herald Tower | San Remo | UN | Majestic | PC |
|-------------|--------------|--------------|----------|-----|----------|-----|
| Close-range | 100 | 220 | 170 | 80 | 100 | 100 |
| Mid-range | 200 | 350 | 340 | 200 | 1050 | 230 |
| Far-Range | 500 | 450 | 620 | 350 | 1200 | 300 |

Results and discussions

It is important to further investigate how humans recognize the buildings from real photos to better understand how recognizability of buildings are attributed. A quantitative survey can be developed to gather responses on how participants recognize the correct number of buildings in each photo. The number of buildings in each photo basically reflects the topological relation of that particular building or buildings. For instance, a building with two towers and one shared base may appear as two separate buildings if trees and shrubs cover the base floors. Hence, it is more meaningful to ask participants to evaluate the number of buildings appearing in the photo rather than the names of the building.

We may assume the building with dense surrounding vegetation yield less correct responses because street vegetation covers significant amount of building façade. Factors such as age, sex, gender, ethnicity, education, residency, frequency of downtown visits, and previous New York City visits may also influence the rate of correct responses or the recognizability of buildings. We can also apply regression analysis to predict the factors that yield correct responses on the survey.

This research does not aim to provide an exhaustive description of the survey and advanced regression model; instead, presenting a preliminary method from a spatial perspective to investigate visual recognition or recognizability of urban buildings.

From the literature review in the previous section, the recognizability of a building can reach maximum if an observer is located close enough to the building where there is no obstruction of vegetation blocking the building façade along his line of sight. Another critical factor of predicting visual recognition of buildings is related to the physical structural form. If a building consists of two or multiple towers and a shared-base, recognition can be low if the vegetation blocks the base floors. The towers of the building can confuse visual recognition of people as the two towers appear as two separate buildings from a medium or far viewing distance. Demographic factors may also influence the recognizability of buildings and the result can be validated by a quantitative survey and future researches.

Conclusions

As more “green” cities are emerging in the 21st century (The World Economic Forum 2018), human recognition of urban buildings can be obstructed by increasing amount of vegetation in urban areas. While the architectural designs of urban buildings are more complicated than before, architects often seek the maximum exposure of the design to public. The complexity of building structure captures inhabitant’s attention (Heath et al. 2000). If vegetation obstructs significant portions of an innovative design of a building, the visual value and attractiveness of the building can diminish greatly. People may not be able to retain much visual and spatial memories about a building or even a city because their views are obstructed. Eventually, the building loses its ability to convey the uniqueness to public.

On the other hand, people choose to use a recognizable urban object or landmark to navigate (Lynch 1960; Appleyard 1969; Mark et al. 1999). Building obstruction by vegetation can significantly influence how people navigate among the concrete jungle. After all, it is essential to understand how buildings are recognized in a city to generate a better urban spatial configuration. Predicting visual recognition of buildings can bring benefits to urban designers, architects, city planners, landscapers, and city promoters.

Unfortunately, no existing studies have made attempts to explore the methods of predicting visual recognition of buildings in an urban environment. A considerable number of scholarly works devoted to visibility analysis (Bartie et al. 2011; Yin et al. 2012; Fisher et al. 1997), as yet no research the author is aware of has addressed visual recognition or recognizability of urban buildings from the perspective of geospatial information science.

The approaches developed in this paper serve the purpose of investigating spatial relationships between recognizability of urban buildings, distance, vegetation, and socio-demographic factors from a spatial perspective. The results presented here provide a starting point for further research in the development of a more sophisticated GIS model to predict and map the recognizability of spatial objects.

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Rationality and Morality

Claudia Buda

Mihai Eminescu National College, Romania
muza_claudia@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT: Kant's problem is transcendental knowledge, as absolutely pure knowledge, that is, completely possible a priori. The path of knowledge passes from feeling, through intellect, to reason. Knowledge through the senses corresponds to an aesthetic, which for the time being means a sensitive way of representation, related to the faculty of knowledge. The research of the intellect is provided by an analysis, revealing either the concepts or the principles/judgments. The investigation of reason, this time in a narrow sense, as a faculty of knowledge superior to the intellect, as complex as it is problematic, is guided by dialectics.

KEY WORDS: rationality, morality, a priori, phenomenon, intellect

Kant delineates to know pure empirical, aesthetics transcendental science of all principles priori sensitivity. We have a fundamental question: how are synthetic judgments possible a priori and the second question: how is pure mathematics possible? Unlike analytical judgment, representing an explanatory judgment, whose predicate only clarifies the subject, without enriching knowledge - synthetic judgment is an extensive one, in which the predicate adds to the subject and adds something to the content, expanding knowledge. Judgment, synthetic a priori, adds its predicate to the subject in a necessary way and on the basis of pure intuition; enrichment proved by Kant first at the level of transcendental aesthetics, of sensible a priori knowledge through pure geometry and pure arithmetic. The forms of pure a priori intuition, as pure both external and internal intuition, are space and

time. They are functions of sensitivity, subjective conditions of all phenomena, having at the same time, as universal and necessary intuitions, an a priori objectivity (Rotaru 2005, 36); they are not transcendent, they do not look at the work itself, but derive from sensitivity, structure the sensitive data, thus requires an epistemological treatment in the transcendental Aesthetics.

With a priori judgments and ethics, however, not only pure mathematics operates, but also pure physics, having as object of experience nature. How are synthetic a priori judgments possible in relation to experience, in relation to nature and the natural sciences, in relation to their categorical synthesis and their philosophical generalizations - this whole scattered field of pure intellect - Kant submits to transcendental analytical investigation. Especially this teaching covers the central goal, namely to become a propaedeutic of the metaphysics of nature.

It is a critique of the speculative use of pure reason. The circumscription of the a priori factors of theoretical knowledge of physical nature. The adequate capacity for this use is the intellect, the first truly superior faculty of knowledge and, at the same time, the proper faculty of knowledge, the faculty of concepts, rules, generality and generalization. The intellect is the one that unites the various concepts in the object, ends up thinking the object of sensitive intuition, subsumes the representations under certain rules, discovers with the help of these rules the unity of phenomena. However, the intellect remains linked to generalized phenomena, dependent on an immanent and non-transcendent use in relation to them, it therefore has to do with phenomena and not with noumenons, all it can achieve is to offer laws a priori to nature in order to know them in a possible experience. For this, categories are used, according to Kant in number, three or three according to the quantity, quality, relation and modality of judgments, the categories being nothing but pure concepts of the intellect, originated a priori and with a synthetic function.

Kant does not project the pure Ideas (principles) of reason - only terminologically of Platonic origin - in a transcendent ontology, but keeps them, again, within the limits of a transcendental epistemology, which would perfect the systematic unity of thought, of the architecture of thought.

Kant delimited three pure Ideas of reason, namely

1. The idea of the absolute unity of the thinking subject
2. The idea of the absolute unity of the series of conditions,
3. The idea of the absolute unity of all objects of thought in general: the soul, the world and God.

The transcendental dialectic delimits these Ideas and their system, then subjecting - for the most part of the exposition - to a detailed critique the errors of the disciplines, which, traditionally, had dealt with these Ideas and assumed them as real and rigorously (dogmatic) knowable.

Kant thus considered the faculty of judgment to be the mediator between intellect and reason, thanks to its ability to order particular laws under higher laws, although still empirical. in general. This summary can be, in turn, of two kinds:

- a. determinative, when the general (rule, principle, law) is given to which the particular is subsumed;
- b. reflexive, when only the particular is given, for which the general must be discovered. Kant stated that only the faculty of reflective judgment, with its subdivisions: the faculty of aesthetic judgment and the faculty of teleological judgment. The first is the faculty of judging the formal finality (also called subjective) through the feeling of pleasure and displeasure, the second - the faculty of judging the real (objective) finality of nature through intellect and reason.

The aesthetics proposed by Kant in the eighteenth century in the Critique of the Faculty of Justice respects the specific character of the value of beauty.

Kant characterizes the aesthetic value as follows:

1. Taste is the ability to judge an object or representation in relation to the pleasure or displeasure it causes independently of any interest
2. It is beautiful what you like universally without concept
3. Beauty is the form of the finality of an object, because it is perceived in this object without representing a purpose
4. It is beautiful what is recognized, without concept, as the object of a necessary satisfaction

For Kant, the judgment of taste is not a judgment of knowledge, but an aesthetic one “to say that the object is beautiful and to prove that they have taste, I start from what happens in me due to the representation, not from which is my dependence on the existence of the object.” (Kant 1995,46)

Kant makes a distinction between pleasant, beautiful and what is good. Pleasant is what delights us, and beautiful means „what we simply like” and good, „what is appreciated” (Kant 1995, 50). Taste is that faculty of appreciating an object or representation without any interest. The object of such satisfaction is called beautiful. Therefore, in the judgment of taste, the universality of satisfaction is represented only subjectively:

1. First of all, we must convince ourselves that through the judgment of taste, satisfaction is produced by an object.
2. Universal validity is the judgment by which we affirm that something is beautiful, „beautiful is what we like universally without concepts (Kant 1995, 60)

The taste judgment at I.Kant is formed on the a priori principle and therefore the pure taste judgment is independent of attraction and emotion: „A judgment of taste that is not influenced by attraction and emotion and therefore has as a determining factor only the finality of the form is a pure judgment of taste” (Kant 1995, 60).

From Kant's point of view, aesthetic judgments are empirical and pure. The former determines the agreeable or unpleasant character of an object and are judgments of the senses, and the latter determine the beauty of objects or representations and are judgments of actual (formal) taste. The judgment of taste is independent of the concept of perfection, and in order to appreciate the object, we need the concept of purpose because, „purpose in general is that whose concept can be considered the basis of the possibility of the object itself.” (Kant 1995,64).

For Kant there are two types of beauty:

1. Free beauty
2. Simple additive beauty

The first type of beauty presupposes a concept about what the object must be, and the second presupposes the perfection of the object: “Flowers are free beauties of nature. What kind of object a flower should be, can

hardly be said by anyone other than a botanist. And even he recognizes in the flower the reproductive organ of the plant, does not take into account this natural purpose when issuing a judgment of taste on it. Therefore, this judgment of taste is not based on a perfection, regardless of its type, nor on an inner finality to which the combination of the various elements should relate (Kant 1995, 67).

According to Kant (1995, 69), the beauty of a man, the beauty of an animal is a concept of purpose that determines what the object must be, thus a concept of perfection and it is a dependent beauty. Another definition of beauty given by Kant is that it is „the form of the finality of an object, because we perceive it without the representation of a purpose”. This definition is given from the third moment.

The fourth moment of taste judgment is given by the satisfaction produced by an object. Pleasant is what gives me pleasure, and we think about the beauty that it has a necessary relationship with satisfaction.

For the rationalist philosopher, the condition of necessity contained in a judgment of taste is the idea of common sense. But this common sense cannot be based on experience, because it seeks to justify judgments that contain an obligation: “therefore, common sense, whose judgment I exemplify here by my judgment of taste and to which I attribute exemplary validity for this reason, is a simple ideal norm” (Kant 1995, 76).

That is why the definition given by Kant in the fourth moment is: „we call beautiful what is known without concept as the object of a necessary satisfaction” (Kant 1995, 79).

For Kant, beauty resembles the sublime, and none presupposes a judgment of the senses or a logically-determined judgment, but a judgment of reflection. Both the judgment on the beautiful and the judgment of the sublime are singular judgments, but they are universally valid for every object. The beauty of nature determines the shape of the object which consists in limitation, and the sublime can also be found in a formless object.

The faculties of the soul are the imagination and the intellect, and when the imagination is used for knowledge, it is subject to the constraint and limitation of the intellect, but used aesthetically, the imagination is free and provides the intellect with rich and undeveloped information.

For Kant, beauty in general, whether it is the beauty of nature or the beauty of art, is called expression. The expression consists of gestures, facial expressions and tone, in fact articulation, gestures and modulation.

Thus, there are three types of fine arts:

1. the art of the word
2. fine arts
3. the art of sensational games

1. The arts of the word are: eloquence and poetry.

– eloquence is the art of representing an activity of the intellect as a free game of imagination

– poetry is the art of presenting a free game of imagination as an activity of the intellect.

The speaker announces the activity and realizes it as a game of ideas, which will entertain the spectators, and the poet announces a fun game with ideas, but using more intellect. The visual arts or the arts that express ideas through sensitive intuitions are:

- a) the art of sensitive truth
- b) the art of sensitive appearance.

Art truest sense is called the r your own actual fine and sensitive appearance art called painting. Both express ideas through spatial figures. The first is the one that creates shapes for two senses - sight and touch, and the second one creates shapes only through sight. Both are based on the aesthetic idea, offered by the imagination, and her figure is the expression that renders the bodily extension as it is.

In Kant, the plastic itself is subdivided into:

- a) sculpture
- b) architecture

The first is the one that represents body shapes, concepts of objects as they could exist in nature, and the second is the one that represents concepts of things that are possible only due to art.

The painting represents the sensitive appearance, which is divided into:

- a) Beautiful painting of nature
- b) Beautiful combination of products.

The first is the one that represents the painting itself, and the second one is the one that represents the art of gardens. The first one is the one that gives us the appearance of corporeal relaxation, and the second one is the one that gives us the appearance of using imagination.

The art of gardens is no other something than enriching the earth with these diversity: flowers, grass, trees, waters, hills, etc., through which nature presents it to our eyes.

3. The art of the beautiful game of sensations is divided into:

a) the artistic game of hearing sensations

b) the artistic game of sensations of sight: music and the art of color.

The art of the beautiful game of sensations is the proportion of the different degrees of the disposition of the sense to which the sensation belongs, that is, its tone. Teleology makes the transition from the natural sciences to theology, to a theology also understood as an effect of morality and not of science, in an effort to equate the organic with the mechanical, Kant questions his position from the moment he considers the judgment „teleological it is reflective and can only offer its law through its own ordering principle. The law of specifying nature in relation to its empirical laws thus becomes a maxim with subjective value, but within these limits it represents an important conquest, foretelling new branches and scientific solutions.

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