

Social perspectives in the dynamics of human development

HABILITATION THESIS

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This thesis presents the most important scientific and academic achievements after 2008, when I obtained a Ph.D. in psychology.

Throughout this thesis I presented my scientific achievements, illustrated by a series of publications: single author books, co-authored books, articles in prestigious journals recognized by national and international academic community, including references to texts, papers, articles.

In recent years, my scientific and academic concerns have been centered on the psychology of human development. I gradually discovered that this field, although extensively studied in our country, is more wider and more complex, more dynamic and more challenging than most of us knew it.

Generally, development issues, and especially psychological development, entered long ago in the area of concern of many groups of scientists - philosophers, sociologists, anthropologists, physicians, biologists, psychologists - and continues to be, at present, a constant in complex and interdisciplinary studies, focused on in-depth investigation of the mechanisms of psychological genesis and of the laws governing the establishment, development and functioning of the psychism, over the ages. (Golu, 2010)

The psychology of human development is a basic modern scientific psychology. This area has developed gradually, following a tortuous path, from simple concrete observation, to high generality theories, and then to the development of ways of intervention and assistance focused

on the individual, the particular, the unique, subjective experience of the individual. (Golu & Gatej, 2012)

The themes investigated and the studied issues are both highly theoretical and practical topical, since discerning the process of early foreshadowing, since prenatal stage, of some elementary mental structures, and then the enrichment and diversification of their successive maturation during the individual's life, provides us important keys in understanding of what is constant and variable in psychological human becoming, of what is normality and deviation from normality in this process.

It is obvious that, according to the image we have on the internal dynamics of mental development - beginning in the early childhood, continued in adolescence and fulfilled at the young, adult and elderly – can be structured some practical ways of reference to the personality of the one who develops and to his specific conduct response to a particular segment of time, in his history of life.

Over many years I tried to respond, in contemporary terms, to these complex, thorny, but fascinating issues, regarding the emergence of the psychism since the dawn of human creation and the inclusion of human evolutions and involutions on the time axis, until the end of life.

The ages and the stages of development are different, with different psychological profiles, but there are not strictly demarcated and rigid, by insurmountable boundaries. On the contrary, every new stage is prepared within the previous stage and offers in its turn the premises to move to the next stage. Hence, the appearance of unique and unitary history in time evolution of the human being, which always remains itself, identical with itself, but at the same time, accumulates and assimilates various changes - cognitive, emotional, behavioral – adapting itself to new statuses and roles that society requires on each developmental stage.

Certainly, trying to adapt themselves to the social requirements and prescriptions, people often slide to some deviations and skids from the expected psycho-behavioral models. It occurs the so-called "developmental errors", which, uncorrected in time, through educational mechanisms, may cost the individual dearly, delaying and reducing his evolution and adaptive

potential in relation to family, professional and personal life. In this regard, we've tried to identify and outline a series of improvement strategies in order to counteract the effects of possible deformed and anomic developments. (Golu, 2010).

The vast study of literature, alongside with leading concrete, field researches, have been an extensive, scientifically substantiated source, in order to illustrate the idea that at the base of this process of psychic genesis is the decisive role of the cooperation of hereditary, environmental and educational factors, seen as being in a strong relationship, of coevolution and mutual modeling. (Golu, 2010, Golu & Gatej, 2012).

This own - systemic and interactional - methodological view is present in most of my completed work, being mentioned in specific forms in the analysis of each stage of development. We used this point of view as explanatory basis of what is common, constant and variable in individuals of the same age periods, but on different levels of development. Development routes systematically merge the similar, the homogeneous with diversity, the general with the particular and unique individuality.

In the next period of time I will focus on deepening the investigated issues, also adding other issues, such as: child and elderly abuse and neglect, domestic violence, dynamics of marital relationships, death anxiety, clinical and pathological insights into the dynamics of human development.

Daily life is continuously influenced by demands of social practice, by political decisions, by models, norms and by moral, legal and religious values. Individuals and groups must learn to structure and regulate their response behavior in relation to these patterns, norms and values. Some manage to do it one hundred percent rate, being highly conformists, others do not manage at all, being highly deviant. Knowing these benefits and their long-term effects represent a challenging task for the social researcher, who has to disclose, among other things, those factors and conditions that contribute to human wellbeing and success, to his professional and relational performances and to motivate his attempt to acquire, at any price, justice and truth, to maintain his legitimate desire to live in a healthy social and physical environment. (Golu & Golu, 2012)

To live in society, as man among men, is not a simple and easy thing to do, even if we are born into society and we are destined to become social beings. Peculiarities of development will influence us, interacting with social challenges.

In the next years I will make the same efforts in order to shape a more extensive image of human developmental psychology, applied to the social field, through continuous involvement in research projects and by coordinating original, but methodologically substantiated research designs. I also intend to continue to motivate students and master students, to interest them in this area of research, which has a wide opening to all other fields of psychology, through the coordination of research projects, theses degree and dissertations.