

THE SOCIALIZATION PROCESS OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE ROMANIAN TRANSITIONAL SOCIETY

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Abstract: *In this article we are focused on the role of primary and secondary socialization on young people in contemporary society. We started from a few questions, such as: What place do socialization courts occupy or how do they appear in the transition of young people from the communist period to the one immediately after 1989? By what criteria are they ranked? What are the agents of socialization? What impact do social courts have on young people's lives? What are the benefits of primary and secondary socialization on the individual? What factors influence the socialization process? What are the conditions for the efficiency of this process? To what extent has their role changed throughout history? With what repercussions on the person, family or society? To some of these questions, we tried to find answers, relying both on the specialized literature and on the data obtained through qualitative methods, especially interview and observation. The field investigation was carried out in the Municipality of Iași, with the population being specialists who intervene in the educational process, but also beneficiaries of education, students and parents. Following the analysis, we observed that the roles of the family and the school still remain decisive, especially when there is a continuity and complementarity between the two and when they support each. Unlike the communist period, there is a more visible influence of the Church, but also of the mass media, especially the Internet. The latter has a positive role in the conditions in which it is used judiciously.*

Keywords: socialization; socialization courts; young people; transitional society; digitization.

1. Introduction

The last decades of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century are characterized by important changes in political, economic and social structures (Zamfir, 2018: 103). The transition from a political dictatorship and a centralized economy to democracy and a market economy generated a decrease in the quality of life for part of the country's population.

One of the social categories affected by the social inequalities generated by the transitional society is represented by young people. According to Romanian legislation (law no. 350/2006), young people are represented by citizens between the ages of 14 and 35, who are in the first process of training social and professional skills. Their path to maturity and to the assumption of social responsibilities is difficult, and they need guidance to complete their life plan (Nicoară, 2002:130).

Socialization means the assimilation of values, norms of conduct necessary for the coexistence of a social group. Psychologically, socialization means causing someone to acquire behavioral patterns that allow him to integrate into society (Neculau, 1977: 9). Socialization implies, on the one hand, a simultaneous process of identification and differentiation, and on the other hand, the socialization of the individual is always associated with a process of individualization of the social (Stănculescu, 2002: 66). Thus, becoming sociable means "opening up" to those around you, acquiring collective experience and knowledge.

Socialization involves three forms:

- *primary socialization* takes place during early childhood, during which the child is subject to the influences exerted by the parents, which he internalizes.

- *secondary socialization* takes place by means of learning the norms, the roles that regulate the child's relations with his peers. It is oriented towards affective neutrality, enduring various changes, no longer controlled and limited by the neighborhood.

- *continuous socialization* takes place throughout life, assimilating new roles, values, skills, abilities and life experiences. According to Voinea and Apostu (2008: 54-57), within this form one can distinguish anticipatory socialization (learning the values, beliefs and behaviors of a group to which the

person does not currently belong, but to which he adheres), resocialization (refers to learning a new set of values, beliefs and behaviors that are different from the previous ones).

2. What instances of socialization contribute to the formation of the person?

The main instances of socialization in contemporary society are the family, the peer group, the school, the church, the mass media and work, etc. (Bernstein, 1978: 229).

In the qualitative survey carried out in the Municipality of Iași, the socialization courts are ranked by the category of specialists (formed during the communist period) as follows: the family is on the first place, followed by the school (reading), the church, the mass media, the community, sports clubs (including contests, tours carried out in the country and outside it), group of friends, "participation in cultural, artistic and religious activities", "discussions with professors from the university environment" such as and "visiting many places foreign to Romania" that formed a different way of thinking.

The interviewees attribute a decisive place to the family in education by "forming an appropriate behavior with love for work", "transmitting values", offering "rules or responsibilities". Along with father and mother, the specialists also mention other people of the extended family, such as brothers, "elder sister", "two older brothers", grandparents and aunts, "a cousin of the mother whom I consider to be the second mother", which had a decisive role in their socialization.

Numerous researchers are interested in the processes of family socialization achieved through language, considering them not only a "vehicle" of information that circulates between parents and children, but also a carrier of values and attitudes, which determine the general relationship with the world (Stănculescu, 2002: 75). Although families perform common socializing functions, in reality there are numerous differences in the way each family socializes its children, differences that are given by the type of society (traditional or modern), by the socio-professional categories of the parents, by their residence.

The school's influence on the education of some specialists is reduced to "some of the good teachers", "a few teachers", "the well-trained teachers we had that I've had", "the clear rules of the boarding school", "the influence of specialized magazines". Other interviewees mention "many teachers" who succeeded in instilling in them a love for reading and in-depth study, for studying universal literature, for "the history and civilization of some peoples such as the history of the French and German people", provoking their interest in continuing their studies and passion for the profession.

The school has always been, still is and will be an essential institution, highlighted by the importance given to education as a factor in socialization and the formation of human capital, in people's access to high social positions, in social change, and the level of education correlates with the quality of life (Mărgean, 2009: 298). The socialization function of the school can be summarized as the development in individuals of the spirit of employment and the capacities for their future role performances (Parsons, 1977: 122). In this sense, the interviews highlight the following:

"The school doesn't really have a role in education, only to remind students how to behave, education is done by the family, the environment, including the school through the group of students. The teachers are less concerned with the educational issue and more with transmitting knowledge, and I think this is the problem of Romanian education. Education is not something tangible, the school should also educate by personal example, provide good behavior to follow or provide models through the content of the lessons. The role of the school cannot be diminished with the passage of time. The school remains a factor of progress and a factor of the future... The school should be looked at more carefully by the authorities and the teaching staff should be well trained" [teachers, 60 years old, public institution, internal mobility].

"The school has an informative, formative and support role, following the evolution of both the students and the teaching staff through those semester and annual assessment sheets for assessing the quality of educational services" [teacher, 34 years old, public institution, urban, internal urban mobility],

"I notice that the school has a rather limited role. I try to tell my colleagues whenever I have the opportunity not to have reservations in openly discussing the problems faced by the students and not to be rigid. For me, it's not important to get a grade of 10, that is, only to learn, but also to know how to manage in life" [female, 38 years old, teachers, public institution, urban, internal mobility],

"The school, first of all, has the role of training, information, socialization and support" [director, 51 years old, private school institution, urban, internal mobility],

"There are also families that have no economic potential, have a low level of education where work is not a value, here is the part of the vicious circle. These children have little chance of leaving the educational social zone in which they are. The school should intervene the most where the family cannot provide support to the child who needs it" [teacher, public institution, 47 years old, urban].

The school must not only instruct, but form, develop attachment to the homeland, favoring economic and social progress (Parsons, 1977: 122). Schools acquire legitimacy to the extent that their objectives are linked to cultural values such as socialization and education. Therefore, the school has both the mission to educate and the mission to contribute to the social well-being of students. This is achieved by deepening the differences within the school institution, shifting the focus of activities from "educational" to "social support" in the case of certain disadvantaged social categories, offering them certain services (Nistor, 2024). Children who come from disadvantaged families have little chance of leaving the educational social zone in which they are. The school should intervene more by asking them in different activities or circles called "Parents' School" or "Parents' Club", capitalizing on this social category.

The first primary group known in human history (outside the family) was the group of neighbors. Joining groups is possible in the presence of certain conditions such as: neighborhood, age, sex, professional group (Neculau, 1977: 11). The position of the family, the strategies and reactions of its members can stimulate or block the child's openings towards similarity groups. The group offers the adolescent not only the framework of free affirmation, but also security, safety, distancing from the ironies of adults and the authority of superiors. The neighborhood can contribute to the establishment of the relationship or intensify it. The surrounding environment plays an essential role in the way of experiencing experiences and in the way of perceiving the other (Gheorghiu, de Saint Martin, 2011: 140).

During the communist period, the behavioral problems of some children were solved through the solidarity of neighborhood networks, within which relatives and work colleagues were preferred. Thus, both in the rural and in the urban environment, the role of the neighborhood in socialization is decisive. In the urban environment, the neighborhood is seen as an educational space close to families, such as "the staircase of the block, in front of the block and behind the block".

"...there were contradictions related to the group of friends in the sense that the parents were careful with which girl or which boy I was talking to" [female, 42 years old, parent, internal mobility]; "...the most obvious contradictions were between the school and the group of friends (negative environment) and between the family and the group of friends because of money and different opinions" [male, 16 years old, student, public institution].

These contradictions are caused by the family's impossibility to see the child's real age, the children's terror caused by their surroundings and, above all, by the desire of some parents to realize their aspirations through their children.

From the survey entitled "Young people and the decision at different levels" (Ilie, 2004: 271), the following conclusions can be drawn: almost 2/3 of young people in Romania are members of certain age groups with whom they meet regularly, a third of them declare that they are part of various associations or organizations. 30% of young people are not present in either formal or informal groups. The informal association is presented to a greater extent among teenagers (approximately 70%) and young people up to 25 years old (more than 2/3) and, to a lesser extent, among those over 25 years (only half of them). The most frequent activities that young people carry out together are parties (more than 1/3 mentioned them among joint activities) and going out to discos or clubs.

Apart from family and school, the Church is also remembered in education through the transmission of moral-religious values: "when I was little, I went with my family to services during the year"; the influence of the spiritual father is frequently remembered, even though it was the communist period. During this period, religious education, in most of the interviewed families, was entrusted to the grandparents.

In the case of 4 interviewed priests, it is highlighted that they did not receive religious education in the family, because their parents were not practitioners, but showed a personal search for God: "My parents were not practitioners, I did not receive a religious education in family, but at home the priest was received on the occasion of religious holidays, there were icons on glass in the house, the Bible was in the library and it was read, even though it was during communism. I met God through a personal approach that a teenager makes and after that I enrolled in the Faculty of Theology" [priest, 39 years old, emigrant in France, stable].

The mass media form the fourth constant environment of the child's life, along with the family environment, the school environment and the group of friends (Cherghit, 1972: 39). Mihai Coman (2007: 24-25) orders the components of the mass media system as follows: according to the medium on which the message is transmitted, print media (books, newspapers and magazines, posters) are distinguished from electronic media (radio, television, computers); according to the method of purchase, the products purchased directly (books, newspapers, magazines, tapes and CDs) are distinguished, those for which an access fee is paid or not (public service television on airwaves, cable television, the Internet); according to the content, information media can be separated from entertainment media and from advertising media; according to the size of the audience that receives these messages, mass media, group media can be identified. However, the unpleasant aspect of the communist period was the censorship for any word that did not agree with the communist ideology.

In the post-December period, the means of information diversified, facilitating access to information and making new forms of communication appear called multimedia - "on-line" systems (from electronic mail or e-mail to the World Wide Web, through which masses of people have access to databanks collected in various sites), teletext/transmission of written texts through television channels, video games and television (Coman, 2007). Although the Internet is the most popular means of information among the forms of multimedia communication, Nichols (2019: 129-141) identifies some disadvantages: it represents one of the causes of challenges to competence, accelerating the destruction of communication between experts and ordinary people, diminishing from people's ability to carry out thorough research, it changes, in a negative sense, "the way we read, we reason", it changes the person's behavior in the sense that he becomes more irritable and unable to hold constructive discussions, unable to distinguish real information from "whatever a search engine shows her"; people are no longer reading in the traditional sense, but "speed scrolling", horizontally, headlines, summary pages, overturning the norms that usually govern face-to-face interactions. At the same time, the above author appreciates that in the technological age, access to information is faster and more frequent than ever, facilitating conversations between people who would otherwise never have met. Also, the interviewed specialists state that the Internet facilitates the communication of emigrant families with their children or with the extended family and with the managers. Students accept online counseling in favor of counseling in the psychotherapist's office.

"As a head teacher, I observe from a student whose parents are abroad how they manage to control their three minor children, talking to them on messenger or on the phone" [teacher, conductor, 33 years old],

"... after the end of the prevention program "Love and responsibility", approx. 15% of the students came to the office for counseling, and the rest chose online counseling because it is easier for them to talk on Messenger or e-mail than face to face" [social worker, female, 37 years old, urban].

However, in the education of specialists, the mass media intervened less "inappropriate behaviors in school are the negative influences of the mass media".

"We didn't have the internet, we didn't have the multitude of television channels, we didn't have the possibility to travel abroad more easily, and the young people have all these... We had nothing else to do but read and by reading, we created a general culture which, unfortunately, now exists among few young people" [male, director, 42 years old, school institution, urban],

"The results of the contests or the projects of the students and teachers are not publicized, but the behavioral deviations of some teaching staff or some students. We have values, but we don't know how to promote them" [fem. 32 years old, teacher, urban environment].

The category of students and that of parents rank the instances of socialization as follows: in the first place is the family, followed by the school, then the church, the mass media and the group of friends, actors, models of singers. This category recalls the influence of the family, referring to: "severe grandparents" who wanted perfection and responsibility for the deeds done, family friends, aunts or uncles close to the students' age, guardians.

"Until the age of 17, I was part of a group that was violent, showing terribleness in class and when I realized it, I withdrew. I spend my free time either with friends for a beer or reading psychology books. ...If the student receives a good education in the family, he will not be influenced by negative surroundings, practicing immoral acts... I discovered the role of the school only in the 13th grade, because I had many outings with the principals and colleagues. In my case, school has the role of socialization, integration and education" [male, 20 years old, student at a public institution].

The students believe that "his teachers", "many teachers", "teachers and professors who took care of education" and "the school through the steps I followed" are responsible for updating this socialization role. As for the clothing models, the students choose them from the world of celebrities.

Among the means of information, the most used by students is the Internet. On the one hand, it has a positive role:

"Through the internet I joined a Club and I am vice-president... I organize parties, certain educational shows with young people" [female, 19 years old, student at a public institution],

...it's very difficult for me, especially since my father left us.. The feelings that the father wants to express now on the phone or on Messenger are fake" [female, 12 years old, student, parents emigrating, one in Greece and the other in Italy],

On the other hand, it can also have a negative impact:

"Many of the classmates attach importance to the Internet, not getting involved in school life, watching different movies, not for their age. This can become a danger through films with violent, aggressive scenes, the language used by some of the guests on television is imitated by colleagues at school, even reaching conflicts with teachers or colleagues" [female, 19 years old, student at a public school],

"... the internet can become a threat when students take ready-made reports and no longer have the pleasure of reading" [father, 54 years old, higher education, parental family, a boy, urban environment, Romania, parents, secondary school education], "parents must supervise children on the Internet, because there are many sites that disturb the peace of the child" [female, 15 years old, emigrant to France].

Two interviewed parents say about their children that, if they did not impose on them, they would not learn; they let themselves be "led by the wave" like a good part of their colleagues, copying reports from the Internet, without reading a book. Other parents have a good perception of the Internet in which they see the professional and social stakes for their children. Internet connection is indeed understood as a means of behaving like a "good parent" by providing the child with all the means necessary for school success (Lelong, Martin, 2004, p. 63). Indeed, contrary to expectations, parents show themselves to be less attentive and concerned with the continuous control of the websites consulted by their children. Very diplomatic parents remain attached to the cult of books and research on paper, and are quite skeptical of encyclopedic research on the Internet.

Thus, some of them are less liberal than others and adapt more difficult than they think to the practices of the Internet, while others quickly acquire the media practices on the screen (TV, video games).

The digital environment, beneficial because it provides access to information in all fields, helps to perform tasks faster and more efficiently, affects communication, social relations and family ties, also brings the great challenge of addiction and affecting social relations and family ties (Nachi, Messaoud, 2024).

Some students interviewed spend their free time in front of the TV, others watch TV only for news, certain movies and less on the Internet (especially those from rural areas who do not have the possibility of purchasing a computer).

The parents, just like the interviewees from the specialist class, state that, among the television programs, during the communist period, they only liked the entertainment and sports shows.

"... I believe that apart from the school and the family, the spiritual priest and the extended family must also be involved in a child's education" [female, 15 years old, emigrant to France, parental family-deceased father, popular class].

For this category of students, the Church contributes a lot to the education of young people, teaching them how to behave in relation to others and to divinity. "Catholic priests from Iasi are closer to the children who come to church on Saturdays. Within the Church, I get involved in helping children younger than me. I attend different campuses every vacation, the amounts are small for these outings. At every meeting, the animators help us learn a lesson about moral values" [female, 12 years old, student, emigrant parents, one in Greece and the other in Italy].

"The church has an important role in the lives of Christians through their participation in the Holy Liturgy, through the connection with the priest and the religious teacher. Orthodox priests do not hold special services on Sundays as Catholics or Protestants do, but within each Archdiocese of the Orthodox Church, various projects are carried out that benefit needy families" [specialist, female, 37 years old, 14 years old, urban environment] .

The church is present through priests who come to families on the occasion of performing religious services, getting involved in their problems.

"Priests were present in my family and I felt the role of the priest since childhood" [parent, female, 42 years old, internal mobility]. Therefore, regarding the ranking of socialization institutions by the two categories of interviewees, it is observed that parents with higher education emphasize cultural education, knowledge of foreign languages from an early age, enrolling their children in the Conservatory, sports and artistic clubs; their own children do not have many friends, but "they don't insist either", because they don't know the qualities of their colleagues and they are afraid of joining groups with delinquent behaviors. Students, especially those from popular families, communicate with their parents "certain general aspects", not personal, because their opinions are different in choosing a girlfriend or friends.

Conclusions

As in the previous period, during the transition to democracy and the market economy transition towards democracy and market economy, families that can provide a secure affective environment for young people, represent the foundation of the socialization process. Within such families, young people acquire social norms, form their work skills, acquire moral values and social behaviors.

Also another role of parents is to support young people in choosing the school institution suitable to their interests and knowledge and to obtain a professional qualification. Strong emotional bonds established within the family contribute to joining a group of friends with positive influence or prevent risky behaviors (addictions or type or aggressive behaviors).

But, when parents do not offer positive models of education or do not have enough time for children (they are busy with the basic service or go to work outside the borders of the country, etc.), other educational institutions, such as the school or the church, are forced to fulfill the educational functions of the family. Thus, the school social work mission of such institutions helps students to overcome social borders and have access to higher social positions than those of the family of origin.

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