

Theodor Valentin Purcărea - Editorial: *Asuming the responsibility for upholding the shared goal of quality higher education. The policy of hope and faith in the future*

Asuming the responsibility for upholding the shared goal of quality higher education is a continuous real challenge, being well known that the bigger the responsibility, the more partners it needs. Paraphrasing Philip Pullman, we can state that the true quality higher education flowers at the point where the involved partners delight falls in love with responsibility.

In fact, at the beginning of this year I have emphasized that *we have to consider the importance of the quality of team relations, as well as the quality of the network in initiating partnerships, along with establishing a fluid and flexible process for planning sequential stages, of a supportive organizational culture, developing a high research potential via learning experiences based on projects and workshops conducted by **leaders who aim high but at the same time pay a lot of attention to details***. We can all see how the humankind continues the search for lost values due to the intoxication with civilization triumphs, authorized views arguing that: we are in the intersection and our future depends on how deeply and truly we examine the causes of the crisis; economic and social responsibility must focus on restoring the preeminence of character over spectacle, transforming ourselves; the actual generation confronts itself with the danger of losing a sense of values; fair competition is replaced by masquerade; distribution of personal income of prosperous elite constitutes the expression of cumulative public policy, the main driving force behind this redistribution of income being the change in the structure of annual income at the different levels of governing; calculated dishonesty determines large-scale corporate failures and scandals, policies lacking integrity and failing to generate prevention of other disasters; political and financial power acts concerted, inappropriate behaviour of the few affecting the lives of many; it becomes more and more obvious the need for a system which allows the discovery of the real causes of failures and promotes people who have been successful. There is no doubt that human interaction, instantaneous or delayed, is the one that makes a better sharing, development and evaluation of knowledge possible, the knowledge transfer involving learning how it will be obtained and used, also questioning the issue of a „learning curve” of knowledge transfer.

Allow me to introduce within this context a leader who really *„aims high but at the same time pays a lot of attention to details”*, the **Honorary President of the First International Congress „Health-Nutrition-Wellbeing”** (www.crd-aida.ro/activitiespartnership/sanabuna-2011/), **„SANABUNA International 2011”**, **Professor Eliot Sorel**, an internationally recognized medical leader, educator, health systems expert and practicing physician. As we all know, the health of the people and of the economy lies in the centre of sustainable development and adapting the business accordingly, and the debates on the occasion of the „SANABUNA International 2011”, in October 2011, were the true expression of the struggling for unity of knowledge beyond disciplines (transdisciplinarity), starting from reuniting a range of disciplines independently contributing to the „Health-Nutrition-Wellbeing” disciplinary investigation (multidisciplinarity) and especially from blending methods in order to generate new and improved tools better adapted to the „Health-Nutrition-Wellbeing” disciplinary research (interdisciplinarity).

The discussions that were carried out in Brasov, in the „Europe” Conference Center of Aro Palace Hotel, with distinguished professors (such us: *Eliot Sorel, Bernd Hallier, John L. Stanton, Florian Popa, Alexandru Vlad Ciurea, Adrian Streinu-Cercel, Ion Petrescu, Dumitru Bortun*, just to name a few and of course, not forgetting our host and colleague *Dr. Nicolae*

Albu), represented in a way answers to the issues raised both in the previous editorials (*How rich together are we today?; The challenge of the invisible revolution, right thinking about people; From the challenge of ensuring the interface with the structure of capitalist economy to doing meaningful stuff that matters the most, to people, society, and the future*), and in certain books, such as, for example, „Diplomatic and protocol customs” (Carol Davila University Press, 2004), presented in Diplomatic Gazette, Brussels, No: 45, December 2004. In this book, under the headline „Why where to? Between timeless truth and the truth as fulfillment in time”, we remembered that: „in the context of organizing, at the Parliament Palace, a symposium regarding the knowledge society and sustainable development (May 16, 2000), I have carried out a substantial discussion with the distinguished professor Benjamin Cotigaru (coordinating together a study of interdisciplinary research – “Sustainable development: principles and action”, published at Millenium Publishing House – which led to the constructive debate on the occasion of the works of the symposium). The discussion started from the so-called “core of the political dilemma”, namely the fact that we cannot live alone and we must learn to live with each other. After all, as Aristotel was saying (Greek philosopher, vast spirit, author of a large number of treatises on logic, politics, natural history, physics), the man is a “political animal”, and as Moise Maimonide said (a Jew physician, theologian and philosopher who sought to show agreement between faith and reasoning, Bible and Aristotel) the man is a “social animal”. As we were talking about what was happening in the search for „common good”, because sustainable development is certainly found on this pathway, professor Benjamin Cotigaru referred to the famous author of significant pieces of work (“The policy of hope” and “Faith in the future”), Dr. Jonathan Sacks, who insisted that the essence of school ethos is moral, therefore it has to be introduced in the school curriculum. Everything starts from the covenant regarding the fundamental institution that is the family and mutual responsibility within the family. As conflict resolution is much easier in the case of conflicts between responsibilities, from those between claims. This aspect, applied also at the enlarged family scale that is the society, means a better preparation of cohabitation in harmony. Dr. Sacks advocates for „freedom as an exercise of collective moral responsibility, for the school as a central institution of the society, the school being the place in which each generation passes on its values”.

Professor Eliot Sorel is firmly convinced of the central place occupied by Higher Education within the society and has constantly pledged (Eliot Sorel, Editor - 21st Century Higher Education: Quality, Leadership, Innovation, The Bucharest Consensus Autumn 2010, <http://www.edu2025.ro/434/section.aspx/554>; the Bucharest Consensus was developed by the participants from Azerbaidjan, France, Italy, Kazakhstan, Republic of Moldova, Romania and the United States to the *First Black Sea & Caspian Sea Area Studies Conference convened by Professors Eliot Sorel & Adrian Curaj* at the Grand Hotel Continental, in Bucharest, July 10-12, 2010, the final version being edited by Professor Eliot Sorel) for partnering for transdisciplinary, systemic, systematic, and integrative 21st century higher education, considering that: these defining qualities are a rich source of leadership, innovation, human capital development, and humane values that contribute to the progress of society; quality higher education is a powerful growth engine as well as a strong foundation for future prosperity, enhanced global understanding and cooperation; human capital development and innovation are interdependent, the first being the factor enhancing the second, and competitive high quality universities systems are indispensable to pursue long-term robust results; the convergence of the Bologna Process with the transatlantic dimension of the Black Sea and Caspian Sea Area Studies and Network partnership launched at the Bucharest meeting in July 2010, represent a tangible asset for the universities in the region; the best result from long term development strategies is achieved by integrating investment in the

development of information technology with an expanding business environment and human capital formation; “Green growth” and environmentally sustainable economic progress are of critical importance; it is important both, to promote the Double-Degree Diploma projects to encompass all Black Sea and Caspian Sea Area universities willing to join the network, and to stimulate innovation, leadership, human capital development, sharing of experiences and the free flow of people, ideas, goods and services across borders and between the Black Sea & Caspian Sea Network countries, their Euro-Atlantic and other global partners; as lifestyle factors play a very important role in shaping the overall health of the population, it is worth to launch a project in collaboration with the European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies (EOHSP being a partnership between the World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe, different Governments, the European Commission, the European Investment Bank, the World Bank, UNCAM, the London School of Economics and Political Science, and the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine.

Consequently promoting the *Black Sea & Caspian Sea Area Studies multidisciplinary project* (initiated by a group of European, American, Black Sea and Caspian Sea public/private universities partners), Professor Eliot SOREL (Editor, *The Marshall Plan: Lessons Learned for the 21st Century*, OECD, Paris, France, 2008; Author of *The Black Sea & Caspian Sea Area Studies. A Euro-Atlantic, Black Sea, Caspian Sea Universities’ Partnership.*, June 2010) - while considering both, the location of the Black and Caspian Seas in a most crucial geopolitical area of the world, and the fact that the world is now experiencing a major financial crisis which is significantly reinforcing global economic instability gaps – has proved his passion, skills and value: to stimulate knowledge generation, innovation, research, human capital development; to close the development gap between the region and the rest of the world, and to open up new major opportunities for collaboration among students, scholars, policymakers and professionals across disciplines and continents; to deliver innovation, education, research projects and policies of mutual benefit, leading to a free, peaceful and prosperous flow of people, ideas and goods; to connect action to thought and implementation to formulation.

In writing the above, I remembered Dr. Peter M. Senge (the founding chairperson of Society for Organizational Learning – SoL, a senior lecturer at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, the author of *The Fifth Discipline: the Art and Practice of the Learning Organization*, Publisher: Currency, March 21, 2006) and of his pledge for the new nexus „Science, Spirituality, and Society”, for „collective awakening”, while growing as a human being, for opening the way for the practice of dialogue, while considering the fact that systemic becomes almost a way of being and not just a problem solving methodology.

All the components of the mechanism promoted by Professor Eliot Sorel play a significant part in the development of the strategy, and appropriate capabilities should therefore be developed in this regard. This is why we reiterate the idea that we cannot be consumers informed of knowledge without reflecting upon this knowledge (explicit or tacit), developing critical thinking (reasoning used in developing arguments, productive practices, appreciation and understanding of the impact on current life etc.), understanding the communication of new knowledge which makes the world permanently transforming.

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