

Mihai Ralea - creator and visionary in psychology and culture

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Communication presented at the Scientific Session - June 2021 of AOȘR

Abstract

Mihai Ralea remains in the consciousness of specialists as an exceptional personality with a rich scientific contribution to the development of psychology and the elaboration of many innovative ideas for a series of fields of culture. An unsurpassed creator and visionary, with a vast work he marked the orientation of many scientific fields and laid the foundations of modern psychology.

Mihai Ralea (1896-1964) is noted and recognized as a psychologist, sociologist, philosopher, esthetician, essayist and man of vast culture, but also involved in social and political life. After finishing his studies in Bucharest, he defended his doctorate in Paris in economics and political sciences (1922) and the doctorate in letters in 1923. He was a member of the Romanian Academy, founding member of AOSR, director of the magazine "Viața Românească" (starting with 1933), and later (1957) founded the Journal of Psychology. Mihai Ralea started his teaching activity as a lecturer at the University of Iași (1923-1926) and then as a professor (1926-1937). Later, professor at the University of Bucharest and, since 1948, head of department. He was also the Ambassador of Romania to the USA. He received orders and medals for his scientific, journalistic and socio-cultural activity. His activity as a psychologist, philosopher, sociologist and man of culture is extremely rich. Thus, he critically and pertinently analyzed the way in which the relationship between pragmatism and psychology is treated, noting the incoherence of pragmatist psychology and Watsonian behaviorist reductionism with implications in some theses of Pierre Janet. From these he came to the antinomy of individual-society, noting both the exaggerations of subjectivist psychology of G. Tarde and those of sociological idealism of E. Durkheim. In Psychology field, we consider as significant the work "History of Psychology" in collaboration with I. Botez (1958) which combines a series of original studies previously developed such as: "Relationships between image and thinking" (1916), "The formation of the idea of personality" (1924), "The problem of the unconscious" (1925), "Hypotheses and preoccupations in the sciences of the soul" (1926), but, especially, the work "Explanation of Man" (1946) which was republished posthumously, in 1972. In addition to these studies and papers with implications in General Psychology, M. Ralea was also interested in Social Psychology. In this sense, he published several works, including "Psychology and Sociology", "Introduction to Social Psychology" (in collaboration with T. Herseni, 1966) - pseudonym Hariton. His vast culture was highlighted especially in the work "Art Psychology" where he analyzed the psychological problems of creation and the reception capacities of the work of art,

but also in the work "Psychology and Life" (1938) in which he creates an image complex of the applied fields of psychology. Along the same lines, his essays such as "Perspectives" (1926), "Interpretations" (1927), "Attitudes" (1931), "Values" (1935), "The Two France" (1956), etc., in which he excels through original ideas and suggestions for exchanging ideas, are also interesting. His heritage is the Institute of Psychology of the Academy and the Association of Psychologists in Romania, which he founded and was president until his death.

M. Ralea was the promoter of Romanian psychology, a recognized thinker and visionary of the philosophical and socio-political, cultural and creative destiny of the contribution of the Romanian people to universal values. M. Ralea's work is impressive both by the richness of the original and visionary ideas, and by the way of comparative analysis specific to the personality structures of the individual related to the understanding and assimilation of the cultural and social phenomenon. The volume "Writings from the past" (published in 1958) and which includes several studies of great importance and value that are located at the intersection of the analysis of psychological phenomenology with that of universal culture so that modern ideas with current penetration from the perspective of a great creative personality. In this context, we refer to some of these studies. Thus, in "Reflections" are disturbingly analyzed his feelings and ideas in relation to the events faced by the person, which often crosses internal earthquakes from which you can get stronger or, conversely, overwhelmed and incapable to be adapted to them. Mihai Ralea, as a humanistic psychologist, refers through his creative ideas to other humanities and social sciences to emphasize the moral character of these sciences. From his point of view, individual psychology and social psychology occupy a central place in the humanities, but does not exclude from this pyramid sociology, ethics, aesthetics, axiology, literary criticism, etc.

Other interesting ideas can be found in "The Mission of a Generation" (1928) in which M. Ralea analyzes the dangers facing his generation and as a brilliant visionary suggests ideas and solutions that can lead to progress and the socio-cultural rise of society. United ideas from several minds of different generations are responsible for progress and national wealth. With much subtlety, Ralea observes that the previous generations were calmer and more settled, with many "bourgeois of knowledge". M. Ralea goes on to say that our forefathers believed unreservedly in Darwin, Spencer, Haekel, Comte and Marx. Then came "murmurs and hypochondriacs," interested in instincts (Freud) and intuition that led to a "more turbulent and freer" generation, but also to the provision of the "unknown and mystery." Hence the recognition of chance as another name for God. The mood created by the atmosphere oriented us towards a partial modesty, towards metaphysics. If at the beginning these acquisitions were "good" says Ralea and reflected the reality correctly, over time they started to fly and generated violence and behavioral maladaptation with notes of intolerance towards peers. This situation has contributed to the installation of economic and social slippages and character for its generation which must be combated and measures taken to order the life of our people. Mihai Ralea resumes in his own form these last ideas in "Mysticism" and focuses on the analysis of ethical issues and generosity that travel a path from peace and heroism to unrest and critical aspects for that era. The culprit is the unconsciousness and mysticism of some who develop under the influence of social contagions. The confusion of human actions appears in the field of the rivalry between mysticism and rationalism. For example, during World War I, rationalism dominated so that all human horrors were justified. A topical issue is analyzed by Mihai Ralea in "Invitation to travel" in which he expresses his disagreement with those who exaggerate by the desire to travel to other

lands and people, especially to the Orient which offers a life full of orgies and bizarre. Referring to Freud, to the repression of erotic instincts, Ralea considers these exaggerated journeys because they express other repressions and notes suggestively that "a map is a reason for despair like a beautiful and inaccessible woman".

Mihai Ralea, as a great psychologist and thinker, analyzes human being in the context of social evolution and, at the same time, relates the progress of society to the quality of the people who compose it. In this way, he makes a major contribution not only to the development of psychology, but also to other humanities disciplines whose status he respects and highlights their correlations with psychology so that the benefits are significant in all these fields. As a humanist and rationalist psychologist, Ralea prefers an in-depth analysis of the phenomena with which he skillfully operated and bypassed generalizations that could not be supported by obvious and convincingly proven facts. People have characteristics that individualize them, differentiate what makes them act mentally and behaviorally in their own style that defines them as a person and personality. The values that belong to the person must be cultivated and stimulated by the urges to cooperation and acceptance of those around them. A valuable personality can be appreciated, says Ralea, according to his level of seriousness because it involves a series of qualities such as perseverance, consistency, tenacity, all with positive effects in solving the problems they face and which he finds quick solutions to overcome. Mihai Ralea dedicates an essay entitled "The Romanian Phenomenon" (1927) to the characteristic and adaptable qualities of the Romanian people appreciated as positive and which developed under the influence of the West, mainly, but also of the East through the need to deal with extremely difficult periods crossed by our nation. Mihai Ralea's work, especially vast, with rich, original and creative ideas not only for his time, but also with deep resonances in contemporaneity both in terms of culture and psychology. In homage to the age of 60 (1956), his good friend, Victor Eftimiu, emphasized that the creative activity of the celebrant, Mihai Ralea, is 80-100 years old. As we pointed out, Mihai Ralea's scientific activity is also significant for our generation. In this context, Prof. Paul Popescu-Neveanu said that "Ralea was a great and unsurpassed psychologist, precisely because he was not only a psychologist, but also got involved in other humanities and social disciplines" and in others recently developed, "Ralea a he was not only a psychologist, but also a literary critic, esthetician, moralist, philosopher ". And Prof. Ursula Șchiopu places Ralea on a pedestal, saying that "for us, Mihai Ralea is equal to Verdi or maybe, to a large extent, to Enescu". Mihai Ralea as a great visionary, thinker and great creator of ideas with many values in psychology and culture remains in our consciousness as a multipurpose personality that has driven the development of so many scientific fields from a modern and current perspective. At the same time, he contributed to the international affirmation of Romanian psychology and culture.

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