

## EDUCATION AND STRUCTURES OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR LIFE AND ENVIRONMENT

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**Abstract**—Responsibility towards life and the environment has become a priority of training in the educational settings, representing one of the values on which is based a genuine consciousness and a moral behavior, able to restore the vital balance to the planet. The responsibility for others, the responsibility for health, the environmental responsibility, the responsibility for life, the universal responsibility, the responsibility for future are possible educational answers to issues concerning the contemporary world. This paper aims to provide an analysis of the structures of responsibility, and of the impact of educational and ethical actions on the environment, health and life in general, as a possible solution to the problems triggered by human aggression on the natural and artificial environment, on life.

**Keywords**-responsibility, responsibility structures, environment, health, life, education, environmental education, education for life

### I. INTRODUCTION

In a world where environmental damage have increased, a return to ethical and moral criteria is required, and, in this sense, education is invited to prepare in a constructive way future generations. We believe that ethics is a priority as a space to be exploited in the analysis and building of the strategies of intervention in the awareness and responsible behavior towards the environment and changing the vision about the understanding of the relationships that are made of ecological systems, between man and nature.

### II. ETHIC OF RESPONSIBILITY

According to the dictionary of Ethics [1], responsibility means a relationship involving three terms: the responsible person, the responsibility (tasks, actions, attitudes, character) and the court before which one must give explanations (eg a court, people charged with taking a decision, consciousness, God). The purpose of this analysis is the moral responsibility, and according to R. Le Senne 'to make someone responsible, means to impute one an obligation, to designate one as a matter of whose responsibility it is to perform that obligation (...) Responsibility is assigned to the ego subject by the ego value, "[2] said the philosopher, and is distinguished by several features:

- is essentially a process by which the human ego is made subject obliged to act, we say in this regard that our responsibility wakes up our "sleeping consciousness," causing us to act selflessly;

- responsibility is reduced to zero, in a world completely determined, if nothing can happen "accidentally", the phenomenon of responsibility is diminished to extinction. We need freedom, openness of spirit, moral inspiration, and this is because "we are responsible, but not for anything, just to say that we are responsible, we seek, we assume responsibility, we like it for its value." (*ibidem*, 580).

The responsibility involves or should involve lucidity and honesty, lucidity is essential to the awareness of actions, the correct choice, the search of alternatives, fair decision-making and acting, and sincerity is obtained when the ego merges with value, the corruption of sincerity is considered the most serious crime and "relies on the most pure values to authorize the acts which are themselves perversions, as it turns out when you invoke loyalty to assure the guile's success, patriotism to serve the betrayal, order to establish slavery, God to make the most selfish interests prevail. (*ibidem*, p. 582)

And R. Hubert saw honesty as a cardinal virtue, which, together with courage is the base of the moral structure of a personality. Responsibility becomes interior and moral penalty - is a shift from joy, moral satisfaction to suffering and anguish, caused by remorse for what one did or haven't done enough to raise towards a new level moral, which is transformation "of self-esteem responsibility also on the ego" and in the "responsibility of the self to the neighbor". Becoming responsible for the other, the possibility to ignore or to be indifferent to the neighbor disappears and this proofs once again the moral superiority of responsibility that we hold. Responsibility involves the most intimate areas of human - weakness, courage, guilt, effort, care, risk taking, moral innovation, etc., all giving it a certain value.

Without indulging in complacency, "the moral ego is a forever haunted ego by the suspicion that it is not sufficiently moral." [3] It is precisely the qualitative leap that must be recorded on the moral plan, meaning the transition from the morally contradictory man, to the man who exceeds conflicts by permanent opening to the values of progress. This allows us to say that the highest level of morality is always found in a moral ideal, always dynamic, flexible and changing, which provides reference points for what we should morally be and do.

Professor Sorin - Tudor Maxim distinguishes "three levels, varying degrees, at different heights of the same capacity obtained by the individual in his socialization process": care, responsibility, moral responsibility. [4] Here the differences are obvious: if " responsibility ensures the minimal condition of the individual in society, that resulting from the respect of the social normative (...) if (...) it ensures

a balanced society, responsibility is largely the one on which restructuring depends on - sometimes even with revolutionary means - and the development of social life. (...) Moral responsibility is, however, much more, is the highest plan of responsibility. It is the person's responsibility who perceives the other person as being more important than his own being." (*ibidem*, 21).

We could add that, from its level, the moral responsibility can exploit both the rigor of care and the creativity of responsibility to unite them with their own courage in the action of finding the moral progress, because, "being responsible means being aware that we are social beings and that we have a duty to act at the level of the human dignity" [5] and dignity values only what is worthy being sought, so it's tempted by the idea of perfection. But "being responsible for something means to be legitimately a subject of reward or punishment, praise or blame, for it" [6] and thereby we identify other stages of this moral level.

### III. RESPONSIBILITY AND PUNISHMENT

Le Senne distinguished three types of sanctions: natural sanction, the legal and, of course, the moral sanction. The moral sanctions have two dimensions - the social, which can be responsible to dishonor the responsible, the other intimate that can "get on with the remorse to the boundaries of psychological disintegration." [7] The force of moral sanctions is proportional with the intensity of feelings of approval or disapproval, which they express. It is a penalty of consciousness that brings spiritual suffering. It was found that the inner sanction of the moral conscience is much deeper, more intense, more ruthless than any external sanctions. "The pangs of conscience are a great torment, a spiritual nightmare, a weight that presses us morally, negating any provision for the pleasures of life. (...) This pain disappears much later than the physical one" [8] and implies regret, repentance and remorse.

The author makes a triadic analysis of these feelings, placing them on levels according to their spiritual depth, and also on the modalities of action determined by the involved subject. If in the case of the regret, we don't assume responsibility for the act, although we've made it, because it happened apart our will, things change when we're talking about repentance: repentance implies responsibility and involves intelligence and will, unlike the remorse which "is deeply emotional to the point where it can always produce a disruption in the mental life." [9] In this sense, the philosopher says that the negative limit of remorse is despair, and "when remorse turns into despair, consciousness is lost." (*idem*, p. 592)

About desperation Kierkegaard says, calling it a "deadly disease"; he believes that the soul may be completely lost in despair, as, without it, the man can not know the true depths of life, the immortal spirit and eternal dimensions: "But man, the philosopher says, (...) thinks that he's desperate for something earthly and constantly speaks about what despairs, or rather he is desperate for the eternal." [10]

If for Kierkegaard despair is no longer a consequence, but a condition of existence, through despair the man is able to be saved by grace, for R. Le Senne saving is "only moral,"

seen as a return in time to the status before committing reprehensible actions, but it saves only those who want to be saved by it. But from sorrow to despair we find a series of reactions of inner pain (what the French call *mauvaise conscience*: guilty conscience) which means lowering the negative step, as opposed to the positive steps (levels) of morality.

These painful involutions, man descends into self-disdain for the mistakes of the committed evil, seeming to break down the steps of the moral values he had ascended before committing the mistake. However, this negative consciousness of falls, but accompanied by the admission of its immorality, and honest self-conviction may be with a return to the ups in morality known before. Or, Le Senne talks just about a retroactive responsibility in the sense that the subject goes back to the past, to already accomplished actions, and tries to overcome his guilt, using the propelling power of regret, repentance or remorse. This happens at the opposite of despair, at the positive upper limit of remorse.

Note that the hierarchy of the three recorded negative feelings differs from that proposed by Gobry Ivan - the latter considered repentance as a superior form of remorse, because compared to remorse which is static, it also determines the action that induces moral progress, or R. Le Senne speaks about a motion of remorse that, through "intellectualization" "becomes repentance", so the upper level of the hierarchy being requested by a feeling or another.

In this respect, Abelard speaks about "fruitful repentance" that comes from love of God and not from fear, repentance opposite to the "barren" one, which doesn't bring forgiveness nor ascension. [11] Referring to Guyau who proposes a moral without obligation or penalty, Le Senne only partially supports this view: he can not see morality without obligation, but agrees that "it must not involve the penalty, if morality means the moments of the required morality. We believe, however, in its forms which help to the ascension of the human's morality, the moral penalty, presented above, has a fundamental role in the moral restoring of the subject and in restoring his improvement.

### IV. OTHER TYPES OF RESPONSIBILITY

Ivan Gobry begins from the fact that the moral conscience is entirely dedicated, "is devoted" to the neighbors and moreover to humanity. Gobry reminds about Lavelle's idea: "Self-consciousness is for each of us the consciousness of his relations with the neighbor. (...) My spiritual life has meaning only in relation to other spiritual lives." [12]

The author distinguishes, regarding the neighbors, two categories of responsibilities: the first, which he calls functional and the other - universal responsibility that can only be reached if "don't totally belong to your neighbor," says the philosopher, and the only cure for selfishness is "the gift of self "which is indispensable to dedicated own consciousness [13].

Functional responsibility "is about those who have been entrusted to us: the father is responsible for his son and the monarch for his subjects, for these souls, they respond to the conscience." [14] To illustrate Gobry refers to the parable of

the Good Samaritan, for whom the unique debt was to help the man in despair: the indifference of the first two passers brought on the shoulders of the third full responsibility of what he avoided. Responsibility is the concreteness of the debt, and this results from the encounter of possibility and opportunity. The philosopher captures the essence of responsibility that extends from the own acts and actions towards the other 's tasks and duties - responsibility which fully demands and involves; we also see this idea at E. Lévinas who speaks about an asymmetry in responsibility: "The other - which dominates me in his transcendence - is equally, the stranger, the widow and the orphan to whom I have obligations." [15] I am "responsible for his own responsibility" (of the other), says the philosopher, but without waiting for reciprocity; even before worrying about oneself, you must be responsible for the other."(*ibidem*, p.108).

As for the other type of responsibility, the universal one, Gobry describes it in terms of ideal; universal responsibility implies that we are not responsible just for ourselves, but for the others around us and for their actions, we are responsible for the repercussions of the committed acts "that exceed our forecasts and (that) can never be contained in our field of consciousness. This second figure of solidarity of spirits should be called "universal responsibility." [16]. Highlighting the ideal character of the universal responsibility, Gobry reminds in his analysis, about G. Madinier who in his turn claims that "man can not love the whole humanity, and this is not possible but just verbal and abstract" (*ibidem*), but "I am responsible for the ones who are waiting for my love. "On the other hand, Lavell argues that "responsibility is always more subtle and no limit it could be ever attributed "- thus it extends over all, it's" that tragic figure that should disturb our whole behavior."(*ibidem*)

## V. TOWARDS AN UNIVERSAL RESPONSIBILITY

We discover about an universal ethic and therefore an universal responsibility also in the writings of Jürgen Habermas, Karl Otto Apel, Hans Jonas or Jean Francois Lyotard. If Habermas and Apel talk about responsibility for the community or collective responsibility, Lyotard about the issue of responsibility of science and technology, Jonas develops an ethic of responsibility for the future, the philosopher believes that the responsibility should be prospective in nature and thus relate to beings who don't exist yet (which, directly, means a detached morality of the present ). Jonas therefore considers that the "people's responsibility for the future generations is implied. Thus emerges the idea of a responsibility not oriented towards the past nor the near future, but towards a distant future, a responsibility that involves the whole community and not just the individual. "[17].

At this level (of dedication), when it comes to responsibility for the future, we can not forget about the attitude of standing for free and specific integration of our people in the sense of responsibility for the future "is absolutely necessary to be clearly cultivated and exercise as

responsible also through the fulfillment of the duties to protect, enhance or create conditions which lead to a normal life for the next generations. This responsibility, confirmed by the fulfillment of duties, is positioned at the highest level of consciousness by the present generations.

## VI. CONCLUSIONS

In the education act, anticipating events and their implications is critical in building strategies, especially formative ones, and universal responsibility is actually the synthesized expression of culture, and different from that concerning education, is supposed to form the man whose behavior should be programmed and fulfilled with long-term consequences.

In the religious domain things aren't different: in most religions "believers recognize that devotion to God requires devotion to the good of all His creatures," [18] and in the Christian moral, responsibility is an expression of love towards God, towards themselves, towards the others and even towards "enemies," thus the universal responsibility appears as an ideal.

An encouragement of universal responsibility is fundamental if we think that all our actions can help or harm others, though without a specific intent. In fact, through dedicated or militant conscience, we must understand a consciousness devoted to humans which implies the other two categories of responsibility: the functional and the universal. In conclusion, the devoted conscience actually makes a construction, a fulfilment of the whole and hence of the moral personality, responsible for the entire human existence in all implications – environment, nature, genetic patrimony, plants, animals, people. Only at this level of consciousness the idea of autonomy can be understood in terms of personal devotion to a universal moral life.

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