PRESTIGIOUS PROPER NOUNS IN EU TERMINOLOGY

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Abstract

In addition to common nouns, EU terminology also includes the proper names which have entered the patrimony of universal culture. There are names of some personalities from Ancient Greek and Latin and from the Renaissance period, when humanity prevailed over other philosophical currents and sociopolitical doctrines. Some educational programs and scientific projects have been assigned names consecrated in universality, in gratitude to the humanistic erudites and prestigious inventors whose life was dedicated to knowledge and who served as models to posterity. These proper nouns ensure the cultural dimension of EU terminology.

Key-words: *proper nouns*, *culture*, *knowledge*, *humanism*, *European*

Résumé

La terminologie de l'Union Européenne inclut, à cote des noms communs, des noms propres entrés dans le patrimoine de la culture universelle. Ce sont des noms de personnalités de l'Antiquité grecque-latine et de la Renaissance, où l'humanité a prévalu sur les autres courants philosophiques et doctrines socio-politiques. Certains programmes éducatifs et projets scientifiques ont reçus des noms remarquables dans universalité, en signe de reconnaissance envers les érudits humanistes et les inventeurs prestigieux, dont la vie a été mise au service de la connaissance et qui ont servi comme des modèles pour la postérité. Ces noms propres offrent la dimension culturelle dans la terminologie de l'Union

Mots-clés: *noms propres*, *culture*, *connaissance*, *humanisme*, *Européen*

By means of legislation, the European Union has imposed linguists' and specialists' attention on principles, institutions, policies, and "Euro-jargon" that draw on various fields of activity[1]. This includes collocations,

[1] Roger Goffin, *L'eurolecte*: *oui*, *jargon communautaire*: *non*, en «Meta», XXXIX, no. 4, Prese de l'Université de Montréal, Montréal, 1994, p. 636-642; Christian Heynold, *L'Union européenne*: *Jardin d'Eden ou Tour de Babel*?, in «Terminologie et Traduction», 3, 1999, Commission des Communautés européennes, Bruxelles, p. 5-14; Laura Mori,

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composed with *Euro-* or simple terms, denominating concepts, terms and structures that are characteristic of the Union.

In the field of programmes of community action, for this analysis, we have chosen several collocations consisting of names of personalities of the universal culture. They denominate policies of education, professional training[2] and development[3]: *The Leonardo da Vinci Programme*, for accessing professional training and innovation; *The Socrates Programme*, intended for student mobility; *The Erasmus Programme*, for inter-university cooperation; *The Comenius Programme*, for cooperation at the school level; *The Galileo Project* regarding the navigation satellite system for civil purposes, for improving transportation of all types[4]. High quality education is promoted by means of these programmes and projects, encouraging mobility and cooperation between the member-states of the European Union.

These famous names are not the result of random choice. The present research aims to justify and substantiate the assignation of the name of programmes and projects, by representing the policies of education and development. It is necessary that all European citizens, as well as those of the entire world, know them, as a fact of linguistic culture.

1. *The Leonardo da Vinci Programme* aims to improve the quality and the innovative feature in the systems and practices of professional training in the EU countries. Specifically, education and professional training may be achieved through the cooperation between the countries of the European area, by developing the abilities and competences leading to European integration and competition on the European market. The actions of the programme include transnational mobility, European projects focused on

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L'euroletto: *genesi e sviluppo dell'italiano comunitario*, în Ada Valentini, Piera Molinelli, Pierluigi Cuzzolin, Giuliano Bernini (a cura di) *Ecologia linguistica*, *Atti del XXXVI Congresso internazionale di studi della Società di linguistica italiana* (SLI), Bergamo, 26-28 settembre 2003, Bulzoni, Rome, p. 473-492.

[2] Cf. *Enciclopedia Uniunii Europene* (Encyclopaedia of the European Union) (coord. Luciana-Alexandra Ghica), Bucharest, Meronia Publishing House, 2007, p. 131.

[3] Idem, *ibidem*, p. 144.

[4] In Euro-lingo, they are known and used by anthroponymsm without the generic term of *programme*.

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innovation and network transfer, addressing especially the youth, as well as other categories of people desiring to improve their skills in a specific field of activity (DETUE: 420).

The name of the programme carries forward the prestige of the most fascinating character of the Renaissance, Leonardo da Vinci (142-1519), born in Vinci, neat Florence. Painter, architect, sculptor, military engineer and scientist, Leonardo da Vinci is considered a "universal man", with an advanced thinking for his time. In his view Nature is a gigantic being, where the elements of the microcosm intertwine with those of the macrocosm (Robert: 1310-1311). Initiated in painting, sculpture and decorative arts, the inventor conceives patterns, plans and applies various methods for solving certain practical activities. His shaping as humanist brilliantly intertwines with the practical spirit in elaborating projects and artistic masterpieces given to the whole-wide world (he anticipated the "stepping" on air and under water, and analysed the decomposition of sunlight, etc.). In the history of civilisation, Alexander von Humbold considers him „the greatest physicist of the 15th century"[5].

2. *The Socrates Programme* implies cooperation in the field of education, by means of activities related to higher education (student exchange, the recognition of the studies abroad), actions in favour of the preschool, primary and secondary education (joint school projects, teachertraining) and "cross-sectional" actions (creating didactic materials, training teachers of foreign languages). *Socrates* reunites eight main programmes. *Erasmus*, *Comenius*, *Grundtvig*, *Lingua*, *Minerva*, *Observație şi inovație/Observation and innovation*), *Acțiuni conjuncte/Conjoint actions*), *Măsuri însoțitoare/Accompanying measures* (cf. DETUE: 675).

The name of the Greek philosopher given to this educational programme is justified by the following: Gr. *Sôkratês* (< *saos*, *sôs* "intact", "well preserved" and *kratos* "force", "vigour"). Socrates (470-399B.C) is renowned for the philosophical education of the Athenian youth. It is well known he used to spend most of the time discussing on the street, in

[5] Cf. Durant, 14, 2004, p. 307.

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schools, at banquets, drawing many people's sympathy. He was a master in the art of questioning[6], curious by nature and an amateur of dialogues, considering that a respectable life means research, above all (*De anexetastos bios ou biotos anthropo*)[7]. Thanks to reason, man may reach self-knowledge (*Know yourself!*) and happiness. He had a passion for well-organised, methodical thinking and liked to classify things according to their type, species and specific differences. He laid the basis for the "method" of definition, which he dedicated to Aristotle, and for Plato's theory of ideas.

Socrates' followers stated the most varied opinions, becoming the leaders of famous schools and philosophical currents in the Greek world: Platonism, cynicism, Epicureanism. The essential element of this influence is exactly the example given by Socrates' life and character, who entered the history of the Greeks and of humanity as a martyr and saint.

3. *The Erasmus Programme*, as part of the *Socrates* community education programme, consists in actions intended for European cooperation in the field of higher education, by encouraging transnational cooperation between universities, boosting European mobility, transparency and academic recognition of the studies and qualifications within the EU[8]. The activities consist in student and teacher exchange, joint programmes of university and postgraduate studies, intensive international programmes, thematic networks between departments and facilities all over Europe, foreign language courses, transferable credits.

The programme is named after the Dutch illustrious humanist *Desiderius Erasmus* (1466-1536), theologian and teacher with a passion for travelling, a man who cherished the Gospel and his predecessors' teachings. His Latinised name means "desired" and "loved". In literature, he is known

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[6] He had a simple method: he used to ask the interlocutor to define a complex notion, analyse this definition and prove it was complete, contradictory or absurd. After that, by a series of questions, he directed the speaker to a complete and just definition. By examining a long string of cases, he passed to a general conception. He introduced the inductive method into the Greek logic (cf. Durant, 5, 2002, p. 189).

[7] In Plato, *Apologia*, apud. Durant, 5, 2002, p. 188.

[8] The action is directed towards higher education institutions, towards teachers and students from the EU member-states, three states in the *European Economic Area* (Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway) and Turkey (DETUE, p. 326).

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due to the collection of 818 adages and quotes from classical authors, accompanied by comments, especially by *Encomium moriae* (*Praise of folly*) in 1509[9]. It is known that Thomas Moore, and John Colet deeply influenced Erasmus. Through a puzzle based on words referring to Moore (in Greek, *moros* means "fool", and *moria* "folly"), he elaborates the concept: *moria* does not only mean "folly", "absurdity", "ignorance", but also "impulse", "instinct", "emotion"[10]. As an adept of the fine Latin style, Erasmus cherishes the classics, taking attitude against predestination.

4. *The Comenius Programme*, one of the eight actions of the *Socrates Programme*, aims at reinforcing the European dimension in education, encouraging transnational cooperation between schools and improving the professional qualities of the didactic staff. The action addresses especially pregraduate education (from kindergartens to post secondary schools), but also includes the entire educational and local community. In fact, it aims at initiating school partnerships (Comenius 1), projects for training the didactic staff (Comenius 2) and connecting school and didactic staff partnerships (Comenius 3)[11].

The essence of the project is related to Jan Amos Komensky's reputation of reformer in pedagogy, who has the Latinised name *Comenius* (1592-1670), and of a Czech teacher, writer and humanist. His name probably has its origins in the Czech word *komenty* "comentariu", "explanation" (Robert: 538). An open spirit and a good diplomat passionate about learning, Comenius wrote *Orbis sensualium pictus*, in 1658, and *La Grande didactique ou l'art universel de tout enseigner à tous*[12]*/The Great Didactic*, between 627-1632, two works which made him famous worldwide.

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[9] http://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/Erasmus_din_Rotterdam

[10] Cf. Durant, 17, 2005, p. 403.

[11] http://www. socrates.ro/programe/socrates/comenius/index.html

[12] The translation into French is done by a collective of people, such as Marie-Françoise Bosquet-Frigout, Dominique Saget, Bernard Jolibert, Paris, Klincksieck, 2002 (http://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/Comenius).

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5. *The Galileo Project* refers to the European Navigation Satellite System, which the European Union and the European Space Agency are working on. This system consists of 30 satellites, which started to be launched since 2006, and in stations on Terra, by means of which users send signals. The role of the system is to ensure smooth, efficient and safe transports in Europe, by localising vehicles, controlling speed, guidance systems, etc. Thusly, *Galileo* contributes to the reinforcement of the European scientific identity, developing the EU independence in the domain of satellite positioning, an alternative to the creation of an American monopoly, by means of the GPS system (DETUE: 369).

Choosing the name of *Galileo* for this project is a sign of gratitude for the contribution of the Italian physicist and astronomer Galileo Galilei (1564-1642) in developing science and valuing data in many fields of activity. Founder of dynamics, Galileo introduced mathematics data in the description of physical phenomena[13], turns towards astronomy, observing four satellites of Jupiter, called *Galileans*, the ring of Saturn, the movement of the Sun around its axis and the phases of Venus[14]. Galileo Galilei dedicated his life to science, contributing together with Kepler in making public Copernic's theories; together with Newton, he has the merit of having proved that the universe is ruled by laws[15].

6. The fact that the European education, professional training and scientific programmes have been given the name of prestigious representatives of the medieval Renaissance and Greek Architecture is fully justified. These are names which have entered the patrimony of universal

[13] Galileo Galilei discovered the laws of the pendulum movement, created the law of objects falling into the vacuum, enunciated the principle of inertia, built the lunette, which is actually named after him.

[14] Cf. Durant, 22, 2006, p. 275.

[15] His discoveries are described in the book *Sidereus Nuncius/The Sidereal Messenger*, in 1610. The detailed statement of his opinions appeared in *Dialogo dei due massimi sistemi del mondo/The Dialogue Concerning the Two Chief World Systems*, in 1632. The synthesis of his scientific creation, elaborated in the late years of his life, appears in the work *Discorsi e Dimostrazioni Matematiche, intorno a due nuove scienze/Discourses and Mathematical Demonstrations Relating to Two New Sciences*, in 1638 (http://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/Galileo_Galilei).

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culture and are associated with a high degree of erudition and spirituality. For the entire humankind, the owners of these names are visionary, study-oriented people who are characterized by logical thinking, but who have equally proven prudence, tolerance, being models of temperance and self-control. For example, Socrates is considered to be a "dilettante in philosophy"; he imposed on himself as a duty to be pragmatic and to express his ideas clearly. His philosophy implies testing, doubting, logic being a guide and an instrument. For him, knowledge is the highest virtue, and happiness, the supreme good; the best way to reach happiness is through knowledge and intelligence (cf. Durant, 5, 2002: 195).

The scientific and cultural merit of these personalities is doubled by the desire to send an idea of perfection to people.

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