THE HUMBOLDTIAN FOUNDATIONS OF THE INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE

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Abstract

Weltanschauung is a kind of implicit "vision" of the world that does not necessarily reveal itself at first sight but manifests itself in terms of depth of the language. At this level of arriére-plan linguistic phenomena, names are marked by certain existential, metaphysical categories. These are the groups considered by the linguist from a dual perspective: as elements that update the history of a language on the one hand, and the history of a mentality, a cultural aspect, philosophical...on the other side.

Keywords: Weltanschauung, world vision, language, metaphysical categories, history of language

0. The knowledge of the principles and mechanisms of interpersonal, and particularly cultural communication, has become instrumental in discussing the concept of *Weltanschauung*. If in the past people used to communicate spontaneously, today we are more and more facing the situation that we have to reflect upon the numerous words, expressions, omnipresent structures within the cultural dialogue. What used to be part of the normality of the everyday language, and as such did not mobilize the attention of the ones involved, has become an object for research for linguists and anthropologists. Due to the fact that it is not produced merely spontaneously, it needs a conscious study effort, including a theoretical and investigating one. The present study is an attempt to answer this imperative.

1. The fact that the philosopher Immanuel Kant was the first to use the concept of *Weltanschauung* in the European culture is unanimously accepted, through which in his *Critique of Practical Reason* (1790) he defined the general idea of "vision" upon existence and thus emphasized the power of the perception of the world which is acquired empirically. Literally the world Weltanschauung (neuter noun) means "worldview". The *Marele Dicţionar de neologisme* (*The Great Dictionary of Neologisms*) defines the concept as the assembly of knowledge on thought, feelings, will and human behaviour, on experience; the view of the world and human existence as a whole. [Pr. velt-án-şa-ung] (from the Germ. Weltanschauung)
.http://www.webdex.ro/online/marele_dictionar_de_neologisme/sentimentele
The concept spread from within German intelligentsia in the English-American culture, where it is used as "world view" since 1868. Let's see what David K. Naugle writes: „This concept, indeed, had legs. Given its prominence, it was impossible for it to remain isolated on the Continent for long. Soon it crossed the channel to Great Britain and made its way across the Atlantic to the United States." Under the influence of romanticism, the

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period after 1930 offers the concept a psychoanalytical significance: intelligence is productive in a double way - considered Shelling - either used blindly and unconsciously, or freely and consciously; it is unconscious in Weltanschauung and conscious in the "productivity factor." For Heidegger *Weltanschauung* is a "world view", opposed to scientific philosophy - the latter being the only one capable to contribute to the research of phenomena, of manifestation. In the anthology of Carl Gustav Jung's works published by Suzana Holan in 1994, the author mentioned the fact that the term of Weltanschauung could not exactly be translated in another language, this meaning that it has a strictly psychological aspect as well (it does not refer only to a certain concept of the world, but also a way to see life): "The word philosophy - writes the translator - has a similar but exclusively intellectual connotation, while the word *Weltanschauung* refers to all possible attitudes towards the world, including towards philosophical attitude" (Suzana Holan, 1994: 13). In culture one can identify a religious, idealistic, esthetical, realistic, romantic, practical, linguistic etc. Weltanschauung. The common note of this typology of such complexity is the idea of "attitude" Suzana Holan calls "formulated conceptual attitude." David K. Naugle discusses in his study entitled *Original Worldview Thinkers in Protestant Evangelicalism* the significance of the concept in the context of protestant religion, emphasizing the contributions made by Orr and Abraham Kuyper. James Orr (1844-1913) - Scottish Presbyterian theologian, apologist, minister and Abraham Kuyper (1837-1920) - Dutch theologian and neo-Calvinist statesman introduced the term Weltanschauung in the Reformed Christian thought, which they take over from the European intellectual background. The research in the religious field made it possible for Orr to conjugate through his works the Christian religion and the "world vision" - in general, and upon the Christian world, in particular. The apologist considered that the notion of Weltanschauung made it possible for him to formulate a Christian definition of reality and to validate all fundamental elements of Christianity in a coherent system.

Carl Gustav Jung analyzes the term from the perspective of analytical psychology, making all the necessary differentiations in the context of a complex relationship: the relation between attitude - idea - *Weltanschauung*; the relation between conscious - unconscious - collective unconscious (in the translation of the German version Suzana Holan points out the difference between *conscious* - part of the physical dimension and *consciousness* in the philosophical sense. He uses the term of *consciousness* also referring to the state of being conscious of the subject or object). With the world view the thinking man creates for himself, *Weltanschauung* contributes to the profound metamorphoses of being, in Jung's vision: "...it is not immaterial what sort of *Weltanschauung* we possess; because it is not just a matter of our creating an image of the world, since retroactively it also changes us" (C.G. Jung, 2006: 145).

2. The human being cannot participate in the cognition of the world, of its own identity outside the language. This was demonstrated by Humboldt in the descendance of Hegelian idealism. In a letter addressed to his friend, Wolf, the Prussian philosopher, he wrote: "... I found the key with which I can explore all the depths of the

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universe: language." A long time before studying in France he built an unprecedented philosophy for a new science of man. This anthropology proposed a view of being seen through the prism of its structural duality: external, referring to senses (sight, hearing, body and language) as well as internal (referring to passions and imagination). The revelation the philosopher describes resides in the fact that language - far from being a simple instrument as it was initially classified - needs to be defined in an intrinsic perspective. On this internal structural level an idiom cannot participate in the cognition of the world, of its own identity outside the thought. Totally parting from the logicist-instrumentalist perspective dominant in the European linguistic tradition, Humboldt asserts the primacy of the *intellectual-creative* power of language. Detaching himself from the tradition of Giambattista Vico, he supports the concept of a *primary energy:* language is not a mechanical and static state (Ergon), "... but an activity (Energeia) [...]. The fact in itself to qualify languages as activities of the soul (Energeia) is a perfectly just and adequate expression because the being of the soul is an act and it cannot be conceived as anything else." As an interior form of a language *energeia* is anterior to any kind of articulation. It is the primary, indestructible principle of any being. The act of speaking (*die Rede*) has also a primordial character regarding language.

The revelation of the philosopher is that of the infinite creative aspect of language - both from the grammatical and the lexical points of view - through which the limited resources of the speaker can be amplified and refreshed. This was the innovative idea that later on awakened the interest of generative linguists who placed Humboldt at his worthy place.

We started by speaking of *energeia* and *ergon* and not of *Weltanschauung* and we avoided asking one question: is language a way to permanently shape reality and a creative "vision" on the person and on the world? Thought in its internal articulation, *energeia* is the inherent creative capacity of the speaker - listener. Conceiving the language not as "an instrument of reflection of reality and of interpersonal communication, but as an essence of the human nature and a unique manifestation of the humane" is one of the "fecund elements" of the Humboldtian heritage, pointed out by Eugen Munteanu" (E. Munteanu, 2009: 63) was ignored by European linguists for a long time. From a general perspective and idiom becomes a *Weltanschauung* in the situation in which the speaker formulates in a conceptual or instinctive way its own system of thought, while the contents of the language are oriented towards a certain finality. In the Humboldtian concept "the evolution of the linguistic organism is not determined in a causative and mechanical way by material conditions... but always by a final cause, that is an actual aim of the speaking human being of that of the community it belongs to" (E. Munteanu 2009: 64). It is a process built upon a notion. In the absence of this notion that individualizes the human being, a poem, a piece, a literary trend within the field of culture, the register of the imaginary would not have the intellectual-creative force conceived by Humboldt and it would not promote a "world vision." The motive is of a psychological nature in Jung's concept ("... a man cannot see the world without seeing himself" - writes K.G. Jung in his *Analytical psychology* - To have a *Weltanschauung* means to make an image of the

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world and of oneself, to know what the world is and who I am). It may be of an aesthetic nature in the conditions in which on a higher level of the intellectual - creative activities, primary energy gives birth to art, mythology, literature, etc...

We speak of a *conscious Weltanschauung* in language, based on some reasons selected from the same Humboldtian source. 1). There exists in our being an energy different from that of animals, due to the human's speech faculty. There is an energy which is manifested in speech, which bursts in the man "Godly free". Articulate language "is pulled out of the chest - writes Humboldt - in order to awaken an echo in another individual, which returns to the ears." This linguistic energy differentiates man from other living organisms, which remain definable within the limits of some primary forces. Through articulate language our spiritual energy becomes functional, exteriorizing the concept on the world, the mentality of a nation. Kant bore in mind "poetic imagination" without correlating this state of being with language in one way or the other: "The different sensations of agreeable or disagreeable are based not only on the appropriation of exterior things they provoke, but on the sentiment of pleasure or un-pleasure they awaken, which are specific to every man" - wrote the philosopher. For the first time this "poetic imagination" finds its natural foundations in language, in Humboldt's work for whom every other way of the subjective perception of objects is transferred in constituting and using the language. 2.) Humboldt directs his attention especially on the "internal form of the language" (*das innere Sprachform*) in relation with matter. The passive material for the formal organization of language is represented by sounds. This *innere Schprachform* is the semantic and grammatical structure that encompasses the imposed models and rules, the crude material of speech belongs - on one hand to man, and on the other it represents the unique and non-repeatable "identity" of a language. Eugen Munteanu resumed the concept of "internal form of language" theoreticized by Humboldt, highlighting in the tradition of the studies carried out by E. Coşeriu, the three acceptions: 1.) the specific modality to understand reality; 2.) a particular report of a "historical language" with the extra-linguistic reality; 3.) the internal and unique formative principle which gives a language individuality.

3. Humboldt wrote in his well-known study *Über die Verschiedenheit des menschlichen Sprachbaues und ihren Einfluss auf die geistige Entwicklung des Menschengeschlechts* (1836) that speech [the German *Sprache* means both "language" and "speech"] did not appear from the need to communicate with the Other, but from the interior need to "procure" the intuition of things. The character of language is not purely instrumental. Conscience contacts things only through language, thus languages are the "identities" that build reality; the phenomenon is produced differently from one culture to another. This is the reason why, on the level of intercultural dialogue, communication suffers distortions imposed by the different culture of the speakers or by the type of representation. Preserving the same Humboldtian tradition, a language is not an aggregation of words and grammatical rules, but a way to reconstruct a world ("The limits of my language means the limits of my world" - writes Ludwig Wittgenstein, 1991: 102).

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In intercultural communication the aspects regarding language as *Weltanschauung* become much more complex due to the fact that the transmitter is subject to a triple condition: toward the nature of its own "intellectual-creative" force, toward the linguistic code normed by laws (phonetic, lexical and semantic, morphological, orthographical and orthoepic), limiting in itself, as well as toward the specific culture of the speakers. In every language there is a multitude of untranslatable syntagms. Which are the "perfect" equivalents of the term *Weltanschauung* in the English, Romanian or Hungarian language, and those of the words "doină", "dor", "bucium", those of the idiom "a lua rost" in German and English? Emil Cioran (E. Cioran 1995: 259) did not find the proper translation into French of the word "noimă", of the verb "mă frâmânt" etc. In Arabic the word *kalim* means "interlocutor", but also "wounded". What is dialogue in Arabic mentality if not reciprocal "wounding", "marking" of the speaker-receiver with his/her own language? As a semantic relation *synonymy* is though only partially another source of individualisation of the "vision" upon the world. Nadia Angelescu emphasized a few linguistic "curiosities" of the Arabic culture. For "lion", "camil", "sword" etc. the Arabic language has an impressive number of synonyms originating from multiple cultural sources (lexical elements from the Quran, words from archaic poetry, from the archaic Bedouin environment etc.) These are words from different ages, belonging to different idioms. According to the principle of iconicity, one "object" needs to have one single name. By virtue of the enounced principle the majority of the "relative synonyms" could be considered from the perspective of cultural anthropology. The noun "house" is marked in the Romanian and French language by different typological and/or cultural categories: 1. home, house, residence, shelter; 2. building, real estate, construction; 3. family, dynasty, kin; 4. undertaking, company. If we consider only these examples, we can notice that the vocabulary includes some terms that synthesize forms of culture, typologies specific to a given geographical area/a determined historical time etc. and it encompasses the untranslatable terms that unify thought and metaphysical concepts. It is a type of implicit "vision" upon the world that foes not appear necessarily at first sight, but is manifested in the deep plan of the language, the one that Whorf called (in the same Humboldtian tradition) "cryptotypes." On this level of arrière-plan linguistic phenomena names are marked by existential, metaphysical categories. These are categories the linguist will approach from a double perspective: as elements that individualize the history of a language on one hand, the history of a mentality, of a cultural and philosophical aspect on the other hand. The values differ from one communicational difference in a momentary relation with the present, to the etymological dimension, where the profound senses of things and those of the world become unique. It is the primordial stratum, in which Plato inferred "the native language" ("the language of gods") in the *Cratylos* dialogue, a language he differentiated from that of man's.

There is also a high number of "cryptotypes" offered by morphology. The primordial stratum of the Latin Indica language indicates the masculine for nous such as: „agricola", „nauta", „poeta", although the Latin of the grammars included it in the

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paradigm of female declension I. The name of trees were feminine in the "world vision" of the Latin person living in a perfect symbiosis with the universe, even if the "the derived language" indicates the masculine and the II declension. Whorf offered as an example the English language grammatical gender, marked especially in the case of pronouns *he, she, it* designating animals belonging to different categories, without having an explicit motivation. The linguistic forms on "time" in the Hopi language are included in the same category with "cryptotypes." The Hopi language does not mark grammatical tenses of past-present and future, as the aspectual values (momentary, continuous, repeated actions). Neither logic, nor etymology justifies the reasons for this classification, only the existential, metaphysical value of the name - which cannot be marked with grammatical tools. In Plato's words, and above any protochronist idea, every language has its own *daimon*. These are the aspects Humboldt referred to in 1836 when he stated that "the traits of the national character can be deduced from all languages."

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