Secţia

ŞTIINŢE SOCIO-UMANE

SUMAR

Section

SOCIO-HUMANISTIC SCIENCES

CONTENTS

LES CABINETS ET LES PETITES MAISONS

BY

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Abstract. The pursuit of aesthetic pleasure preoccupies the heroes of libertine novels of the eighteenth century: all the actors in this social comedy participate in shows, parties and romantic encounters to temporarily ward off the spectre of boredom and to enjoy moments of passion. In order to escape embarrassment and alienating feelings, libertines need to make their lives an aesthetic experience. This is the reason why libertine heroes favour certain enclosed places like secret cabinets and small houses where nature and artifice merge thanks to the fusion of spaces.

Keywords: French; literature; eighteenth century; novel; pleasure.

1. Introduction

La période 1715-1789 représente un interlude essentiellement marqué par une prolifération d'idées nouvelles qui impliquent la mise en cause des notions traditionnelles de bonheur et de liberté individuelle. C'est pourquoi le roman libertin fournit aux lecteurs le portrait parfait de cette culture fondée sur le plaisir où la recherche du bonheur est intimement liée à l'ambition personnelle. Si on analyse en particulier la France sous la Régence et Louis XV, on constate la vacuité des aristocrates, les principaux acteurs sociaux de la littérature libertine du dix-huitième siècle. À ce propos, Wald Lasowski affirme

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qu'une telle frivolité se manifeste à travers la manière où la noblesse s'abandonne aux liaisons illicites et aux divertissements les plus diversifiés. De cette façon, l'aristocratie met en scène une représentation sociale et culturelle basée sur les spectacles (foires, pièces) et l'ostentation des biens (vins, meubles, romans, etc.) :

> Nul ne connaît mieux que lui [l'aristocrate] les lieux, les rites, les usage du siècle: les filles du monde, le luxe des équipages, les spectacles de la Foire, le bal de l'Opéra, les bienfaits du chocolat, l'agrément du champagne, les prestiges de la toilette, les porcelaines, les diamants, les girandoles de cristal, les meubles et les miroirs somptueux, les académies du jeu, les pantins de Boucher à figures lascives, le feu des habits, un dernier pas de danse, les aigrettes et les pompons que répandent les agréministes, les almanachs et les brochures du jour, la nouvelle cuisine, la nouvelle philosophie, les romans nouveaux (Wald Lasowski, 2020, p. XIX).

P. Wald Lasowski successivement constate la naissance d'un mythe qui, remontant aux années de la Régence de Philippe d'Orléans, inaugure le siècle libertin :

> Bientôt, la fureur du jeu, la passion du théâtre, les spectacles aux flambeaux, l'Opéra plein de fastes, la Foire qui bat son plein, les filles du monde croqueuses de diamants, les parties secrètes, les petites maisons, le luxe des équipages, la collaboration des peintres, écrivains, musiciens, décorateurs au service des voluptés, la magnificence de la débauche aux trois jours des Ténèbres, les porcelaines tendres, les miroirs somptueux, les girandoles, la nouvelle cuisine, la nouvelle philosophie, les romans nouveaux, l'art de la toilette, la poudre, les mouches, les perruques, les laquais, les vernis et les nœuds participent à la création d'un nouveau lien, qui expose le libertinage comme le trait fulgurant d'une culture de plaisir et de l'ironie généralisée (Wald Lasowski, 2008, pp. 33-34).

2. Le roman libertin du dix-huitième siècle

La poursuite du plaisir esthétique préoccupe les héros des romans libertins : tous les acteurs de cette comédie sociale participent aux spectacles, aux fêtes et aux rencontres amoureuses pour éloigner momentanément le spectre de l'ennui et pour jouir des moments de passion. Afin d'échapper à l'embarras et aux sentiments aliénants, les libertins ont besoin de faire de leur vie une expérience esthétique. Vu que la séduction amoureuse touche tous les arts, elle implique pour le libertin une initiation des sens et une fête pour les cinq sens couronnés par le sixième sens qui conduit à l'extase finale. Comme P. Wald Lasowski, Jan Herman met en relief l'importance des arts et de la musique qui sont fonctionnels à la scène de séduction et à la mise en scène d'un spectacle total (Herman, 2003, p. 28).

Cependant Michel Delon affirme que l'adjectif *libertin* est un mot ambigu non seulement parce qu'il est utilisé pour désigner les romans de Crébillon et de Laclos, mais aussi parce qu'il décrit un tableau de Fragonard, une composition de Mozart en suggérant une élégance qui prend corps à travers les mots, les formes et les couleurs, les partitions et les accords (Delon, 2012, p. 9). Cela signifie que l'érotisme implique l'union physique des amants ainsi que la sublimation du plaisir à travers l'approche esthétique des sensations unies à la peinture et à la musique. C'est la raison pour laquelle les héros libertins privilégient certains lieux clos comme les cabinets secrets et les petites maisons où la nature et l'artifice se confondent grâce à la fusion des espaces qui rendent possibles les dispositifs architectoniques et paysagistes, la disposition des objets, les jeux de lumière, le recours à la musique (Hölzle, 2012, pp. 94-96).

Si l'on prend en considération la subdivision et la fragmentation des espaces internes (divisés en boudoirs, cabinets, alcôves et niches) qui délimitent les frontière entre la dimension publique et la vie privée, on constate que même si ces lieux clos sont aussi nombreux dans la littérature française du dix-huitième siècle, ils caractérisent aussi la littérature libertine où les rencontres amoureuses ont lieu à l'intérieur de ces espaces particuliers comme les petites maisons, les cabinets (lieux privilégiés des liaisons illicites), les couvents, les abbayes, ou bien encore dans les sous-sols (influence du roman gothique).

Tous ces endroits représentent le scénario de plaisantes orgies (*Histoire de dom B***, portier des chartreux*) ou de tortures ou de déviations sexuelles (*Les infortunes de la vertu*). Si l'on analyse l'importance du monastère comme décors des aventures amoureuses touchant les héros libertins, Barry Ivker observe que le monastère est le lieu privilégié pour jouir d'une liberté sexuelle totale en dépit de l'hypocrisie imposée par l'Église (Ivker, 1970, p. 229). En outre, la hiérarchie dominant le couvent, en particulier, reproduit l'ordre social de la France d'Ancien Régime caractérisée par des structures opprimantes et les degrés définis selon le système féodal : les seigneurs et les vassaux fournissent la configuration du couvent catholique où se déroulent les œuvres libertines de Sade (Didier, 1976, p. 176).

3. Les lieux de séduction

La description détaillée de ces chambres réservées au plaisir permet de relever l'importance sociale de l'art et du luxe par rapport à l'éros et à la séduction. Les critiques français ont essayé de rapporter ces endroits spécifiques au contexte socioculturel de l'époque. Par exemple, Jacques Rustin observe l'importance de ces lieux séparés du reste des maisons (boudoirs, petites maisons) consacrés à la douceur et au luxe faisant référence à des citations significatives tirées des romans libertins écrits dans la première moitié du dix-huitième siècle par Claude Crébillon, Fougeret de Monbron, La Morlière, Chevrier (Rustin, 1979, p. 80). Si les romanciers libertins mettent l'accent sur la

diffusion des petites maisons, c'est parce que les grands personnages du royaume en possèdent plusieurs, comme le duc de Richelieu, l'un des plus célèbres séducteurs du siècle des Lumières, qui invite le roi et la Marquise de Pompadour à souper dans sa petite maison à Clichy (Capon, 1902, p. 90). À la différence de J. Rustin, Jean-Pierre Dubost relève la portée stratégique de ces lieux érotiques (chambre, lit, boudoir, cabinet, salon, jardin et bosquet) que les romanciers libertins ne choisissent pas indifféremment mais qu'ils adoptent pour leur fonction de séduction. C'est pourquoi dans *Point de lendemain* Denon a représenté une « longue phrase chronotopique ». Malgré la multiplicité des lieux, il s'agit d'un continuum constitué d'une longue succession des lieux destinés à la séduction parce qu'ils possèdent une certaine connotation. Après avoir quitté l'Opéra, le jeune protagoniste fait un voyage en carrosse pour arriver au château de son amante qui lui fait traverser une série de lieux clos (salon et salle à manger) jusqu'au moment où ils arrivent au jardin auquel on accède à travers un pavillon et un cabinet secret qui représente la fusion parfaite entre l'art et la nature. Après avoir couché avec la comtesse, le jeune héros retourne au jardin avant de prendre congé (Dubost, 2004, pp. 147-149). Valentina Vestroni analyse l'importance considérable de ces lieux clos qui témoignent du climat social dans lequel les aristocrates français agissent : le roman libertin est focalisé sur l'intrigue amoureuse où les aventures des personnages ne sont que de lents projets de séduction. Ceux-ci mettent en relief le strict contact entre corps et décor, sens et espaces. Les décors, qui servent de scénarios aux relations libertines, ne sont pas de simples instruments finalisés à la séduction, mais ils deviennent des éléments fondamentaux qui accompagnent, influencent et déterminent les liaisons entre les personnages ainsi que la conclusion de leurs actions. Si le décor est efficace, le système libertin fonctionne. Il est donc possible d'établir un processus d'identification entre le style d'une maison et le style de vie de sa propriétaire (Vestroni, 2008, pp. 393-397).

Analysons maintenant en détail ces lieux destinés à la séduction amoureuse. Par exemple, le boudoir est un lieu secret où la femme rêve ou donne corps à son désir : la configuration du boudoir comme territoire symbolisant l'indépendance féminine en particulier se manifeste dans les œuvres libertines *Angola*, *Point de lendemain*, *Les liaisons dangereuses*. Dans *Angola* le boudoir qui appartient à la fée Lumineuse devient le théâtre de l'initiation amoureuse du jeune Angola qui, ignorant les mystères de la sexualité, est subjugué par la fée. Beaucoup d'architectes et décorateurs travaillent à la richesse du boudoir : étoffes, lustres, miroirs, tableaux, meubles pour la toilette, secrétaires (dépositaires des billets et des lettres), armoires pour les liqueurs, poufs et sofas en soie ne sont qu'extensions de la dimension féminine (Wald Lasowski, 2011, pp. 72-73). En outre, les appartements, où la fée Lumineuse vit, sont décorés avec des scènes pastorales et objets destinés à l'amour :

L'ameublement, inventé par la mollesse, portait un caractère de volupté difficile à rendre ; beaucoup de glaces, des peintures tendres et sensuelles, une duchesse, des bergères, des chaises longues, *semblaient tacitement désigner l'usage auquel étaient destinés*. Les tabourets, *enfants du respect*, étaient bannis de ce lieu charmant, où l'amour égalisait tout (La Morlière, [1746] 2000, p. 719).

À cet égard, Vestroni constate que certains murs sont partiellement ou totalement recouverts de miroirs : la présence considérable des miroirs dans *Angola*, *La petite maison* et *Point de lendemain* aurait une fonction narcissique destinée non seulement à la vision des rencontres amoureuses, mais aussi à l'augmentation du sentiment de vanité en raison des triomphes obtenus (Vestroni, 2008, pp. 396-397). Dans *Point de lendemain* la comtesse termine ses manœuvres de séduction en menant son jeune amant dans son boudoir secret. De la même manière, dans *Les liaisons dangereuses* la marquise de Merteuil accueille son amant Belleroche dans le boudoir, qui se trouve dans sa petite maison, et plus tard cache son amant Prévan dans le boudoir de sa résidence parisienne. L'analyse de ces romans libertins amène à constater que le boudoir représente, à la fois, une manifestation tangible du pouvoir féminin et un instrument même de pouvoir.

La séduction amoureuse, touchant la production libertine au dix-huitième, nécessite d'autres objets fonctionnels à l'érotisme comme le lit et le sofa. La présence apparemment casuelle du lit, émergeant au début du roman *La nuit e le moment* de Crébillon, anticipe la fin de celui-ci : Cidalise couche avec Clitandre. C'est Crébillon qui indique un autre supplément : le sofa qui donne le titre à l'une des œuvres les plus célèbres de Crébillon. Le protagoniste est transformé en sofa : dans ce cas le sofa sert non seulement à révéler les dynamiques de couple mais aussi à créer une continuité entre la conversation galante et sa mise en acte concrète (Wald Lasowski, 1980, pp. 44-45). Cependant, Herman constate l'importance dramatique liée à la contemplation d'un personnage comme une femme demi-nue qui est langoureusement étendue sur un sofa en feignant de dormir. Face à une telle scène, contemplée comme s'il s'agit d'un tableau, le spectateur craint d'avancer ou faire le plus petit mouvement (Herman, 2003, p. 36).

Le contexte socioculturel du roman libertin est mis en valeur par d'autres objets comme l'ottomane et le canapé : dans *Les liaisons dangereuses* la marquise de Merteuil déclare la guerre à Valmont tandis qu'elle est assise sur une ottomane. En outre, cette ottomane est le lieu où la marquise s'est précédemment abandonnée au plaisir avec son dernier amant et aussi avec Valmont lorsqu'ils étaient amoureux. Quoique le canapé puisse accueillir plusieurs personnes ou servir de lit, il est fonctionnel au plaisir : dans le roman *Thémidore*, le canapé devient le protagoniste absolu non seulement parce qu'il est le théâtre où se déroulent les triomphes amoureux du héros mais aussi parce

qu'il symbolise un objet qui suscite la curiosité féminine. Tandis que la jeune Argentine parle avec Thémidore, elle est attirée par le canapé dont l'effet poudreux est symptomatique de la rencontre amoureuse comparable à une bataille militaire : « Ce canapé n'a-t-il pas été témoin de votre courage ? Il est poudreux, mais je crains peu la poussière, elle est honorable lorsqu'elle est prise au champ de bataille » (Godard d'Aucour, [1744] 2000, p. 512). De même, la jeune Laurette reconnaît le charme qu'exerce le canapé : « Ce canapé est contagieux, on ne peut en approcher sans s'en ressentir, dit-elle […] » (Godard d'Aucour, [1744] 2000, pp. 512-513). Dans *La petite maison*, l'abondance du riche mobilier de la petite maison est caractérisée par « les ottomanes, les duchesses, les sultanes » (Bastide, [1763] 1995, p. 134). Cependant la portée évocatrice de ces objets laisse indifférente la jeune Mélite, que le noble libertin entend séduire. Quelque fois les objets aident à véhiculer la connaissance empirique comme dans le cas du roman *Les Bijoux indiscrets* où la bague sert à révéler les secrets féminins les plus profonds en donnant la parole à la partie la plus intime de la femme. Toutefois ces confessions sont différentes des discours prononcés par les femmes en public. À ce propos, Anne Deneys-Tunney soutient que la prolifération d'objets fétiches et d'objets partiels (comme la bague dans *Les bijoux indiscrets* et l'écumoire dans *Tanzaï et Néadarné*) ne sont que des signes de la réduction du corps et de la mise à distance du corps dans son ensemble (Deneys-Tunney, 2002, p. 51). Si l'on réfléchit sur la signification liée à la bague, A. Deneys-Tunney affirme que cette sorte de fable montre, d'une part, la recherche d'un savoir imputé aux femmes et, de l'autre, l'impossibilité à le comprendre : le refus de l'amante Mizorza, qui ne veut pas être jugée par la bague, empêche l'illusion d'un savoir totalisant concernant le corps (Deneys-Tunney, 2002, pp. 57-58). En revanche, Robert Mauzi observe que la présence de lits et de tables, qui concourent à la mécanique du plaisir, possède un pouvoir évocateur comme les musiques et les parfums (Mauzi, 1969, p. 427).

Pourtant, la réception du roman libertin n'est possible qu'à travers l'explication de certaines composantes qui caractérisent la société française de l'Ancien Régime. Afin de s'entretenir avec leurs amants secrets, les aristocrates achètent ou louent des appartements appelés petites maisons dont le nom évoque des dimensions réduites par rapport à la maison nobiliaire. Les libertins et les libertines considèrent ces petites maisons comme des lieux privilégiés pour s'amuser avec des amants officiels ou des acteurs. À Versailles, même le roi même Louis XV sent le besoin d'échapper à l'étiquette de la Cour en se réfugiant dans ses petites maisons ou au Trianon. En suivant l'exemple du monarque, les grandes maisons nobiliaires incluent des constructions séparées et appelées Trianon (Delon, 1999, p. 23). D'abord les petites maisons sont bâties au pied de Montmartre et dans la barrière Blanche, d'autres sont construites à Bercy et dans le faubourg Saint-Antoine à l'Est ; à Vaugirard et dans le faubourg Saint-Jacques au sud ; dans la barrière du Roule, à Chaillot et à Passy

à l'Ouest (Delon, 2000, p. 116). En outre, les petites maisons allient la commodité des maisons nobiliaires au bon goût qui caractérise le cabinet, comme on peut le voir dans le roman *Thémidore* :

> Ces petites maisons-là sont d'une idée charmante, le mystère en est l'inventeur, le goût les construit, la commodité les dispose, et l'élégance en meuble le cabinet. On ne rencontre là que le simple nécessaire, mais c'est ce nécessaire cent fois plus délicieux que tous les superflus (Godard d'Aucour, *Thémidore* [1744] 2000, p. 508).

Architectes, décorateurs, peintres, ingénieurs, artisans projettent et enrichissent ces appartements somptueux sous le signe du luxe et de la volupté. C'est pourquoi le romancier Bastide reconnaît l'importance de ces appartements en choisissant d'intituler son roman libertin *La petite maison* parce que le protagoniste y invite la jeune fille Mélite, insensible à son charme, à le suivre dans la petite maison où elle cède à ses avances incessantes. Beaucoup de femmes nobles adoptent les habitudes déréglées, caractérisant la conduite masculine, et ne craignent pas la perte de leur réputation sociale parce qu'elles sont sûres de la morale tolérante de l'époque. Par exemple le comte de ***, le protagoniste du roman éponyme de Duclos, est chargé par Madame d'Albi, une de ses amantes, de trouver un appartement pour cacher leur liaison illicite. C'est Duclos qui explique en détail l'usage de ces petites maisons :

> Le premier usage de ces maisons particulières appelées communément petites maisons s'introduisit à Paris par des amants qui étaient obligés de garder des mesures, et d'observer le mystère pour se voir, et par ceux qui voulaient avoir un asile pour faire dans des maison publiques et dangereuses, ce qu'ils auraient rougi de faire chez eux (Duclos, [1742] 1993, p. 209).

Du reste, les femmes n'hésitent pas à s'occuper personnellement de louer ou acheter une petite maison en choisissant un portier dévoué et discret. À la différence du roman de Duclos, la reine Marie Antoinette, protagoniste du roman anonyme *La Messaline française*, ordonne à la duchesse de Polignac de trouver un appartement où elle puisse rencontrer son jeune amant. Pourtant, dans *Les égarements du cœur et de l'esprit*, Versac admet la contradiction de ces maisons qui servent à cacher des liaisons dangereuses dans le but de préserver la propre réputation sociale :

> Et d'ailleurs, je ne connais, moi, rien de plus décent qu'une petite maison, rien qui vous expose moins à ces discours qu'il semble que vous craigniez. Je commence même à croire que l'amour des bienséances, plus encore que la nécessité, les a mises à la mode (Crébillon, [1736] 1993, p. 119).

Dans *Les liaisons dangereuses* la marquise de Merteuil possède une petite maison où elle reçoit Belleroche, auquel elle confie la clé de la petite maison. Pourtant, la petite maison est un élément culturel de l'époque si l'on considère que le *Journal encyclopédique* y dédie un article où on explique que la petite maison, située hors de Paris, sert à protéger l'honneur des femmes qui, pleines de pudeur, souhaitent cacher leurs relations illicites, ainsi que d'abriter les femmes entretenues. Le *Journal encyclopédique* fournit une description détaillée concernant la fonctionnalité et la dislocation de ces petites maisons :

> On entend ordinairement par la *Petite Maison*, une retraite agréable située soit dans un quartier reculé, soit dans les faubourgs de Paris, ou bien dans les environs de cette ville, où les gens du bel air donnent des soupers fins à ses amis et à des femmes qui par un faible reste de pudeur, veulent jeter un petite voile de mystère sur leur conduite, et d'autres tellement déshonorées que l'homme le plus vicieux rougirait, si l'on savait qu'il a le moindre commerce avec elles (Rousseau, 1757, p. 127).

Tous ces instruments de séduction sont proposés dans les écrits libertins de François-Antoine Chevrier. Celui-ci est l'un des auteurs les plus détestés de son époque à cause de sa verve satirique et polémique. Pourtant, ses œuvres nous offrent un témoignage du climat culturel et social de la France dans la moitié du dix-huitième siècle. On y retrouve les lieux clos caractérisant la littérature libertine de l'époque. Les lieux de séduction sont ceux traditionnels et chers à la littérature libertine : au canapé et au cabinet s'ajoutent les petites maisons réservées aux rencontres illicites. De la même manière que d'autres romanciers (Crébillon, Duclos, Laclos, etc.), Chevrier montre que le cabinet est un lieu qui précède l'acte sexuel. Si l'on analyse la portée érotique du boudoir, Henri Blanc observe que la conversation à l'intérieur du boudoir garantit un déroulement agréable visant à la poursuite du plaisir en masquant l'imminence du moment érotique et en le suggérant (Blanc, 1972, pp. 307-308) et qui est aimé des petits-maîtres Dorival (*Amusements des dames*), Genneville (*Recueil de ces dames*), Ma-gakou (*Ma-gakou*). En outre, il est relevant de considérer que Chevrier, comme d'autres romanciers libertins, emploie le mot « cabinet » à la place du mot « boudoir » qui est trop connoté sexuellement (Aragon, 2000, pp. 77-78). Les femmes même ont un cabinet : la jeune protagoniste du conte *Bi-Bi* aime ce lieu ainsi que les femmes plus âgées comme Argentine (*Bi-Bi*) et Madame de Norval (*Le Quart d'heure d'une jolie femme*). On comprend que les femmes possèdent un cabinet parce qu'elles veulent avoir un espace isolé où elles peuvent accueillir les personnalités les plus intéressantes (amants, serviteurs, colporteurs, etc.) et exclure la présence incommode des maris (come dans *Le Quart d'heure d'une jolie femme* et dans *Le colporteur*). En effet, la fée Chicorée essaie de conquérir le cœur du jeune Ma-gakou en lui montrant son cabinet parfumé : « La Fée l'attendait dans un cabinet de Jasmin couvert de

renoncules ; […] elle était nonchalamment couchée sur un lit de roses blanches, entouré d'un double rideau de jonquilles » (Chevrier, 1752, p. 69).

Afin de contrôler son époux, la jeune Belise accepte d'organiser à son mari une fête galante en lui présentant certaines filles de l'Opéra, qui sont traditionnellement considérées comme les protagonistes du jeu libertin parce qu'elles sont dispensées du contrôle de la police et de leur famille. Cette scène mêle deux composantes, c'est-à-dire le cabinet et le canapé. On a disposé un canapé, scénario traditionnel des rencontres furtives et illicites, à l'intérieur d'un cabinet :

> Je connais assez le comte, dit le marquis, pour aller au-devant de lui: j'aurai dans mon carrosse la Lachenterie, la petite Chaumard, et une autre vestale de l'Opéra: ces créatures, agaçantes de leur naturel, ne manqueront point de faire à votre mari des prévenances auxquelles il ne pourra résister ; il passera dans un cabinet voisin, il y aura un canapé ; et, malgré la santé de ces filles bien constatées par Pibrac et Morand, la perte de nos chirurgiens, il faudra qu'il tienne de l'une d'elles la maladie dont vous l'affligez ce soir (Chevrier, [1761] 1993, p. 777).

Un autre objet fonctionnel à la séduction est certainement le canapé qu'on retrouve dans le conte *Ma-gakou*. C'est le cas au moment où la fée Chicorée fait asseoir le jeune Ma-gakou près d'un canapé brodé en or afin de le séduire : « Les voyageurs ne furent pas plutôt entrés qu'elle les fit asseoir près d'un Canapé de velours bleu sur lequel les plus beaux vers des tragédies modernes étaient brodés en fil d'or, on en comptait jusqu'à trente depuis dix ans » (Chevrier, 1752, p. 57).

Chevrier est un observateur attentif de son époque et relève la grande importance sociale liée aux petites maisons. Car elles sont appréciées des aristocrates qui tiennent à rencontrer leurs amants à l'abri des yeux indiscrets. Du reste, l'arrivée dans une petite maison préfigure l'acte amoureux, c'est pourquoi le jeune Ma-gakou imagine de posséder la belle Bazika quand ils arrivent dans une petite maison : « Arrivés tous les trois à la petite maison de l'amant de Delaniga, Ma-gakou se jeta aux genoux de Bazika (sa coquette s'appelait ainsi) » (Chevrier, 1752, p. 44). Chevrier nous montre aussi la parité des droits sexuels de l'époque parce que non seulement les nobles parisiens comme le vicomte de Sanville et le comte de Courmont (*Mémoires d'une honnête femme*) possèdent une petite maison, mais aussi parce que beaucoup de femmes nobles en ont une. Par exemple, Madame d'Erbigni (*Le colporteur*) se réfugie dans sa petite maison pour rencontrer son amant secret, c'est-à-dire un abbé. À la différence de Madame de Querman, d'autres aristocrates parisiens (comme le Vicomte de Sanville) sont fiers de montrer à leurs amis les changements apportés à leurs riches petites maisons. Cependant, la découverte d'une petite maison peut choquer une femme ignare comme Julie, la

protagoniste des *Mémoires d'une honnête femme*, qui s'étonne quand elle apprend que son mari possède une petite maison :

> Ennuyé de n'y voir personne, le Vicomte nous engagea d'aller à Auteuil sous le prétexte de voir quelques embellissements qu'il venait de faire dans sa petite maison. Pervaux et Madame Quetel que Sanville avait invités avec l'air froid qu'on prend pour ne pas obtenir ce qu'on demande, refusaient sous le prétexte d'aller souper à Vaugirard, dans la petite maison de mon mari, que je ne connaissais point (Chevrier, [1753] 2005, p. 60).

Dans le même roman, la petite maison est aussi l'endroit où se déroule l'inceste involontaire consommé par la jeune Sophie, amie de Julie, et son frère. Les deux jeunes s'abandonnent au plaisir sans connaître leurs liens familiaux :

> Nous quittâmes Dijon pour nous rendre au Val de Suzon où un ami particulier d'Ivières lui avait prêté une petite maison. La mode commençait à les mettre en vogue et tous, jusqu'aux gens de robe, se piquait d'en avoir. Arrivés à cette campagne, nous n'eûmes d'autres soins que nous témoigner par les caresses les plus tendres et les moins indécentes, combien nous nous devions l'un à l'autre (Chevrier, [1753] 2005, p. 85).

4. Conclusion

L'analyse de certains endroits finalisés à la séduction montre la spécificité d'un certain milieu culturel et littéraire caractérisant la France à la veille de la Révolution. En effet, les aristocrates s'enfuient à Paris à la recherche d'espaces plus privés que les salons dorés de Versailles. Les cabinets et les petites maisons sont des lieux clos privilégiés où les amoureux furtifs s'adonnent aux plaisirs loin des yeux indiscrets.

Ces espaces représentent cependant la clôture à laquelle se condamne la même noblesse qui ne s'intéresse pas aux changements sociaux désormais en cours. Les aristocrates se réfugient alors dans ces oasis de plaisir où ils souhaitent reproduire les mêmes luxes et richesses existant dans les maisons particulières. Les romans libertins du dix-huitième siècle témoignent de la réalité de la situation de l'aristocratie avant 1789.

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CABINETELE ȘI CASELE MICI

(Rezumat)

Căutarea plăcerii estetice îi preocupă pe eroii romanelor libertine din secolul al XVIII-lea: toți actorii din această comedie socială participă la spectacole, petreceri și întâlniri romantice pentru a îndepărta temporar spectrul plictiselii și pentru a se bucura de momente de pasiune. Pentru a scăpa de stările proaste și de alienare, libertinii simt nevoia să facă din viața lor o experiență estetică. Acesta este motivul pentru care eroii libertini preferă anumite locuri închise precum cabinetele secrete și casele mici, în care naturalul și artificialul se îmbină datorită fuziunii spațiilor.

CONCEPTUALIZATION, SYMBOLISM AND METONYMY AS MECHANISMS OF METAPHORICAL MEANING IN IDIOMATIC EXPRESSIONS: INTERLINGUISTIC COMPARISON

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Abstract. Idiomatic expressions are linguistic carriers of culture, collective mentalities and metaphorical representation. One of the most fascinating endeavors in the study of idiomatic expressions is the comparative analysis of phrases from various languages, which reveals similarities and differences between people and their perceptions of the world. This article analyses idioms from English, German, Spanish, Portuguese and Romanian, investigating the underlying mechanisms of their metaphorical meaning. Conceptualization, symbolism and metonymy are some key semantic devices that impregnate idiomatic expressions with connotative meaning. The difference between a concept and a symbol is not very evident; the former denotes a thought, an opinion, or a fact about a certain entity and the latter is an immaterial connection between the concrete and the abstract. A metonymical analogy is based on the replacement of an idea with one of its attributes or constituents. These mechanisms generate metaphorical meaning in idioms and the interlinguistic comparison of lexically or semantically equivalent phrases reveals interesting parallels and contrasts.

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1. Introduction

Metaphors are all around us. George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, the two American researchers that conducted groundbreaking studies in the field of cognitive linguistics, define the notion of "conceptual metaphor" as the understanding of one idea in terms of another and they identify the metaphor as a governing aspect of human life, as a common part of communication, thought and action (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980). "Metaphor" is a broad term that encompasses a myriad of associative mental processes and mechanisms of linking concrete entities with abstract ideas.

One mechanism is **conceptualization**, that is, the formation of a concept as a result of interpreting reality and making connections between the material world and immaterial perception. A concept is a thought, a judgment, a generalized opinion, sometimes an actual fact about a common entity (for instance, *peaches taste good*, ergo, peaches can become metaphors for something desirable). Another mechanism that underlies metaphor formation is **symbolism**, through which literal things are invested with figurative value and denotative words are impregnated with connotative substance, based on their features, functions or connections to specific contexts (for example, *light symbolizes goodness and darkness symbolizes evil*; *the hand symbolizes humanity*; *the laurel plant symbolizes success*). There is a fine line between concepts and symbols, so these notions may sometimes overlap. A further mechanism involved in metaphor creation is **metonymy**, which can be seen as "one of the basic characteristics of cognition" (Lakoff, 1987, cited in Murphy, 1996) and consists of referring to a certain entity by means of one of its attributes or components (as an illustration of this allegory: *bread*, as an essential element of human subsistence, *equals material nourishment*, so it can be metaphorically used as a substitute for the entirety of foods that people consume).

These three mechanisms – conceptualization, symbolism and metonymy – are subordinated to the metaphor and make it what it is. Accordingly, Lakoff and Johnson's perspective can be extended and it can be argued that the "metaphors we live by" are, in fact, the "concepts, symbols and metonymical analogies we live by". Idiomatic expressions are axiomatically metaphorical and their meaning relies on allegorical connections. In what follows, we will investigate how concepts, symbols and metonymical substitution generate metaphorical meaning in idioms from different languages. The expressions were gathered from various idiom dictionaries: English

(Siefring, 2005), German (Krüger-Lorenzen, 1973), Spanish (Jiménez, 2012), Portuguese (Almeida, 2017), Romanian (Dumistrăcel, 1997).

2. Conceptualization

2.1. Concept: *Tasty foods are enjoyable. Flowers are beautiful*

The following metaphorical idiomatic expressions serve for exemplification and elucidation of conceptualization as a process that lies at the core of metaphor creation. ***Peaches and cream*** (or simply ***peaches***) is an English phrase that can also be used as an exclamation to refer to exceptional quality, very good condition and great mood or positive state of mind. On the one hand, the phrase is linked to the initial connotative use of the word "peach", which colloquially described an attractive woman, but on the other hand it relies on the cognitive mechanism of *abstracting* a delicious fruit into a pleasant situation. The same conceptual association is observable in phrases such as: ***to be apples***, used in Australian English and meaning in good order; ***to be all roses***, ***a bed of roses***, Portuguese ***estar/viver num mar de rosas*** (to be/to live on a sea of roses), Romanian ***a sta ca pe roze*** (to be sitting on roses), meaning to be going perfectly; ***a bowl of cherries***, illustrating a cheerful or enjoyable situation; ***the cherry on the cake***, with the German correspondent ***das Sahnehäubchen*** (the cream topping), representing the ultimate enhancement that makes something perfect; ***a piece of cake***, referring to something very easy, with correspondents in Spanish – ***un juego de niños*** (a children's game) and Romanian – ***floare la ureche*** (a flower behind one's ear); ***milk and honey***, or ***the land of milk and honey***, Romanian ***lapte şi miere***, referring to abundance, wealth and good fortune. All these expressions rely on sweet fruit, tasty food or perfumed flowers that are turned into abstract concepts to indicate pleasant and positive circumstances. The conceptual significance of flowers can also be observed in idiomatic expressions based on similes: English ***to be fresh as a daisy***, Spanish ***estar fresco como una rosa*** (to be fresh as a rose). The British English expression ***beer and skittles*** refers to a state of indulgence, relaxation and amusement and is also found in the negative, paremiological form – ***life isn't all beer and skittles***. This phrase carries cultural implications, as it contains the name of a popular old British pub game, the precursor of bowling; although the expression is chiefly British, is has migrated into international English and the actual meaning of "skittles" might be confused, as nowadays "Skittles" is also the name of a brand of multicolored candy, which can also be associated with delight and positivity.

2.2. Concept: *Water is an essential element. Water is a valuable resource. Water is danger. Water is a natural environment*

G.L. Murphy introduces the notion of "multiple metaphors" and exemplifies it through different words that acquire various connotative senses, for instance: love is a journey, a unity, a valuable commodity, a commercial transaction, a sickness, insanity (Murphy, 1996). Idiomatic expressions also contain such words that carry conceptual meaning. Water can be abstracted in idioms as follows: WATER IS AN ESSENTIAL ELEMENT: Romanian *a fi toţi o apă şi-un pământ* (to be all made of the same water and earth), using an element that is found in a very high percentage in the human body, to refer to people that are very similar in nature and character; WATER IS A VALUABLE RESOURCE: Romanian *a-i da apă la moară cuiva*, *a-i lua apa de la moară cuiva* (to give water to somebody's watermill / to take the water away from somebody's watermill); WATER IS DANGER: English *to be in deep waters*, a biblical metaphor for a difficult situation; Romanian *a pescui în ape tulburi* (to fish in troubled waters); WATER IS A NATURAL ENVIRONMENT: Romanian *a se simţi ca peştele în apă*, Spanish *estar como pez en agua*, Portuguese *estar como o peixe na água* (to be like a fish in water); Romanian *a nu fi în apele sale* (to not be in his/her waters); English *a fish out of water*, Romanian *un peşte pe uscat*, Portuguese *peixe fora d'água*, referring to someone who is in low spirits or to a person that is not in their usual environment and does not feel comfortable. Water in idioms can also have more neutral implications: English *like oil and water*, a phrase with very transparent, almost denotative meaning, referring to two elements that do not blend together, figuratively used about people who do not agree with each other, who have irreconcilable differences; and a humorous Romanian phrase – *a da apă la şoareci* (to give water to the mice), meaning to cry.

2.3. Concept: *The woods are dangerous*

The woods can be conceptualized as a dangerous place, due to an association with darkness, with seclusion from community and inhabited areas; the English expression *to be out of the woods*, meaning to be safe, and the German expression *auf dem Holzweg sein* (to be on the wooden path), meaning to be on the wrong path, illustrate this concept. The woods can also appear as a wild place where there are no rules: Romanian *a fura ca-n codru* (to steal as if one were in the woods).

2.4. Concept: *Something that is commonly found everywhere is insignificant*

The German expression *keinen Pfifferling wert sein* (to not be worth a chanterelle), referring to something that is worthless, is a very interesting phrase

that no longer reflects reality, as chanterelles have turned from being very common and thus insignificant, to being rare and actually expensive; however, the expression is still used with its initial meaning. This intriguing sociolinguistic phenomenon invokes Kurt Krüger-Lorenzen's plastic illustration of idiomatic expressions:

> Die Redensarten, wichtige Glieder der Sprache, sind mit Münzen zu vergleichen. Manche sind recht abgegriffen und werden gerade noch als Wechselgeld geduldet, einige wurden in einer bekannten Prägestätte geschlagen und sind ins Rollen gekommen; andere wieder gehören zu den numismatischen (sprachlichen!) Kostbarkeiten! Man hat sie erst kürzlich ausgegraben; sie sind aber schon vor tausen Jahren im Umlauf gewesen und leuchten heute noch so schön wie am ersten Tag (Krüger-Lorenzen, 1973).
> (Own translation: Idiomatic expressions, vital limbs of language, can be compared to coins. Some are fairly worn and are momentarily tolerated only as change, some were struck in a famous mint and then entered circulation; others belong to the collection of numismatic (linguistic) treasures! They have only recently been unearthed; but they have been in circulation for thousands of years and they shine today just as bright as they did on the first day).

A reversed occurrence can be observed in the Spanish phrase *no valer un pimiento* (to not be worth a pepper flake); this expression shows the rise and fall of pepper, from being very valuable and called "black gold" in the Middle Ages, when its price was very high and it was associated with the most expensive things, to becoming a common spice and representing something cheap and insignificant. Other expressions with the same meaning are: Spanish *no valer una castaña* (to not be worth a chestnut), *no valer un pepino* (to not be worth a cucumber), *no valer un rábano* (to not be worth a radish), Romanian *a nu face nici cat o ceapă degerată* (to not be worth even a frosted onion).

2.5. Concept: *Stones are lifeless*

Stones are lifeless, barren, inert objects that are used in idioms for contrast and exaggeration, to describe extraordinary situations: German *Stein und Bein frieren* (stones and legs freeze), Romanian *a crăpa/îngheţa pietrele* (stones crack/freese), to describe extreme cold; German *wenn Menschen schweigen werden die Steine schreien* (when people say nothing, the stones will scream), Romanian *a striga pietrele* (the stones are screaming, meaning that truth somehow finds a way to come out; Spanish *sacar agua de las piedras*, Romanian *a scoate apă din piatră seacă* (to pull water out of stones), meaning to achieve the impossible; Spanish *ablandar las piedras* (to soften the stones) or *hacer reír hasta a las piedras* (to make even the stones laugh), Portuguese *fazer chorar as pedras da calçada* (to make even the stones of the sidewalk cry), Romanian *a mişca până şi pietrele* (to move even the stones), referring to

something deeply impressive; Spanish *corazón de piedra*, Portuguese *coração de rocha*, Romanian *inimă de piatră* (a heart of stone), referring to hardness and insensitivity.

Another conceptual connection can be made between stones and something strong, durable, immutable: the English phrase *to be carved in stone* makes reference to the Ten Commandments and describes something that is fixed and unchangeable. Stones have neutral implications as well: English *a stone's throw away*, describing a very short distance, with full lexical equivalents in all the other analyzed languages, as it also appears in the Bible, where it was used as an approximate spatial measurement (technically about thirty meters) – German *einen Steinwurf entfernt*, Spanish *a tiro de piedra*, Portuguese *um tiro de pedra* and Romanian *la o aruncătură de piatră*; this Romanian phrase is not very used and the more common version is *la o aruncătură de băţ* (a stick's throw away).

To illustrate the fine line between concepts and symbols, here is a set of expressions in which stones display symbolic meaning: English *to cast the first stone*, German *den ersten Stein werfen*, Spanish *tirar la primera piedra*, Portuguese *atirar a primeira pedra*, Romanian *a arunca primul cu piatra*; the metaphorical meaning of these phrases is acquired from a symbolic situation of biblical origin and can be decoded by means of accessing previous knowledge of this intertextual link. This example shows how a specific symbolic value can be assigned to an object that would otherwise not carry this additional meaning. Symbols of literary origin are widespread and generally become universal and known to almost all people within a particular cultural space, sometimes even without knowing the original context.

3. Symbolism

3.1. *The hand is a symbol of humanity*

The hand, based on its use and concrete functions as a human limb, becomes imprinted with figurative meaning and symbolically stands for humanity, relationships and interpersonal connection. It is a meaningful element of idiomatic expressions in different languages: English *to lend somebody a hand*, Spanish *ofrecer/echar una mano*, Portuguese *dar uma mão*, Romanian *a da/a întinde o mână*, or *a da o mână de ajutor* (to lend a helping hand); Spanish **ser mano de santo** (to be the hand of a saint), Romanian *a lua durerea cu mâna* (to take someone's pain away with one's hand); Spanish *darle un dedo a alguien y tomarse este la mano*, Romanian *a-i da un deget cuiva şi a i se lua toată mâna* (somebody is given a finger and they take the whole hand), referring to someone abusing another person's kindness and also alluding to the hand as a symbol of help; English *hand in hand*, Spanish *mano a mano*, Romanian *mână-n mână*, referring to people being side by side and pursuing

the same goals; the Romanian phrase also has negative connotations, alluding to a conspiracy or a hidden complicity between people, with malicious intents. The same idea of working together to achieve common goals is expressed by means of extensions of the hand: Spanish *codo con codo*, Romanian *cot la cot* (elbow next to elbow); Spanish *hombro con hombro*, Romanian *umăr la umăr* (shoulder next to shoulder).

Combining the symbolism of the hand with the conceptual meaning of left and right results in idioms such as: English *to be someone's right hand*, German *jemandes rechte Hand sein*, Spanish *ser la mano derecha de alguien*, Portuguese *a mão direita de alguem* or *o braço direito de alguem* (someone's right arm), Romanian *a fi mâna dreaptă a cuiva*, meaning the biggest help, the person that someone can fully rely on for assistance and support. Hands are also symbols of people's actions: Spanish *tener las manos limpias*, Romanian *a avea mâinile curate* (to have clean hands); Spanish *mancharse las manos*, Romanian *a-şi murdări mâinile* (to stain one's hands), referring to good or bad deeds; English *to wash one's hands of something*, German *seine Hände in Unschuld waschen* (to wash one's hands in innocence), Spanish *lavarse las manos de algo*, Portuguese *lavar as suas mãos*, Romanian *a se spăla pe mâini de ceva*, meaning to relinquish one's responsibility or involvement in something, also making an intertextual reference to the biblical story of Pontius Pilate washing his hands and thereby refusing to be responsible for the fate of Jesus.

The hand as the most important limb, a symbol of the human being itself, in combination with the symbolism of iron, creates expressions that describe a very firm, determined and courageous person: English *an iron hand*, German *eine eiserne Hand*, Spanish *mano de hierro*, Portuguese *mão de ferro*, Romanian *mână de fier*. Metonymically, the hand represents the person and the attribute used in the phrase to describe the hand is projected as a quality onto the person. Other idioms use the hand and its parts as tools of manipulation: Romanian *a purta pe cineva pe degete* (to have someone on one's fingers), meaning to deceive someone or to make them act according to one's desires, in other words to manipulate them; and the variant *a juca pe cineva pe degete* (to play someone on one's fingers), which is more revealing due to the verb. The similar expression *a purta pe cineva pe palme* (to have someone on one's palms) has a very different meaning and refers to protecting someone, caring for them or spoiling them. The lexically equivalent Spanish and Portuguese phrases have the same meaning: Spanish *llevar a alguien en palmitas*, Portuguese *trazer alguem nas palmas* (to carry someone on one's palms).

3.2. *Gold is a symbol of value*

Gold is a very precious material, thus becoming symbolic for value, worth, high quality and importance: Romanian *a avea gura de aur*, Spanish

tener un pico de oro (to have a mouth of gold), meaning to speak beautifully or convincingly; English **to have a heart of gold**, German **ein goldenes Herz haben**, Spanish **tener un corazón de oro**, Portuguese **ter um coração de ouro**, Romanian **a avea o inimă de aur**.

3.3 *The mountain is a symbol of greatness*

Things that have dominant, obvious or outstanding features are more likely to be abstracted. Due to its size, the mountain is symbolic for greatness, strength and importance. The expression **to make a mountain out of a molehill**, meaning to exaggerate the importance of something trivial, contains a meaningful dichotomy in the form of two elements that have similar shape but are considerably different in size, which is meant to highlight the contrast and amplify the effect. Corresponding expressions in other languages also make use of elements that are greatly different in size: German **aus einer Mücke einen Elefanten machen** (to make an elephant out of a mosquito), Spanish **hacer una montaña de un grano de arena** (to make a mountain out of a grain of sand), Portuguese **fazer de um argueiro um cavaleiro** (to make a knight out of a mote), **fazer de uma pulga um cavaleiro armado** (to make an armed knight out of a flea), Romanian **a face din țânțar armăsar** (to make a stallion out of a mosquito); the choice of words in some expressions is motivated by rhyme and rhythm.

The expressions **to move mountains**, German **Berge versetzen**, Romanian **a muta munții din loc** (to move mountains from their place), referring to a spectacular achievement, are based on the abstract meaning of a mountain as height, peak, realization, but also make an intertextual link with a biblical verse ("Truly I tell you, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move." Matthew 17:20). The German phrase **über den Berg sein/kommen** (to be/go over the mountain), meaning to surpass difficulties, to no longer be in difficulty, to be safe, to overcome the worst and make a turn for the better and the English phrase **to be over the hill** are lexically very similar, but the latter expression refers to someone who is past their youth, thus being a partial false friend of the German expression and showing how conceptual meaning varies depending on how speakers choose to imagine and interpret the linguistic representations of reality.

3.4. *Light is a symbol of goodness*

Light has utterly positive symbolic connotations; it is associated with intelligence, wisdom, enlightenment, and also with the truth, honesty and openness: English **to bring something to light**, German **etwas ans Licht bringen**, Spanish **traer a la luz**, Portuguese **trazer à luz**, Romanian **a aduce la**

lumină or *a face lumină* (to make light), meaning to clarify a situation; Romanian *a se face lumină în capul/mintea cuiva* (someone's head/mind lightens up) and the opposite expression *a i se întuneca mintea cuiva* (someone's mind darkens), describing a mental state of irrationality. The dichotomy in the phrase *to bring light into the darkness* can be interpreted in various ways, but the possible connotations are all framed in the same semantic field, due to the symbolism of the two concepts and the power of contrast: truth/lies, hope/despair, kindness/cruelty, knowledge/ignorance. Light is also a symbol of life: English *to see the light of day*, German *das Licht der Welt erblicken* (to see the light of the world), Spanish *ver la primera luz* (to see the first light), Portuguese *vir à luz* (to come to the light), Romanian *a vedea lumina zilei* (to see the light of day), all meaning to be born, to come into existence, to have the first contact with the world. The beautiful Spanish and Portuguese expressions *dar a luz* and *dar à luz* (to give to the light) mean to give birth, illustrating the miracle of life in a candid way.

The shadow, as the opposite of light, is symbolic for mystery and obscurity; but, as it is so closely connected to the body, representing the projection of someone's stature, it also stands for the dark side of the human condition, for predefined limitations, as opposed to liberties. This is illustrated in expressions such as: English *to be a shadow of oneself*, German *nur noch ein Schatten von sich selbst sein*, Spanish *no ser ni sombra de lo que era*, Romanian *a fi doar o umbră din ce era*; German *über seinen Schatten nicht springen können* (to not be able to jump over one's own shadow), referring to someone's inability to fundamentally change themselves or to overcome their nature. Semantic correspondents can be found in the other languages in the form of proverbial sayings: English *the leopard cannot change his spots*, Spanish *el zorro pierde el pelo, pero no las mañas* (the fox may lose its fur, but not its tricks), Portuguese *o lobo perde o pelo, mas não perde o vício*, Romanian *lupul îşi schimbă părul, dar năravul ba* (the wolf may change its fur, but not its vice). These expressions originate in the Latin sayings *lupus pilum mutat, non mentem* and *vulpes pilum mutat, non mores* (a wolf/a fox changes its coat, but not its character).

3.5. *Wings are a symbol of freedom*

Humans have dreamed about being able to fly from time immemorial and wings have become symbols of that ability and of the infinite freedom that comes with it: English *to give wings to somebody*, German *jemandem Flügel verleihen*, Spanish *darle alas a alguien*, Portuguese *dar asas a alguém*, Romanian *a-i da aripi cuiva*, meaning to help someone achieve their dreams; and the opposite expressions, English *to clip someone's wings off*, German *jemandem die Flügel beschneiden*, Spanish *cortarle las alas a alguien*,

Portuguese *cortar as asas a alguém*, Romanian *a-i tăia aripile cuiva*, meaning to incapacitate someone and prevent them from succeeding.

3.6. *Stars are symbols of luck*

Celestial bodies are representations of wishes and aspirations, of the magical and the unobtainable. The attempt of human beings to link their fate to stars is primeval and it is illustrated in the following expressions: English *to be born under a lucky star*, German *unter einem glücklichen Stern geboren sein*; Spanish *haber nacido con estrella* (to have been born with a star), Portuguese *ter boa estrela* (to have a good star) or *ter nascido debaixo de bom planeta* (to have been born under a good planet), Romanian *a se naşte cu stea în frunte* (to be born with a star on one's forehead), all meaning to be very lucky; English *to reach for the stars*, German *nach den Sternen greifen*, meaning to attempt to do something very difficult, almost impossible; English *to promise someone the moon*, German *jemandem versprechen, für ihn die Sterne vom Himmel zu holen* (to promise to bring someone the stars from the sky), Spanish *prometer la luna*, Portuguese *prometer a lua* (to promise someone the moon), Romanian *a promite luna de pe cer/luna şi stelele/cerul şi pământul* (to promise someone the moon/the moon and the stars/the stars and the earth).

Apart from symbolic value, stars also carry conceptual meaning. The following idiomatic expressions reflect a conception of the world, of human fate, based on astrology and theories of predestination: English *to be written in the stars*, German *in den Sternen geschrieben stehen* or *die Sternen lügen nicht* (the stars don't lie), Spanish *estar escrito en las estrellas*, Portuguese *escrito nas estrelas*, Romanian *a fi scris în stele*; the idea that everyone's destiny is written somewhere and connected to the sky gives comfort and peace of mind to some people, while others reject this theory and feel better believing that it lies in their power to change their own fate. Stars can also have neutral implications in idioms: English *to see stars*, German *Sterne sehen*, Spanish *ver las estrellas*, Portuguese *ver estrelas*, Romanian *a vedea stele verzi* (to see green stars); these expressions are not related to astrology, but rather make a humorous allusion to the effect of seeing flashing lights after being hit on the head.

3.7. *The laurel is a symbol of success*

Another object that is turned into an abstract concept is the laurel plant, which becomes symbolic due to its use and importance in ancient worship cults and medicine, especially in ancient Greece, where it was considered to be the tree of Apollo and for this reason, wraths made of laurel leaves were awarded as a mark of distinction, given as prize or worn as adornment and they were believed to bring blessings and good fortune. Although the plant itself no longer

plays an important role in modern world, it remains a symbol that can be found in fixed phrases such as: German ***Lorbeeren pflücken*** or ***Lorbeeren ernten***, Spanish ***llevarse los laureles***, Portuguese ***colher os louros***, Romanian ***a culege laurii*** (to pluck or to harvest one's laurels), meaning to be successful, recognized for one's achievements or claim credit for them; and the opposite versions with negative or pejorative meaning – English ***to rest on one's laurels***, German ***sich auf seinen Lorbeeren ausruhen***, Spanish ***dormirse en los laureles***, Portuguese ***dormir à sombra dos louros***, Romanian ***a se culca pe lauri***, referring to someone who makes no further effort after being praised or becoming successful.

4. Metonymy

4.1. Metonymical analogy: *Bread and salt equal nutrition and communion*

Fundamental foods and spices appear in idiomatic expressions with metonymical meaning, as vital elements that are representative for nutrition and consecutively for relationships between people and for human existence in itself. Bread, corn, salt and pepper are particularly significant, especially in the Western world; bread symbolizes the essential nourishment in the Christian world and corn represents well-being, bliss and fecundity in Latin American cultures (Med, 2011). Their positive connotations are illustrated in phrases such as: Spanish ***más bueno que el pan*** (better than bread), Portuguese ***bom como o milho*** (as good as corn), Romanian ***bun ca pâinea caldă*** (as good as fresh bread). The following expressions metonymically refer to the effort one puts into making a living: English ***to earn one's corn*** or ***to earn one's bread***, German ***sein Brot verdienen***, Spanish ***ganarse el pan***, Portuguese ***ganhar o seu pão***, Romanian ***a-şi câştiga pâinea***. The act of leaving someone without their source of income is also expressed by means of metonymy: Spanish ***quitarle a alguien el pan de la boca***, Portuguese ***tirar o pão da boca de alguém***, Romanian ***a-i lua cuiva pâinea de la gură*** (to take someone's bread away from their mouth).

The proverb ***Man does not live by bread alone*** (Matthew 4:4 and Deuteronomy 8:3) depicts bread as the main food for the body and uses it to highlight the spiritual dimension of the human being, implying the presence of spiritual needs as well, besides material needs. Idiomatic expressions that mention flour further highlight the analogy between basic elements of nutrition and all aspects of life: Portuguese ***fazer farinha com alguém*** (to make flour with someone), meaning to live in harmony with someone; Romanian ***a fi din aceeaşi făină*** (to be made of the same flour) or ***a fi din acelaşi aluat*** (to be made of the same dough), Spanish ***ser harina del mismo costal***, Portuguese ***ser farinha do mesmo saco*** (to be flour from the same sack), referring to people of the same nature and with common features of character.

Salt as an essential mineral that is imperiously necessary for life and can be used for many different purposes is also found as a central element of idiomatic expressions and sayings based on metonymy: English *to eat salt with someone*, meaning to be someone's guest; Romanian *a manca pâinea şi sarea cuiva* (to eat someone's bread and salt), meaning to enjoy someone's hospitality, referencing the way in which guests are received, as part of the Romanian welcoming ceremony; Romanian *a mânca pâine şi sare cu cineva* (to eat bread and salt with someone), referring to cohabitation and companionship; Romanian *până nu mănânci cu omul o baniţă de sare, nu îl cunoşti* (you don't know someone until you have eaten a bushel of salt with them), German *einen Scheffel Salz mit jemandem gegessen haben* (to have eaten a bushel of salt with someone), meaning to know someone very well. Salt and pepper are the main spices in many cultures and thus they acquire conceptual meaning as ingredients that are indispensible to life: German *das Salz in der Suppe* (the salt in the soup), Romanian *sarea in bucate* (the salt in food), describing the best or the decisive constituent of something; Spanish *ser la sal y la pimienta*, Romanian *a fi sarea şi piperul* (to be the salt and pepper), meaning to be the most exciting person or aspect of a situation; Spanish *no tener sal y pimiento*, Romanian *a-i lipsi sarea şi piperul* (to lack salt and pepper), meaning to lack charm, wit and sense of humor; Portuguese *caldinho/sopinha sem sal* (a soup without salt), meaning to be uninteresting and monotonous.

4.2. Metonymical analogy: *The face equals character*

Other examples of metonymical analogy are found in expressions that make use of strongly suggestive notions with high abstraction power. The face is the most expressive body part and for this reason it becomes an extension of someone's personality, a substitute for the human being itself, as shown in the phrases: English *to save face*, German *das Gesicht waren* and English *to lose face*, German *das Gesicht verlieren*, where the face is synonym with reputation and integrity; Spanish *persona de dos caras*, Portuguese *pessoa de duas caras*, Romanian *om cu două feţe* (a person with two faces), where the face represents a person's character and personality. The cheek, being the part of the face which changes color depending on one's emotions and feelings, is associated in Romanian with common sense: *a (nu) avea obraz* (to have/not have a cheek), describing a person who shows respect, dignity and sense of responsibility, or on the contrary, a lack of education and bad manners; *a avea obrazul subţire* (to have a thin cheek) and *a avea obrazul gros* (to have a thick cheek), referring to the presence or absence of decency and common sense; *a avea obrazul curat/pătat* (to have a clean/stained cheek). The following pairs of expressions mention the cheek in Romanian and the face in Spanish: Romanian *a-i crăpa obrazul de ruşine cuiva* (someone's cheek cracks with shame), Spanish

caérsele la cara de vergüenza a alguien (someone's face falls off with shame); Romanian *a-şi pune obrazul pentru cineva* (to vouch with one's cheek for someone), Spanish *dar la cara por alguien* (to vouch with one's face for someone), meaning that someone guarantees for the morality and behavior of another person.

4.3. Metonymical analogy: *The word equals honesty*

Words, as realizations of the language capacity which is specific only to the human being, are prone to abstraction and become the very expression of human essence; they come to represent a quantitatively and qualitatively measurable human attribute and to stand for communication intrinsically and, by extrapolation, for integrity, honesty and honor, as shown in these expressions: English *to weigh one's words*, German *jedes Wort auf die Goldwaage legen* (to place each word on the gold scale), Spanish *medir bien las palabras*, Portuguese *medir bem as palavras* (to measure one's words well), Romanian *a-şi cântări bine vorbele* (to weigh one's words well), meaning to think before one speaks, to consider and pay close attention to every word that one says; English *to give one's word*, German *sein Wort geben*, Spanish *dar su palabra*, Portuguese *dar a sua palavra*, Romanian *a-şi da cuvântul*; English *to be a man of his word* or *a woman of her word*, Spanish *ser persona de palabra*, Portuguese *ser homem de palavra*, Romanian *a fi om de cuvânt*. In German, there is a very suggestive saying that is used to describe a trustworthy, reliable, authentic and honorable person: *ein Mann, ein Wort* (one man, one word).

5. Conclusions

The interlinguistic comparison of idiomatic expressions reveals that the majority of phrases whose metaphorical meaning is based on conceptualization, symbolism or metonymy, have full or partial lexical equivalents in different languages (that is, they can be found in the exact same form or very similar form in different languages). Out of the five analyzed languages, some are related to each other: two are Germanic languages (English and German) and the other three are Romance languages (Spanish, Portuguese and Romanian). Although they belong to different subdivisions of the Indo-European language family, they are mostly spoken in the common cultural space of the Western world and they are influenced by virtually the same mentalities, abstract motifs and cognitive connections. The similarities and differences between the analyzed idiomatic expressions highlight both cultural peculiarities and cultural confluence, conceptual distinctiveness and conceptual resemblance, which are all pillars of understanding the creation and evolution of languages in general and the depths of the human being in particular. Future research into idiomatic

expressions, especially in the form of interlinguistic studies, can further widen our perspectives on cultural and ideological boundaries.

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CONCEPTUALIZAREA, SIMBOLISMUL ŞI METONIMIA CA MECANISME ALE SENSULUI METAFORIC ÎN EXPRESII IDIOMATICE: COMPARAŢIE INTERLINGVISTICĂ

(Rezumat)

Expresiile idiomatice sunt purtători lingvistici de cultură, mentalităţi colective şi reprezentări metaforice. Unul dintre cele mai fascinante demersuri în studiul expresiilor idiomatice este analiza comparativă a unităţilor frazeologice din diferite limbi, care dezvăluie similarităţi şi deosebiri între oameni şi percepţiile lor despre lume. Acest articol analizează expresii din limbile engleză, germană, spaniolă, portugheză şi română, investigând mecanismele subiacente semnificaţiei lor metaforice. Conceptualizarea, simbolismul şi metonimia sunt câteva instrumente-cheie care impregnează expresiile idiomatice cu înţelesuri conotative. Diferenţa dintre un concept şi un simbol nu este foarte evidentă; cel dintâi desemnează un gând, o opinie sau un fapt legat de o anumită entitate, pe când cel din urmă reprezintă o conexiune imaterială între concret şi abstract. O analogie metonimică se bazează pe înlocuirea unei idei cu un atribut sau un constituent al acesteia. Astfel de mecanisme generează semnificaţie metaforică în expresiile idiomatice, iar comparaţia interlingvistică a expresiilor echivalente din punct de vedere lexical sau semantic revelează paralele şi contraste interesante.

FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE AN INCLUSIVE ENVIRONMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION

BY

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Abstract. Inclusion in higher education is a multifaceted topic with extensive research conducted globally ranging from individual classroom practices to broader institutional commitments to equity and accessibility.

Through the study we investigated to what extent accessibility, support, resources, social and cultural inclusion are available to students with special needs or from disadvantaged backgrounds at "Gheorghe Asachi" Technical University of Iaşi (TUIASI). The study was developed by TUIASI Centre for Career Guidance and Counselling specialists within the framework of the CNFIS-FDI-2024-F-00116 project "TUIASI Inclusive University".

Keywords: inclusive education; students with special needs; academic community perception.

1. Context and Theoretical Background

Inclusive education is an ambiguous term. Broadly, it refers to a situation in which students with SEN (Special Education Needs) are taught in

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mainstream educational institutions and spend at least some of the time in the classroom together with their peers without SEN (Farrell *et al.*, 2007).

There is much of literature and research questions debating on how students with special needs benefit or affect a regular classroom. For example, a meta-analysis of 47 studies on the effectiveness of inclusive education for students without special educational needs (SEN) concluded that inclusive education impacts positively academic achievement of students without SEN. (Szumski *et al.*, 2017). In one of the studies, students' attitudes towards peers with SEN and inclusive learning settings found that girls reported more positive attitudes than boys (Spörer *et al.*, 2020).

However, several studies underline the difficulties faced by students, teachers, and peers in achieving effective inclusion. The main reasons are: lack of teacher preparedness, social exclusion, academic challenges, instructor's attitudes and support, systemic barriers, peer perception and bullying.

Many teachers feel underprepared to meet the diverse needs of SEN students in mainstream classrooms due to insufficient training in differentiated instruction and inclusive practices (Florian and Linklater, 2010). Students with SEN often experience social exclusion and limited peer interactions in inclusive settings, particularly if they exhibit significant behavioural or cognitive differences (Koster *et al.*, 2010). While inclusive education may improve self-esteem, academic performance for SEN students sometimes lags due to insufficient classroom accommodations or individualized support (Lindsay, 2007). Teachers' attitudes toward inclusion and perceptions of inadequate support can negatively affect their ability to create an inclusive environment (Sharma and Desai, 2002). Systemic issues such as large class sizes, rigid curricula, and lack of resources hinder the integration of SEN students in regular classrooms (Norwich, 2008). SEN students often struggle with peer acceptance, making it difficult for them to integrate socially (Carter *et al.*, 2005).

However, inclusive practices in higher education positively influence: academic outcomes because students in inclusive environments tend to perform better due to equitable access to resources and support. Inclusive practices foster a sense of belonging, improving students' overall well-being and reducing dropout rates. Inclusive environments encourage diverse perspectives, leading to richer classroom discussions and innovative solutions.

None of these factors acts independently with interdependence relationships between them that contribute holistically to the academic performance of all students, regardless if they are with or without special needs.

2. Methodology

The primary aim of this study has been to inform and raise awareness within the academic community about the need to include and support students with disabilities or from disadvantaged backgrounds throughout their university

studies. The study was developed by TUIASI Centre for Career Guidance and Counselling specialists as part of the CNFIS-FDI-2024-F-00116 project "TUIASI Inclusive University" carried out by the vice-rectorate for student affairs in 2024.

The study assessed accessibility, support, resources, social and cultural inclusion, and overall satisfaction with the support provided to students with special needs or from disadvantaged backgrounds at "Gheorghe Asachi" Technical University of Iaşi (TUIASI).

The results were encoded in Romania with Google Docs and Excel. The questionnaire in Romania was online (with an average administration time of 20 minutes). The questionnaire was applied between May 2024 and September 2024. The questionnaire was completed by students, professors, board and staff from the academic community of the Gheorghe Asachi Technical University of Iasi, Romania. The questionnaires were accompanied by a short presentation in Romanian on the purpose of applying the questionnaires.

A total of 358 valid responses were collected. A frequency analysis was performed and a test summary is presented below, graphical responses are included, too.

The respondent demographics were as follows: 202 (56.9%) respondents were university students. 108 were academic staff, of which 85 (23.9%) were faculty members across 11 faculties, and 23 (6.5%) teaching staff with leadership roles.

o   Only 91 of respondents (25.6%) believe that our university is inclusive, while 140 of respondents (39.3%) believe that our university is somewhat inclusive at present. Meanwhile, the others either do not know or believe that the university has a very minimal inclusive policy.

o   218 (61.8%) are aware that at TUIASI there is a Gender Equality Strategy and Commission that promotes gender non-discrimination and equal opportunities across the entire academic community.

o   Only 163 (46%) believe that TUIASI respects the principle of equal opportunities regarding access to career opportunities through clear and transparent hiring/promotion criteria.

o   A large majority of respondents, 302 (85.1%), are unaware of the number of students with disabilities that are currently studying at TUIASI.

o   237 believe that TUIASI provides support measures and resources to ensure that all students, regardless of background or situation, can excel academically.

o   88 (24.8%) believe that principles related to equality, non-discrimination, and inclusion are greatly embedded in study programs, while only 51 (14.4%) believe these principles are greatly embedded in professional practices/workplaces.

o   111 (31.2%) witnessed acts of discrimination against a colleague who ultimately was not given justice (64.2%).

o   Only 54 (15.2%) believe that TUIASI provides significant support to students with disabilities (accessible buildings, personalized study materials, assistive and accessibility technologies, etc.).

o   193 (54.5%) believe the university is PARTIALLY adapted for access by people with reduced mobility (e.g., ramps, elevators, wide doors).

o   180 (50.8%) believe there are sufficient parking spaces reserved for people with disabilities.

o   148 (41.7%) claim that there are not enough accessible toilets available for individuals with special needs.

o   171 (48%) believe that there are no adapted signs and indicators for people with visual impairments (e.g., Braille inscriptions, color contrasts).

o   177 (49.9%) believe that there is a lack of special teaching resources (e.g., equipment, assistive technologies) available to support individuals with special needs.

o   224 (63.1%) do not know whether training programs are offered at the university to educate staff about the needs and inclusion of people with disabilities.

o   Similarly, 190 (53.4%) do not know whether individuals with special needs benefit from adequate support for integration into the work/educational environment (e.g., counseling, mentoring).

o   64 (18%) and 162 (45.5%) believe the university has a highly inclusive or open level of acceptance within the TUIASI community towards people from different backgrounds/affiliations (ethnic minorities, sexual minorities, low socioeconomic status, international students, etc.).

o   Approximately the same percentages, 65 (18.3%) and 153 (43%), believe that the university has a highly inclusive or open level of acceptance within the TUIASI community towards people with disabilities.

o   Only 51 (14.4%) believe that the voices of students/members of the academic community with disabilities or from disadvantaged backgrounds are heard.

o   205 of respondents (57.9%) evaluate the attitude of colleagues/employees toward people with special needs as positive or very positive.

o   Only 35 respondents believe that the university frequently or occasionally organizes activities or events specifically to promote the inclusion of people with special needs, while 111 respondents believe such activities are very rarely or never organized. 210 (59%) did not know how to answer this question.

o   Only 30 individuals (23.4%) are very satisfied with the institution/organization's efforts regarding the inclusion of people with special needs, while 246 (69.3%) stated that the entire university community has the most important role in ensuring and implementing the principles of equal opportunities and inclusion.

3. Discussions

From the conducted study, the conclusions regarding the inclusion of individuals with disabilities at TUIASI are as follows: Infrastructure limits the physical access and active participation of individuals with disabilities in various domains, such as education, work, and social life.

The lack of continuous training and counseling leads to insufficient preparation of those involved in supporting individuals with disabilities, perpetuating barriers to inclusion. Efforts in this area need to be intensified.

An inaccessible educational environment creates inequalities and excludes students with disabilities from an inclusive educational system, undermining their chances for personal and professional development.

Initiatives like the current study and project are commendable, but they need to become part of a broader and sustained strategy to ensure long-term impact. Although the TUIASI community demonstrates significant openness to the issue of inclusion, the lack of specialized staff reflects underfunding and inadequate resource management. However, excessive attention to the issue of inclusion, without implementing practical measures, can generate skepticism or reduce initiatives to mere image exercises. A balance between promotion and concrete action is essential. Adopting or adapting an existing model from an experienced institution is a useful step, but success depends on tailoring it to local needs and implementing it with adequate resources.

Meta-analyses point out that measuring inclusion can be complex due to: variability in institutional definitions of inclusion; differences in cultural and regional contexts; limited longitudinal studies tracking the long-term impact of inclusion initiatives. The meta-analysis mentioned above that met the inclusion criteria, covering a total sample of almost 4 800 000 students (Szumski *et al.*, 2017) shows that inclusive education impacts positively academic achievement of students without SEN, the overall effect is positive and statistically significant, $d = 0.12$ (95% CI: 0.02, 0.23). Effective inclusion in higher education is strongly linked to institutional policies and frameworks designed to promote equity and accessibility. Evidence-based strategies for fostering inclusion include: Regular workshops for faculty and staff on diversity, equity, and inclusion; pairing underrepresented students with mentors to guide them academically and socially; establishing dedicated offices or centers for disability services, cultural diversity, and student support, and incorporating diverse perspectives into curriculum and promoting active, inclusive learning environments.

4. Conclusions

The integration of individuals with disabilities requires a multidimensional approach involving infrastructural, educational, institutional,

and cultural reforms, as well as better resource allocation. Several studies underline the difficulties faced by students, teachers, and peers in achieving effective inclusion and the main reasons are related to the lack of staff training, social exclusion, academic challenges, staff's attitudes and support, systemic barriers, peer perception and bullying.

Our results are consistent with other studies conducted over the last 20 years (Szumski *et al.*, 2017; Lindsay, 2007; Norwich, 2008).

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FACTORI CARE INFLUENȚEAZĂ UN MEDIU INCLUZIV ÎN ÎNVĂȚĂMÂNTUL SUPERIOR

(Rezumat)

Incluziunea în învățământul superior este un subiect complex, existând cercetări care variază de la practici individuale în sălile de curs până la angajamente instituționale privind echitatea și accesibilitatea.

Prin acest studiu, am investigat în ce măsură accesibilitatea, sprijinul, resursele, incluziunea socială și culturală sunt disponibile pentru studenții cu nevoi speciale sau din medii defavorizate la Universitatea Tehnică „Gheorghe Asachi" din Iași (TUIASI). Studiul a fost realizat de specialiștii Centrului de Consiliere și Orientare în Carieră (CCOC) TUIASI în cadrul proiectului CNFIS-FDI-2024-F-00116 „TUIASI Universitate Incluzivă".

STUDY ON VICES AND FACTORS THAT NEGATIVELY INFLUENCE SPORTS PERFORMANCE

BY

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Abstract. The concept of vices is complex and varies according to cultural, social and historical context. In different periods and cultures, certain behaviours or habits were considered vicious or virtuous according to prevailing norms and values. It is important to note that perceptions of vices are largely subjective and change according to the evolution of society and cultural values.

Athletes, like everyone else, may be likely to develop various vices during their sports career. These vices can have a negative impact on their performance and on their personal life in general.

The impact of sport on vices can be positive and can significantly contribute to their prevention and management through the following ways: healthy and disciplined lifestyle, increased self-discipline, stress and anxiety management, and, mood recovery, mentoring and team support, education and awareness, identifying and managing risks and monitoring mental health.

Keywords: sports; health; discipline; self-control; addiction.

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1. Introduction

1.1. Aspects of the Occurrence and Negative Effect of Vices

The concept of vices is complex and varies according to cultural, social and historical context. In different periods and cultures, certain behaviours or habits were considered vicious or virtuous according to prevailing norms and values. Here is a general look at the history of the occurrence of vices:

• In ancient societies, vices were often viewed from a moral-religious perspective. In ancient Greece and Rome, philosophers such as Aristotle and Plato discussed virtues and vices in the context of ethics. Vices were often associated with lack of self-control or excesses in various areas of life.

• In the medieval period, the Catholic Church exercised a strong influence on morality and the concept of vice. Vices were often associated with sins, and the Church promoted virtues as the opposite of vices.

• With the Protestant Reformation and the Age of Enlightenment, there have been changes in the outlook on vice. Ideas about individual freedom and rationality influenced how people viewed vices and virtues.

• During the Industrial Revolution and major social changes, vices have often been linked to social problems such as alcoholism, poverty, and child labour. Social reformers have tried to address these issues through temperance movements and social reforms.

• In the 20th century, concerns about vices have extended to the inclusion of issues related to substance addiction (alcohol, drugs) and compulsive behaviours (gambling, the internet). Psychology and the social sciences began to provide scientific insights into the development of vices.

It is important to note that perceptions of vices are largely subjective and change according to the evolution of society and cultural values (Anderson and Baumberg, 2006). What was considered a vice in one period or culture may not be the same in another.

1.2. Characteristics of Persons with Vices

The term "person with a vice" is used to describe a person who manifests a compulsive dependence or behaviour related to a substance or activity. These characteristics may vary depending on the type of vice, whether it is substance addiction, gambling, the internet or other compulsive behaviours (Anderson and Baumberg, 2006). General characteristics of persons with vices:

☐ Physical or psychological dependence: The person with a vice may develop physical or psychological dependence on the substance or behaviour in question.

 Lack of control: Inability to control consumption or addictive behaviour is a common feature.

 Neglect of responsibilities: People with vices may neglect social, professional, or family responsibilities because of their focus on meeting vice-related needs.

 Increased tolerance: The person suffering from a vice can develop increased tolerance to the substance or to the addictive behaviour (Drăgan, 2002).

 Continuation of consumption or addictive behaviour despite negative consequences.

 Persistent preoccupation: The person's thoughts and activities may be dominated by substance consumption or the addictive behaviour.

 Social isolation: The person suffering from a vice may withdraw from social interaction or reduce their social activities.

 Lies or secret behaviours: People with vices can resort to lies or conceal their addictive consumption or behaviour from others.

 Unstable emotional state: Vice can lead to intense fluctuations in your emotional state, including anxiety, depression, irritability, or euphoria.

 The need for professional help: Although vices can be hard to overcome, many people who have vices can regain their lives with the help of therapy and other specialized resources.

These characteristics are not universal and may vary depending on the type of vice and the individuality of each person. It is important to understand that vices are complex conditions and that proper treatment can be crucial for recovery and for improving quality of life.

1.3. Vices That Athletes Can Develop

Athletes, like everyone else, may be likely to develop various vices during their sports career (Shirreffs and Maughan, 2006). These vices can have a negative impact on their performance and on their personal life in general. Some of the common vices that can affect athletes include:
- Consumption of prohibited substances (doping)
- Consumption of alcohol and tobacco
- Gambling
- Unhealthy eating behaviours
- Dependence on technology
- Dependence on obsessive physical exercise

1.4. The Impact of Sports Activities on Vice

The impact of sport on vice can be positive and can significantly contribute to its prevention and management (Shirreffs and Maughan, 2006). We will list below some ways in which sport can influence vices:

☐   Healthy and disciplined lifestyle: participation in sports activities encourages the adoption of an active lifestyle, which may include a balanced diet, adequate rest and avoidance of the consumption of harmful substances (Drăgan, 2002).

☐   Increased self-discipline: regular training and following a rigorous training program can develop self-discipline and self-control, thus reducing the temptation to resort to harmful behaviours, such as alcohol or drug use (Drăgan, 2002).

☐   Management of stress and anxiety, since sports activities can serve as a healthy way to manage stress and pressure, providing a natural way to release accumulated tension and maintain a balanced mental state.

☐   Regular exercise can stimulate the production of endorphins in the brain, improving mood and reducing the risk of depression or anxiety, what may be predisposing factors for vices (Drăgan, 2002).

☐   Development of social skills and community integration, opportunities for positive socialization, participating in sports teams or group sports activities can provide athletes with opportunities for positive socialization and integration into a healthy community and mutual support.

☐   Mentoring and support from the team: the team and coaches can play an important role in providing support and mentoring, helping athletes avoid negative influences (Bull, 2011).

☐   Education and awareness, as sports organizations can use their platforms to educate athletes about the risks of vice and promote responsible and ethical behaviour among them. Performance athletes often have a strong influence on young people (Bull, 2011).

☐   Identification and risk management: sports teams and organizations, can implement programs and resources for managing stress and competitive pressure and thus reduce the risk of athletes resorting to vices as a mechanism for managing them (Bull, 2011).

☐   Mental health monitoring: athletes should have access to counselling and psychological support services to manage the mental and emotional challenges that may arise during their sports career.

2. Research Methodology

2.1. Research Hypothesis

We assume that vices (alcohol, drugs, gambling, etc.) have a significant and negative impact on sports performance, influenced by factors such as competitive stress, social pressure and accessibility to substances.

2.2. Research Purpose

The purpose of this study on vices and factors that negatively influence sports performance is to explore and understand in depth the impact of consuming vices on sports performance.

2.3. Research Objectives

The objective of this study is the assessment of the prevalence of vices among athletes: determination of the frequency and types of vices (alcohol, drugs, gambling, etc.) encountered in different branches of sport and age categories.

- Analysis of the impact of vice on sports performance: assessing how vices affect the physical and mental performance of athletes, including reflexes, coordination, endurance and other skills necessary for optimal performance in competitions.
- Identification of risk and protection factors associated with vice: analysis of social, psychological and cultural factors that may contribute to the development of vice among athletes, including, as well as identifying factors that could protect athletes from the consumption of vices.
- Exploring the relationships between competitive stress, social pressure and the consumption of vices: investigating how the pressure to perform in competitions and the stress associated with sport can influence the decisions of athletes regarding the consumption of vices.
- Propose intervention and prevention strategies: based on the results of the study, develop recommendations for the development and implementation of effective policies, programs and interventions for the prevention and management of vice among athletes.

The study aims to primarily evaluate the prevalence of vices among athletes, addressing not only their frequency but also the negative impact on athletic performance. The analysis of risk and protective factors reveals the social and psychological influences on vice consumption, linking competitive stress to individual decisions. Ultimately, the goal is to develop effective intervention and prevention strategies to support athletes in avoiding and managing these vices, thereby promoting a healthy sports environment.

2.4. Research Subjects

The target subjects of this study were athletes or former performance athletes who developed various vices during the practice of sports. The study was conducted only for people over the age of 18, targeting both genders. All participants had access to the internet and were willing to participate in an online questionnaire.

Research sample: the sample for this study consisted of 29 participants, current and former performance athletes, aged 18 to 50.

2.5. Research Method

In this study, we used the questionnaire as the main research method for collecting quantitative data. This tool was chosen because of its ability to gather detailed information from a large number of respondents in a structured and systematic way.

The questionnaire was designed to obtain relevant data about the experiences of athletes or former athletes in relation to the vices and factors that negatively influenced their sports performance.

2.5.1. The Questionnaire

QUESTIONNAIRE

Please answer the following questions according to your personal experience. Your responses will remain confidential and will be used exclusively for research purposes.

1. Age
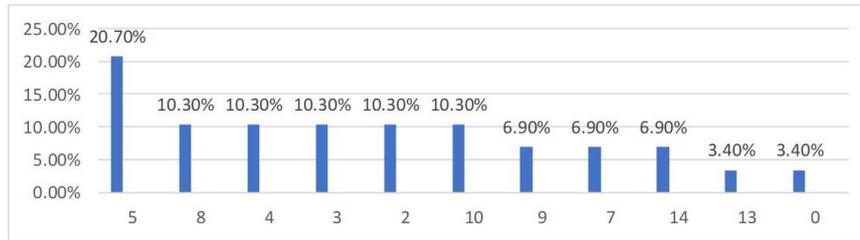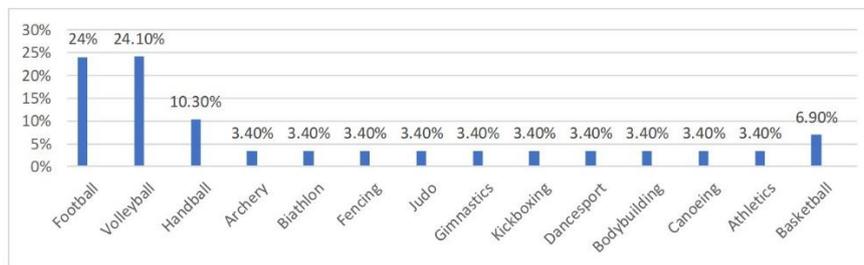2. Gender
3. Years of performance practice
4. Sport practiced
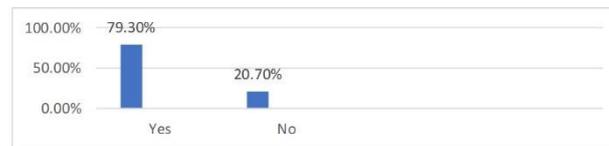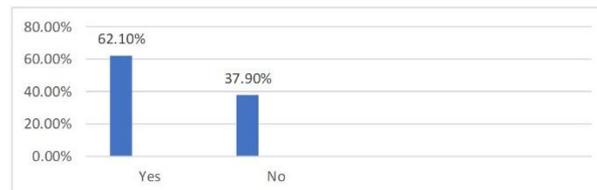5. Do you currently practice performance-level sports?
6. Have you ever consumed different substances or practiced different activities that can fit the vice level?
   • yes
   • no
7. Which of the following vices have been present in your life?
   • alcohol consumption
   • tobacco consumption
   • substance consumption
   • gambling
   • another
8. Do you currently have any vices?
   • yes
   • no
9. Is there a certain addiction that you cannot get rid of?
   • yes
   • no
10. What addiction do you have that you think you can't get rid of and why?

11. Have you consulted specialists to try to solve this problem?

12. How did you get this dependency?

13. How has this addiction affected your privacy?

14. How has this addiction affected your sports life?

15. Have you received support from close people?

  • yes

  • no

16. How has this addiction affected your sports performance?

17. How do you think we could combat the presence of vices among athletes?

- education and awareness (information, workshops and seminars, mentoring)
- psycho-emotional support (psychological counselling, support groups)
- prevention and intervention programs (regular screening, intervention programmes)
- promote a healthy lifestyle (alternative activities, nutrition and rest)
- regulations and policies (anti-doping policies, contracts and clauses)
- involvement of families and communities (family support, support communities)
- technologies and applications (mobile apps, online platforms)
- evaluation and monitoring of progress (continuous feedback and evaluation, studies and research).
- other.

3. Results
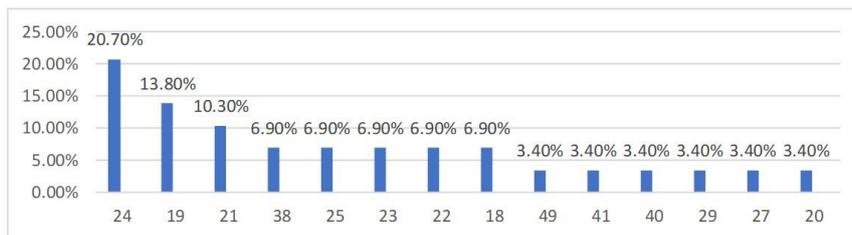
Fig. 1 – Age.
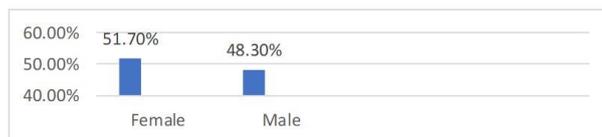
Fig. 2 – Gender.

Fig. 3 – Years of performance practice.

Fig. 4 – Sport practiced.

Fig. 5 – Do you currently practice performance-level sports?

Fig. 6 – Have you ever consumed different substances or practiced different activities
that can fit the vice level?
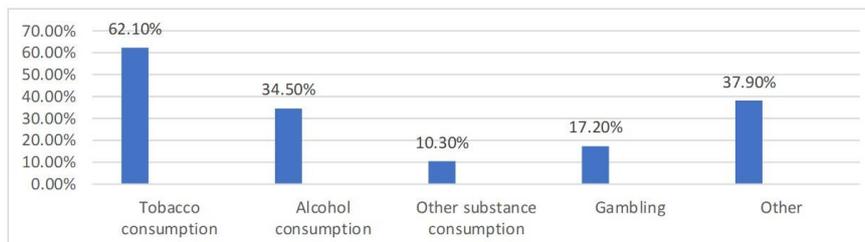
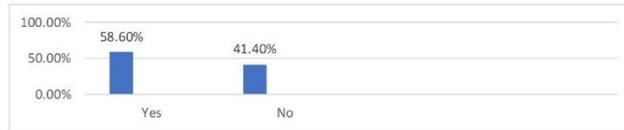Fig. 7 – Which of the following vices have been present in your life?

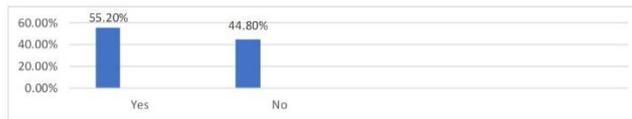Fig. 8 – Do you currently have any vices?

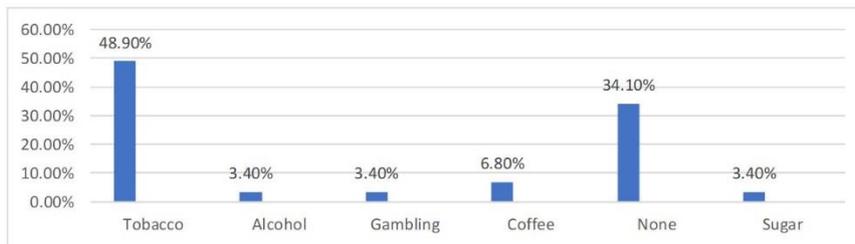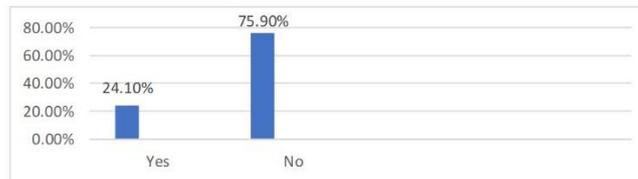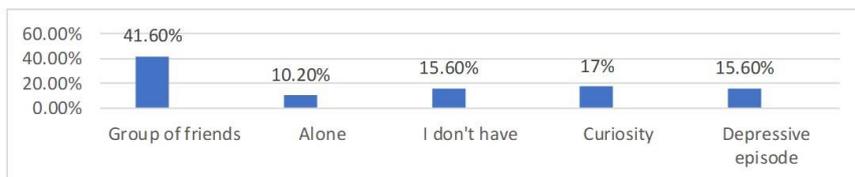Fig. 9 – Is there a certain addiction that you cannot get rid of?

Fig. 10 – What addiction do you have that you think you can't get rid of and why?

Fig. 11 – Have you consulted specialists to try to solve this problem?
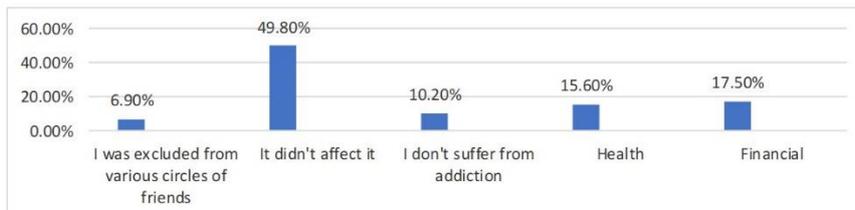

Fig. 12 – How did you get this dependency?

Fig. 13 – How has this addiction affected your privacy?
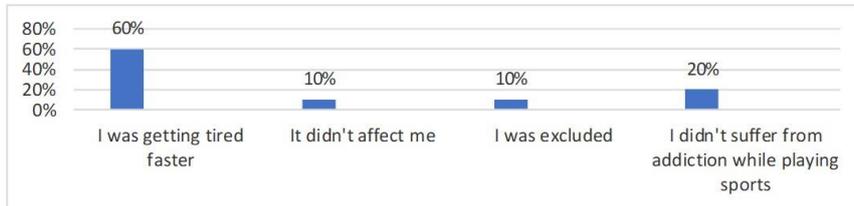
Fig. 14 – How has this addiction affected your sports life?
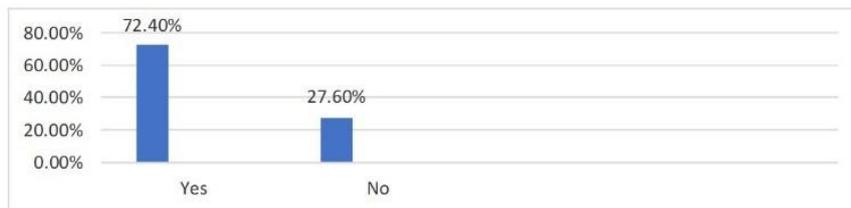

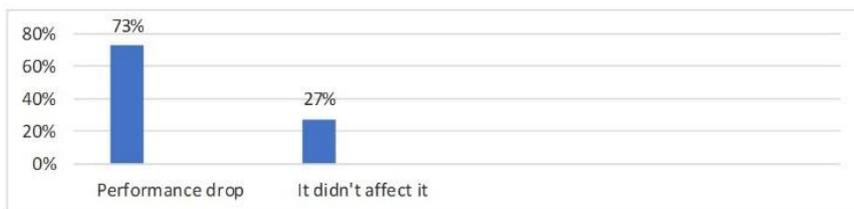Fig. 15 – Have you received support from close people?

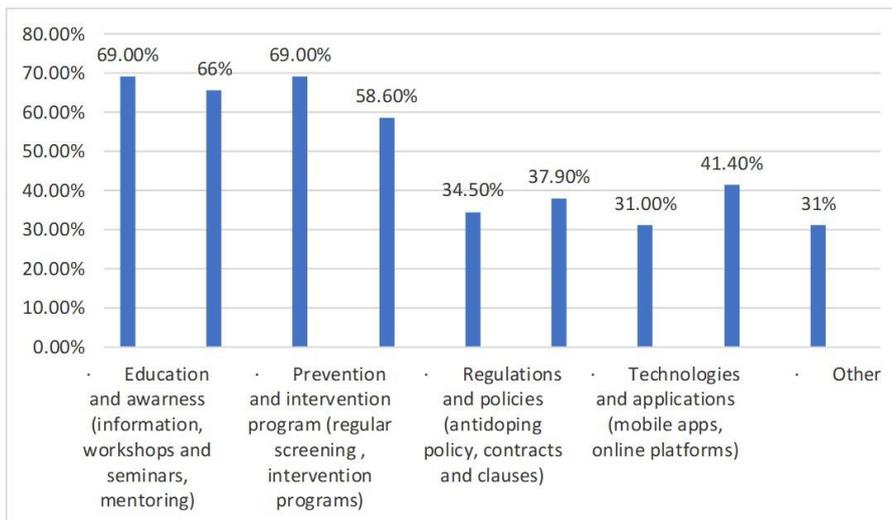Fig. 16 – How has this addiction affected your sports performance?

Fig. 17 – How do you think we could combat the presence of vices among athletes?

3.1. Interpretation of results

1. The results of the first question in this study showed a greater desire of the younger generation aged 18-25, a total percentage of 75.8% out of 100%, to complete the questionnaire.

2. The second result showed that the study was completed 51.7% by women and 48.3% by men. Although there was a higher percentage for the female gender, the difference between percentages is not large.

3. For the percentages on the years of sport practiced at performance level, the highest percentage was recorded for the 5-year period, being 20.7%.

4. The most common sports practiced were: basketball 6.9%, handball 10.3%, football 24% and volleyball 24.1%.

5. The percentages for this question have a significant difference, as the percentage for those who still practice sports at performance level is 79.3% and the one for those who no longer perform is 20.7%. The difference is considerable, 58.6%. The issue is that most of those who still practice sports at the performance level also have different vices, based on the answers to the following questions.

6. For the occurrence of vices or the consumption of different substances during the practice of sport, the answer was 62.1%. We consider this to be an unfavourable response as sport promotes the ideal of a healthy lifestyle from all points of view.

7. The most present vice was tobacco use, for 62.1% of the study participants.

8. For the existence of vices in the current life of the study subjects, the response was 58.6%. For renunciation or absence thereof, the percentage was 41.4%. The difference is small, which can be considered gratifying.

9. For the vices that the subjects think they can or cannot escape, the opinions were almost halved. For those who think they cannot get rid of vices, the answers were 55.2% and for those who think they can, 44.8%.

10. The highest percentage of dependence that was considered to be unavoidable was tobacco, at a percentage of 48.9%. Considering that it is the most common vice not only among athletes, but also of people who do not practice sports every day, it is in some way understandable.

11. Those who consulted specialists to solve the problem with vices represent 24.1% of the participants in this research, while the rest are 75.9%. This serves to demonstrate the distrust in specialists or simply the disinterest in the repercussions that vices can have.

12. As mentioned earlier, the people we spend our time with have a great influence on us. Thus, 41.6% of the study participants admitted that they got their vices through the entourage they were/are in.

13. Most of the participants in this study, namely 49.8%, said that the vice did not affect their privacy. The rest, in contrast, said that they were excluded from different circles (6.9%), that they had no dependencies (6.9%), that their

health was affected (15.6%) and that they encountered financial problems (17.5%).

14. For the way in which their sports life was affected, the most common response – a percentage of 60% – was that the subjects faced fatigue more often, with fatigue settling in faster. The remaining 40% said they were unaffected, or were excluded by the coach and team, or had no dependencies.

15. Regarding the support from close people, the statistics showed encouraging percentages, the affirmative answer being 72.4%. For the remaining 27.6%, the response was negative, with no support from the people around them.

16. 73% of the subjects stated that due to vice, their sports performance decreased, thus affecting their performance and probably the team itself. The remaining 27% claimed that their performance was unaffected.

17. The last question in the questionnaire was one with multiple possibilities to choose from. Therefore, the subjects chose several variants that they considered beneficial for combating the existence of vices in sports. The best variants were considered to be: 69% education and awareness (information, workshops and seminars, mentoring), 69% prevention and intervention programs (regular screening, intervention programs), 66% psycho-emotional support (psychological counselling, support groups) and 58.6% promoting a healthy lifestyle (alternative activities, nutrition and rest).

3.2. Discussion of Results

The study focused on the various vices and factors that may have a negative impact on sports performance. Following the analysis of data and literature, we came to the following essential conclusions:

a. Impact of Illegal Substances and Alcohol: alcohol and drug use has been identified as having a significant destructive effect on the performance of athletes.

b. Effects of Smoking: smoking reduces lung capacity and oxygenation of the blood, which leads to a decrease in endurance and exercise capacity.

c. Stress and Anxiety: stress and anxiety are major psychological factors that negatively influence sports performance.

d. The importance of Social Support: social support from family, friends, coaches and teammates is crucial to maintaining a high level of performance.

e. Eating and Lifestyle: inadequate nutrition and an unhealthy lifestyle, including lack of sufficient sleep and recovery exercises, have been identified as factors that compromise athletic performance.

4. Conclusions

In conclusion, the vices and factors that negatively influence sports performance are varied and complex. Addressing these issues requires a holistic

strategy that includes education, psychological support and promoting a healthy lifestyle. By implementing these measures, athletes can achieve and maintain an optimal level of performance, avoiding the pitfalls associated with vice and stressors. This study highlights the importance of a concerted effort to support athletes in all aspects of their lives, both on and off the field.

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Shirreffs S.M., Maughan R.J., *The effect of alcohol on athletic performance*, Current Sports Medicine Reports, **5**, *4*, 192-196 (2006).

STUDIU PRIVIND VICIILE ŞI FACTORII CARE INFLUENŢEAZĂ NEGATIV PERFORMANŢA SPORTIVĂ

(Rezumat)

Conceptul de vicii este complex şi variază în funcţie de contextul cultural, social şi istoric. În diferite perioade şi culturi, anumite comportamente sau obiceiuri au fost considerate vicioase sau virtuoase în conformitate cu normele şi valorile predominante. Este important de menţionat că percepţiile asupra viciilor sunt în mare măsură subiective şi se modifică în funcţie de evoluţia societăţii şi a valorilor culturale.

Sportivii, la fel ca oricine altcineva, pot fi susceptibili să dezvolte diverse vicii în timpul carierei lor sportive. Aceste vicii pot avea un impact negativ asupra performanţei lor şi asupra vieţii personale în general.

Impactul sportului asupra viciilor poate fi pozitiv şi poate contribui semnificativ la prevenirea şi gestionarea acestora prin următoarele moduri: stil de viaţă sănătos şi disciplinat, autodisciplină crescută, managementul stresului şi anxietăţii şi, recuperarea stării de spirit, mentorat şi sprijin în echipă, educaţie şi conştientizarea, identificarea şi gestionarea riscurilor şi monitorizarea sănătăţii mintale.

THE IMPORTANCE OF USING MENTAL TRAINING TECHNIQUES IN THE POST-TRAUMATIC TRAINING AND RECOVERY OF ATHLETES

BY

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Abstract. Mental training is a part of sports psychology that focuses on specifically supporting athletes to help them overcome obstacles and reach their full potential. Confidence, focus and motivation are important factors in every athlete's performance (Albu, 1998). Competing is demanding and without positive thinking and effective communication between team members, success is more difficult to achieve.

Intense training, proper nutrition and willpower are not enough to succeed in this field. Mental training is also necessary to improve the ability to focus, emotional balance and self-confidence (Grosu, 2001). Psychological principles such as positive thinking, visualization and goal setting can be applied in sport to help athletes perform well and prepare for competition (Boroș-Balint, 2012).

This study aims to highlight the impact of mental training in the post-traumatic recovery and restoration of performance athletes. We collected data through a questionnaire conducted on athletes in order to demonstrate that mental training techniques are necessary not only for recovery but also for daily training, for competitions, contests and of course in everyday life.

Keywords: emotions; balance; injury; volition; efficiency.

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1. Introduction

This work aims to study and analyze the importance of mental training in the post-traumatic recovery of athletes. Mental training has become a field of great interest. Most high-level athletes use this type of training as their core training just like physical training (Tüdös, 2000).

Competition is demanding, and without positive thinking and effective communication among team members, success becomes harder to achieve. Intense training, proper nutrition, and willpower are not enough to succeed in this field.

Mental training is also necessary to improve concentration, emotional balance and self-confidence. Psychological principles such as positive thinking, visualization and goal setting can be applied in sports to help athletes perform well and prepare for competition (Boroș-Balint, 2012).

2. Research Methodology

2.1. Research Hypothesis

We start from the premise that mental training techniques represent one of the most important forms of restoration and recovery for an athlete.

Our assumption is that after the application of mental training techniques, the post-traumatic recovery of athletes will be fast and efficient.

2.2. Research Purpose

The purpose of this study is to show how mental training helps an athlete's post-traumatic preparation and recovery. Through this research, with the help of the existing data in the specialized literature regarding mental training, we tried to prove that post-traumatic training and recovery is a difficult process and the tool called mental training is necessary in order for the athlete to come back as quickly and efficiently as possible on the field.

2.3. Research Subjects

The subjects of the research were high-performance athletes. When applying the questionnaire, we aimed to cover as wide a range as possible in the categories "gender", "age" and "sport practiced".

The sports practiced by the people who completed the questionnaire are: athletics (51.6%), basketball (15.2%), handball (3%), judo (3%), fencing (3%), volleyball (24.2%).

2.4. Research Methods

For the purpose of conducting this research, the following methods were employed:

• The method of bibliographic documentation

We carried out research on the importance of using mental training techniques in the post-traumatic recovery of athletes, assimilating, interpreting and processing the collected information.

• Questionnaire method
• The graphic method

This method provides an easier visualization of the results obtained from the applied questionnaire.

• The statistical-mathematical method

The statistical-mathematical method provides a more precise picture of the studied phenomena, through the use of different formulas, graphics, followed by statistical processing and building models.

2.4.1. The Questionnaire

QUESTIONNAIRE

Please answer the following questions according to your personal experience. Your responses will remain confidential and will be used exclusively for research purposes.

1. Age
2. Gender
3. Sport practiced
4. How much of a negative influence do you think stress has in sports competitions?
5. How much do you think mental recovery is beneficial after an injury?
6. Do you consider mental recovery to be more important than physical recovery?

    • yes
    • no

7. Following an injury, how many of you see a specialist?

    • never
    • very rarely
    • rarely
    • frequently
    • very frequently

8. Do you think our country has enough resources in terms of mental training techniques?

    • yes
    • no

9. Do you think that Romania's top teams get enough psychological help?
- yes
- no

10 Apart from specialists, who do you think can help an athlete following an injury?

11. Do you think hypermotivation can affect your sports performance?
- yes
- no

12. How much do you think coaches get involved in an athlete's mental preparation?
- very little
- a lot

13. Do you think vices hinder an athlete's mental recovery?
- yes
- no

14. After a physical or mental trauma, would you turn to mental training techniques?
- yes
- no

15. From your point of view, is psychological training necessary to deal with problematic situations (recovery, de-stressing the atmosphere before a competition, consecutive defeats, injuries, conflicts between players/athletes/opponents/staff, lack of concentration)?

16. In your opinion, is psychological training necessary to optimize the trainer's work?

17. In your opinion, is psychological training necessary to improve performance?

18. In your opinion, does the psychological preparation of the athlete involve a set of techniques by which the athlete is optimally motivated?
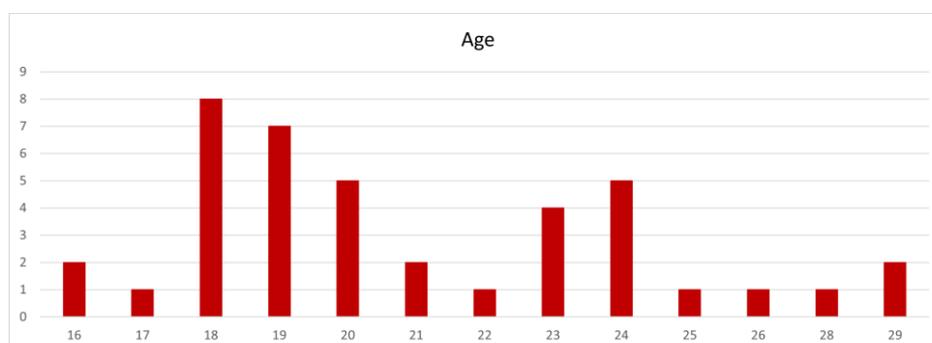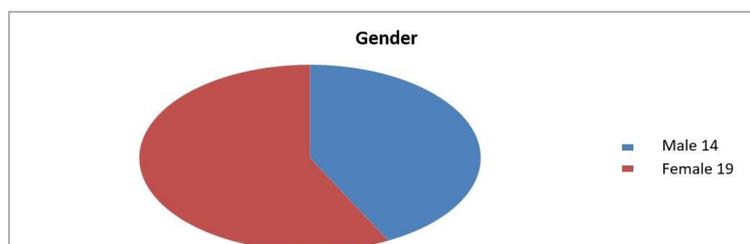
3. Results

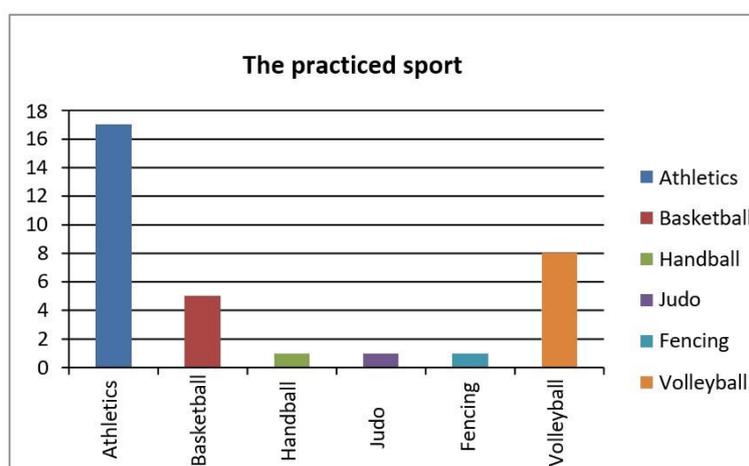Fig. 1 – Age.

Fig. 2 – Gender.

Fig. 3 – Practiced sport.

A number of 33 people participated in this questionnaire, 42.4% of the total being male and 57.6% female (Fig. 2), their age being between 16 and 29 years and the average age being 21 to 25 years (Fig. 1).

The sports practiced by the people who completed the questionnaire are: athletics (51.6%), basketball (15.2%), handball (3%), judo (3%), fencing (3%), volleyball (24.2%), as shown in Fig. 3.

Questions 4 "How much do you think stress negatively influences sports competitions?" and 5 "How beneficial do you think mental recovery is after an injury?" were constructed with 5 answers ranging from "not at all characteristic of me" to "very characteristic of me", the fewest answers registered being for the first and the second option (9.1% and 3% to the first question / 6.1% and 9.1% to the second question), and most answers being for the third to the fifth option (39.4%, 24.2% and 24.2% to the first question / 18.2%, 33.3% and 33.3% to the second question). The answers indicate that stress can negatively influence sports competitions and that mental training is absolutely necessary after an injury.
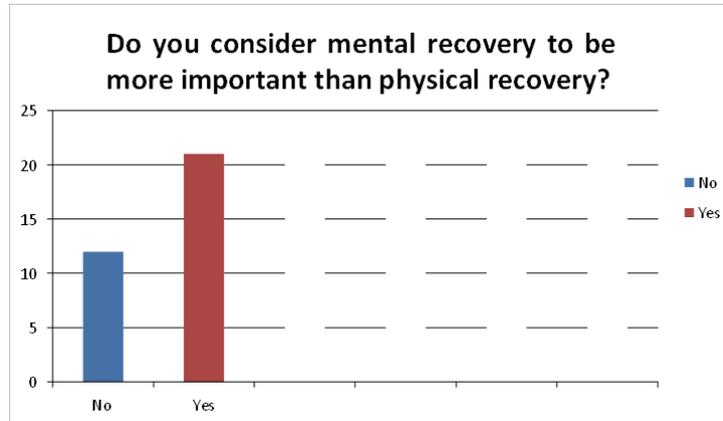
Fig. 4 – Do you consider mental recovery to be more important than physical recovery?

40% of the participants answered No and 60% of the participants answered Yes to the question of whether mental recovery is more important than physical recovery (Fig. 4). We observe that the majority consider mental recovery to be more important than physical recovery.

To the next question, number 7 in the questionnaire, "Following an injury, how many of you see a specialist?" 37.5% of the subjects answered that they never do so, 3.1% very rarely, 34.4% rarely, 18.8% frequently and 6.3% very frequently.
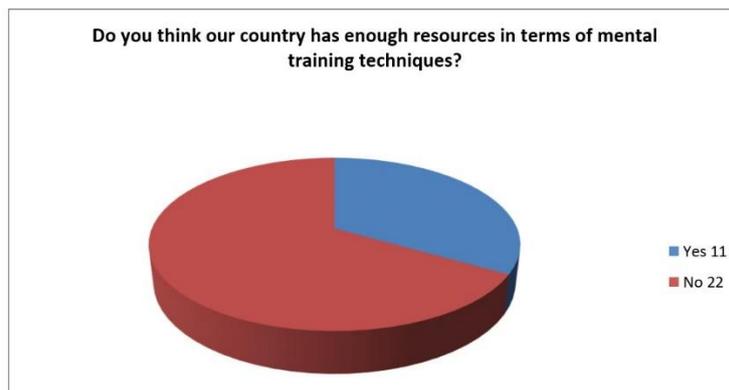

Fig. 5 – Do you think our country has enough resources in terms of mental training techniques?

To question 8, "Do you think our country has enough resources in terms of mental training techniques?", 66.7% of the subjects answered No and 33.3% Yes (Fig. 5).
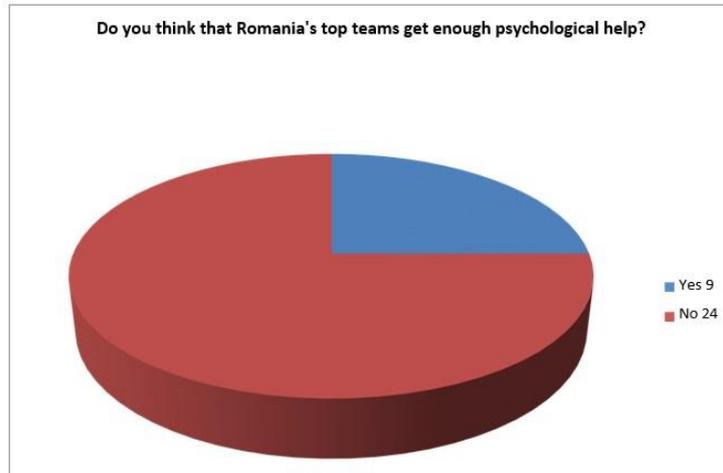
Fig. 6 – Do you think that Romania's top teams get enough psychological help?

To the next question, number 9 in the questionnaire, "Do you think that Romania's top teams get enough psychological help?", 70% of the subjects answered No and 30% Yes (Fig. 6).

To the question 10 in the questionnaire, "Apart from specialists, who do you think can help an athlete following an injury?" 10% of subjects answered the club, 20% friends, 22% coaches and 48% family.
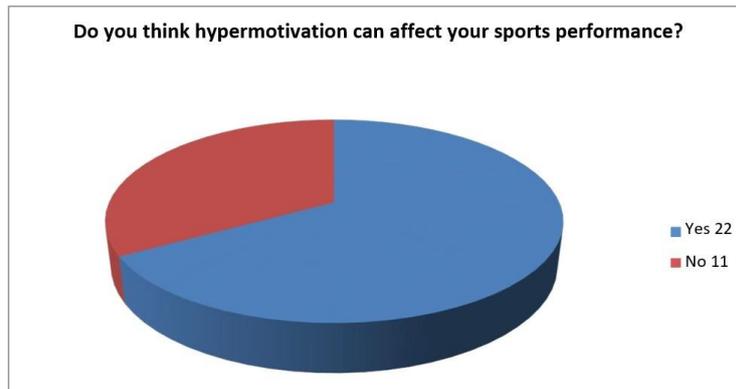

Fig. 7 – Do you think hypermotivation can affect your sports performance?

To the next question, "Do you think hypermotivation can affect your sports performance?" 66.7% of the subjects answered that it can affect their performance and 33.3% that they do not think it affects their sports performance (Fig. 7).

For question number 12, when asked "How much do you think coaches get involved in an athlete's mental preparation?", 33.3% of the subjects have coaches who are very involved, 30.3% have coaches who get involved, 27.3% have coaches who are partially involved and 9.1% believe that their coaches do not get involved.
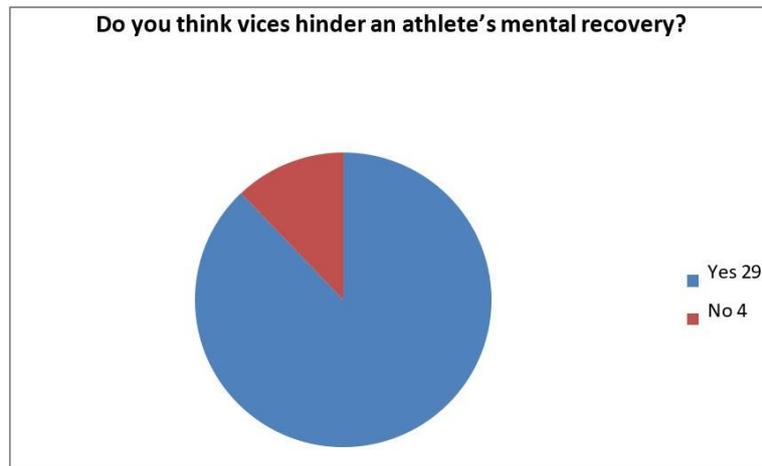

Fig. 8 – Do you think vices hinder an athlete's mental recovery?

As shown in Fig. 8, 87.9% of the subjects believe that vices can affect mental recovery and 12.1% do not think that they can affect it.

Fig. 9 – After a physical or mental trauma, would you turn to mental training techniques?

To the question "After a physical or mental trauma, would you turn to mental training techniques?", 100% of subjects answered that they would use these techniques (Fig. 9).

From the data collected, regarding question 15, it appears that 63.6% see the statement "psychological training is necessary to deal with problematic situations" as very true, 18.2% think it is true, 12.1 % don't know and 6.1% do not think it is true.

Regarding the question "In your opinion, is psychological training necessary to optimize the trainer's work?" 18.2% believe that the statement "psychological training is necessary to optimize the coach's work" is very true, 36.4% believe it is true, 39.4% don't know and 6.1% do not think it is true.

When we asked, "In your opinion, is psychological training necessary to improve performance?", 60.6% answered that "psychological training is necessary to improve performance" is very true, 27.3% think it is true, 9.1% don't know and 3% do not think it is true.

Regarding the last question, "In your opinion, does the psychological preparation of the athlete involve a set of techniques by which the athlete is optimally motivated?", 30.3% believe that it is very true for an athlete to have a set of techniques by which to be optimally motivated, 42.4% believe that it is true and 27.3% don't know.

4. Conclusions

33 subjects participated in this study, of which 18 were female and 15 male, aged between 16 and 29 years. The first questions were about their gender, age and sport practiced.

During the questionnaire, there were questions related to the importance of mental training and its effectiveness, about the importance of psychological preparation, especially in the life of an athlete, where we recorded different opinions. However, most of them approved the importance of mental training techniques in the post-traumatic recovery of athletes.

It is very well known that especially in performance sports, relaxation techniques, meditation, self-motivation exercises are very often used to overcome the crucial moments that an athlete can go through. Through our research we were able to show and collect data through the questionnaire carried out on 33 athletes and we were able to demonstrate that mental training techniques are necessary not only for recovery but also for daily training, for competitions, contests and of course in everyday life.

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IMPORTANŢA UTILIZĂRII TEHNICILOR DE ANTRENAMENT MENTAL ÎN PREGĂTIREA ŞI RECUPERAREA POSTTRAUMATICĂ A SPORTIVILOR

(Rezumat)

Antrenamentul mental este o parte a psihologiei sportive care se concentrează pe sprijinirea în mod special a sportivilor pentru a-i ajuta să depăşească obstacolele şi să-şi atingă potenţialul maxim. Încrederea, concentrarea şi motivaţia sunt factori importanţi în performanţa fiecărui sportiv (Albu, 1998). Participarea la competiţie este solicitantă şi fără gândire pozitivă şi comunicare eficientă între membrii echipei, succesul este mai dificil de obţinut.

Antrenamentul intens, alimentaţia adecvată şi voinţa nu sunt suficiente pentru a reuşi în acest domeniu. Antrenamentul mental este, de asemenea, necesar pentru a îmbunătăţi capacitatea de concentrare, echilibrul emoţional şi încrederea în sine (Grosu, 2001) Principiile psihologice precum gândirea pozitivă, vizualizarea şi stabilirea obiectivelor pot fi aplicate în sport pentru a ajuta sportivii să performeze bine şi să se pregătească pentru competiţie (Boroş-Balint, 2012).

Prin acest studiu încercăm să evidenţiem impactul antrenamentului mental în refacerea şi recuperarea posttraumatică a sportivilor de performanţă. Prin cercetarea efectuată am reuşit să colectăm date prin chestionarul efectuat pe sportivi şi am reuşit să demonstrăm că tehnicile de antrenament mental sunt necesare nu doar pentru recuperare dar şi pentru antrenamentele zilnice, pentru competiţii, concursuri şi desigur în viaţa de zi cu zi.