

Doctoral thesis

**MODERN VALUES,
WORK PERFORMANCE AND LIFE
SATISFACTION
OF ROMANIAN EMPLOYEES WITHIN MULTINATIONAL
AND NATIONAL COMPANIES**

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Abstract

“What matters is not what others have made of me, but what I make out of what others have made of me” Immanuel Kant

Modernity, as we perceive it today, would be hard to imagine in the absence of *for profit* organizations and the significant growth of both work performance, as well as the quality of life, of life satisfaction. Our hypothesis, within this undertaking, is to explore a facet of modern progress with regards to work and happiness starting from the change of a set of pre-modern values (among which we count heteronomy, retrospective rationality, the sacred and collectivism) into a set of modern ones (towards autonomy, prospective rationality, the secular and individualism). This process of transformation of values manifested impactfully as a change in the way man relates to work and to his own existence.

Throughout this thesis, by *modernity* we understand the higher sharing of four modern values (autonomy, prospective rationality, secularism and individualism) and by *premodernity* the high adherence to four premodern values (heteronomy, retrospective rationality, the sacred and collectivism).

By analyzing the degree of sharing of modern and premodern values - autonomy and heteronomy, prospective and retrospective rationality, the secular and the sacred, individualism and collectivism - we will seek to highlight some tendencies of how they have succeeded in shaping us into what we are today, strong and autonomous, in the position of “little gods”, as Randall Collins said, capable of building and realizing their own cultural models of work performance and life satisfaction.

This idea of changing the paradigm of social change has been promoted in the past two decades by Ronald Inglehart, through the concepts of *modernization* and *post-modernization*. The simplified vision of modernization can be explained by the focus on rationalization and planning in the undertaking of most of every day decisions, to the detriment of tradition, customs

and habits. On the other hand, post-modernization, viewed through the lens of cultural remodeling, is centered on the expression of the self and the meeting of higher-level needs.¹

Both modernization and post-modernization highlight, among other things, the individualization of society, a major increase in the importance of the individual's needs instead of those of the community. According to Inglehart, from a cultural point of view, in post-modernism, the major orientation in terms of values targets post-materialism, the explicit tendency to give priority to an ever increasing emphasis on self-expression and on the increase in the quality of life.²

Why modernity, work and happiness?

Modernity is probably the most intensely disputed subject by any scientist, especially if he is part of the group comprising sociologists, economists, education specialists, etc. So much was written about modernity that it would be impossible for someone to be able to encompass everything that was said. The statement by Vintilă Mihăilescu regarding modernity (“we can talk all of our lives and still we will not exhaust this topic”) captures many of the feelings you are experiencing as you move forward within the said theme.

The idea of the project regarding modernity, work and the happiness of Romanian employees arose from a question. In 2013, with the end of the project and the publication of the book *Valorile angajaților români (The values of Romanian employees)*, a question came up, namely why do we have these values and not others, what are the potential sources which feed the system of values shared by the majority of Romanian employees. The next step was to explore the essence of our culture, the ideas and prejudices about what we are, about one's self and the others, about world and life, about the past and the future. Thus we came to talk about modern thinking, about the distinction between modernity and premodernity and, implicitly, about modern and premodern values, and how they interact with work and happiness. The difficult task was to operationalize modernity and to choose its defining values, which inevitably assumes certain limits and a dose of arbitrariness. However, the main arguments which formed the basis for the choice of these four

¹ Bogdan Voicu and Mălina Voicu, *Valori ale românilor 1993-2006*, Editura Institutul European, Iași, 2007, p. 12.

² Ronald Inglehart, *Modernization and Post-Modernization. Cultural, Economic and Political Change in 43 Societies*, Princeton University Press, 1997, p. 4.

modern values have targeted: the desacralization of the world, individualism, the man's takeover of “norm” and rational thinking for the realization of future purposes.

The concept of *modernity*, as used in the theory of classical sociology, has its origin in the attempt to approach the topic of the significance of the social changes that had taken place in Europe in the second half of the 19th century as a result of the effects of industrialization, urbanization and political democracy on essentially rural and autocratic societies. The term “modernity” was invented to capture the progress generated by all these changes by contrasting the “modern” with the “traditional”. The theme of modernity pervades sociology through the activity of its founding fathers, Marx, Weber and Durkheim. In their vision, modernity refers to a world built again through the active and conscious intervention of the social actors and to the new view of the self which is implied by such an intervention and active responsibility. In modern society, the world is experienced as a human construction, an experience that gives birth to both a full sense of freedom and a basic anxiety about the future.³

Work is the second variable analysed throughout this thesis which proposes to come up with ideas and suggestions for improvement in the world of organizations. Work is the result of a considerable effort associated with self-control and self-discipline in order to achieve goals and obtain external rewards. In this respect, Baumeister insists on understanding that work is guided, first of all, by goals and not by fulfilment.⁴

The revolution of modernity radically transformed the collective and individual mind, accessing human life and existence from the perspective of continuous progress, of creating newer and newer capacities for everything that can be imagined by man. It has transformed the meaning and significance of work, first by creating what we could call “the ethics of labour” and then demolishing its own invention through its effects nowadays. Starting from these findings, *the questions of our undertaking are “why” and “how” did all the transformations of modernity occur, which, although they began many centuries ago, seem in their early days even today, in what we might call “postmodernity”. What was the impact of having shared modern values both on the significance and the continuous growth of work performance, as well as on the increase of the quality of life and, implicitly, on the degree of happiness?*

³ Hans Haferkamp and Neil J. Smelser (ed.), *Social Change and Modernity*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1991, pp. 38-39. <http://ark.cdlib.org/ark:/13030/ft6000078s/>

⁴ Roy Baumeister, *Sensuri ale vieții*, Editura ASRC, Cluj-Napoca, 2011, pp. 157-158.

Finally, happiness is the third component of this thesis and is viewed from three different perspectives: satisfaction with life, affective balance, and the universe of expectations (life goals).

The study presented in this paper explores the relationships between the state of modernity (depending on the degree of sharing of modern and premodern values), work and happiness through comparisons of how different categories of Romanian employees (of the companies participating in this research) are referring to work and happiness.

The study has as starting point the modernization theories developed in the 1950s and 1960s that suggest that modern societies converge to modern values by abandoning traditional ones. Starting from aspects such as the degree of religiousness, materialism, preference for personal development, the importance of work, etc., the studies conducted contradict the convergent evolution towards modernity and suggest that tension, the conflict between traditionalism and modernity are concepts relevant for the structuring of European values.⁵

Likewise the research done in this thesis falls within the scope of Schwartz's pursuits of how the values of a society affect the values of organizations. According to Schwartz, at the organizational level, the culture of a society influences the values of the organization both directly (as an environment in which the organization operates) and indirectly (through the individual culture of each employee).⁶

The main hypothesis of our research project is the existence of an "unfinished modernity", as understood by Vintilă Mihăilescu, of a partial, selective and weakly interiorized sharing of the four values that define modernity (autonomy, prospective rationality, secularism and individualism) by most of the Romanian employees of companies participating in the research. This partial sharing of the defining values of modernity is the generic background of some particularities of *work* (such as skills development, attitude towards work and motivation as part of work, development of intellectual and creative potential, etc.) and *happiness* (viewed from the

⁵Tradition vs. Modernity : The Continuing Dichotomy of Values in European Society
<https://www.cairn.info/revue-francaise-de-sociologie-1-2008-5-page-153.htm>

⁶ Cultural Values in Organisations: Insights for Europe
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/234021865_Cultural_Values_in_Organisations_Insights_for_Europe

perspective of satisfaction with life, emotional balance, and the universe of expectations - life goals).

As a result, the aim of the study is to investigate the relationship between *the state of modernity* whose expression is represented by the modern thinking reflected by the degree of sharing of modern values and the beliefs of the participating employees, on one hand, and the cultural models of *work* and *happiness* in the collective mentality of these employees, on the other hand.

By making use of the method of sociological inquiry based on a questionnaire (which was built and pre-tested in the years of 2014 and 2016), the collection of data took place in the period 2016-2018 on a number of 833 participants within 17 multinational and national companies in Romania, while the interpretation of the results of the research took place in the period 2018-2019.

The birth and revolution of modernity

Modernity affirmed itself since the 17th century through a tearing, a breaking away from traditional society. Industrialization and urbanization, open access to education and higher levels of work performance, scientific breakthroughs, and, last but not least, the development of modern thinking by sharing the values of modernity have fundamentally transformed the world and the people. Daniel Bell said that modernity meant the division between *culture* and *social structure*, which easily gave way to the many social revolutions, ever so present in the past two centuries.

The essence of Bell's statement is the tension which appears between the two sides (and which crystallizes itself through the appearance of the Modernist current in art), as a consequence of the valuing of "individual freedom" by each of them. The middle class (the bourgeoisie) tends to achieve freedom through economical means and own effort. This leads to the establishing of a conservative attitude in the social structure, which is subsumed to economic efficiency and hierarchy. From a cultural point of view, what was once reserved to the imaginary is now attempted to be made concrete, to be transposed into reality, the power of turning thought into reality being a means of expression of liberty. However, therefrom also results a "liberal", rebellious attitude, the revolt being against the grey of the ordinary man. The excesses promoted by culture are in contradiction with the necessary moderation, dedication and discipline required

to achieve economic success, whence the tension which is at the foundation of social transformations.⁷

At the end of the 20th century, as one entered into postmodernity, after three centuries of profound social changes, of major transformations of the individual and collective mentality, some authors like J. F. Lyotard, have announced the end of modernity, while Francis Fukuyama announced the end of history.⁸ At the same time, many others, contemporary to us, like Anthony Giddens, U. Beck, Ronald Inglehart, C. Welzel or Zigmund Bauman consider, contrarily, that we are in a full process of modernization and invite us to think of modernity in a reflexive, critical and innovative manner.⁹

Throughout time, modernity has taken multiple forms, and without exaggerating, we might say that there are as many forms of modernity, as there are societies in the process of modernization. And this is because modernity presupposes a radical social, cultural and economic change. Today, although there are still opinions that talk to us about the end of modernity (of continual progress), the process of modernization is still far from over. And one of the main reasons is that the modernization process itself is not easy to decipher. Nor easy to diagnose.

The perspectives on the process of modernization of Lawrence Harrison and Samuel Huntington are very clear and definite: culture is important for the economy because there are *development / progress-prone* cultures and *development / progress-resistant* cultures.¹⁰ Although we can easily look at this statement both pessimistically and optimistically, in both scenarios the unknown is always the same: culture, the shared values by the large majority of a society's members.

By analysing the various models of modernization of the non-Western states, Huntington also offers us the explanation: there are at least three major phases of the modernization process. A first one in which the non-Western society absorbs the elements of the culture of the West (a phase in which the progress of modernization slows down under the strong influence of the values of the autochthonous culture), a second one, in which the speed of modernization grows, while the autochthonous culture goes through a renaissance phase and a final third, in which the

⁷ Daniel Bell, *The cultural contradictions of capitalism*, Basic Books, New York, 1978, pp. xxi-xxvii.

⁸ Francis Fukuyama, *Sfârșitul istoriei și ultimul om*, Editura Paideia, București, 2001.

⁹ Lazăr Vlăsceanu and Marian-Gabriel Hâncean, *Modernitatea românească*, Editura Paralela 45, Pitești, 2014, p. 5.

¹⁰ Lawrence Harrison și Samuel Huntington, *Culture Matters: How Values Shape Human Progress*, Basic Books, New York, 2000.

progress of modernization becomes visible, the autochthonous culture distancing itself from its own traditional values in the favour of the modern, Western ones.¹¹

Culture makes the difference is also the central idea in our work. And the analysis of the modernization process or the stage at which modernity finds itself on the sample of Romanian employees participating in our study proves a paradoxical socio-cultural reality, at first sight, which could be, with sufficient precision, framed, according to the classification of Huntington, within the second phase (of reinvigoration of the autochthonous culture and its traditional values), but also within the third one (of internalization of modern values and distancing from the past). That is, part of the participants have a mentality that is strongly oriented towards the past and traditions, while another has already internalized a good part of modern values, marking the definitive break with the past.

Why and how did all of this happen?

Our attempt at finding answers to these questions leads us, inevitably to the exploration and identification of the values which are at the foundation of the notion of world and life, which guide us through the journey of our existence and influence everything that we are, the development process, the way of thinking, how we relate to work and happiness etc. The core of culture is composed of values, which we might define as general tendencies to prefer certain situations to others.¹²

Through this study we are referring, of course, to modern and premodern values, to the beliefs and feelings that accompany them. Values explain both the stage where the modernization process finds itself and the notion of world and life, of oneself and of others, of relating to work and one's happiness. Because values are that which drives our thinking, affectivity and behaviours, it is crucial to identify and explore them. And modernity, viewed essentially in terms of the individual's supremacy and the attainment of a comfortable lifestyle, managed to overthrow the social order of the premodern world, to determine an irremediable process of man taking control of the "norm", it being no longer external to him (as in divinity, social order, etc.). Thus, the premodern world dominated by values related to heteronomy, retrospective rationality, the sacred, and collectivism was, is (and probably will be, for a long

¹¹ Samuel Huntington, *Ciocnirea civilizațiilor și refacerea ordinii mondiale*, Editura Antet, București, 2018, p. 69.

¹² Geert Hofstede, Gert Hofstede and Michael Minkov, *Culturi și organizații*, Editura Humanitas, București, 2012, p. 20.

time) replaced by a new world in a continuous progress of renewal, of reinstatement of the new modern values: autonomy, prospective rationality, secularism and individualism. But once reinstated, the new values do not immediately produce an effect. The process is slow and full of perils and the old values, having refused an easy abdication, become as heavy as millstones throughout the progress of modernization.

The natural and inevitable consequence is the current socio-cultural and economic reality, a mixture of modern and premodern spirit which coexist together.

It is the status quo which Vintilă Mihăilescu defines through the formula “unfinished modernity”.¹³ And the effect of this partial sharing of modern values translates into the collective and individual mind by what we call *social dissonance* and *cognitive dissonance*. In other words, the current state of the modernization process expresses the current strength of the identity crisis we find ourselves in.

In exchange, the imaginary of the modern world can no longer be stopped or limited. The degree of sharing of modern values coupled at the same time with this breaking away from pre-modern values has already changed and continues to transform the cultural patterns of work and happiness within the collective mentality, the essential areas of human existence. As a result, modern man is happier than his predecessor and knows how to create his own model of happiness, and labour, as an instrumental value, has significance to him only to the extent that it succeeds in expressing his self, his autonomy and his individual particularities.

About the “modernity” in which we live (the Romanian modernity)

In the past two decades of working with countless multinational organizations in Romania, I have often encountered perplexities from various French, German, American, Austrian, etc. executives, in the face of some of the behaviours of Romanian employees who seemed, to them, to be out of the ordinary pattern, even though they were ordinary to me. The reading of this thesis, through the analysis of the values and styles of modern and premodern thinking, could contribute to a better and deeper understanding of our cultural amalgamation, to the decoding of the role of autonomy in cultural architecture, to the interplay between the old and the new, past, present and future, sacred and secular, individualism and collectivism.

¹³ Vintilă Mihăilescu, *Curs doctorat*, 2017.

The work has five parts, preceded by an introduction. The first part presents a perspective of modernity centred on the evolution of modern thinking marked by the transformation of premodern values (of heteronomy, of retrospective rationality, of the sacred and of collectivism) through the ever more accentuated sharing of modern values (of autonomy, of prospective rationality, of the secular and of individualism). Obviously, the question which will be posed is why we chose precisely these four modern and premodern values, and not others. Naturally, this choice has certain limits and implies a dose of arbitrariness, and this is inevitable. However, there are some arguments in favour of choosing the set of modern and premodern values.

Firstly, Vintilă Mihăilescu, through the analysis of different distinctions and classifications about the passage from the traditional autochthonous (customary) society to the modern one, synthesises the fundamental principle of modernity: *locus of control* (the projection of the individual's control). Therefore, heteronomy, specific to traditional societies, places control outside of man's reach (the control, the norm having an exterior and anterior origin to man – e.g. ancestors, customs, God etc.), and autonomy, on the contrary, places control within the interior of man (the control, the norm having an origin interior to man, according to his own reason). Thus, traditional premodern thinking is centered on a projection of control outside of ourselves, responds to a cosmocentric vision, values the sacred and the customs and is the adept of creationism and retrospective rationality, of holism. At the opposite pole, modern thinking is grounded in an anthropocentric vision, values the secular, the “dispelling” (e.g. Max Weber) and historicism (e.g. Hegel), is oriented towards a prospective, strongly individualized rationality (e.g. Descartes) and dependent on the freedom of individual decisions.¹⁴

Secondly, the fundamental principle of the premodern world was creationism (Lovejoy, 1936), according to which the world is full and complete, all of its components forming a hierarchy according to their “degree of perfection” (e.g. Aristotle) or according to the “proximity to God” (the later Christian thinking). On the other hand, the principle of modernity implies the liberation from “custom” and the assumption of control – “the desire for patricide, regicide or deicide, that is, the denial of its own origin is the basis of modern culture” (Hiyama, 1994).¹⁵

¹⁴ Vintilă Mihăilescu, *Modernitate, modernizare, modernități*, Course material for „Introduction in anthropology”, 3rd year, SNSPA, București 2017.

¹⁵ *Ibidem*

Thirdly, by following Descartes's argument according to which the main source of our errors is our “culture”, our own ideas and prejudices about what we are, about the world and the others. Descartes' rationality presupposed systematic doubt of customs of communities, that is, of culture. And this can only be done through a solitary, proud and independent reason, which ultimately aims at the liberation from the collective, that is, from its culture and history. In this way, man is no longer subjected to a cosmic order or to God, but becomes his own historical evolution.¹⁶

As a result, according to these arguments, premodern and modern thinking are nothing more than two world mirrors that try to show us two diametrically opposed truths expressed by: heteronomy *versus* autonomy; sacred *versus* profane (secular); retrospective rationality *versus* prospective rationality and, last but not least, collectivism *versus* individualism.

The second part focuses on developing the theme of one of the most successful “products” of modernity: the limited liability company, the modern *for profit* organization. The impact of modern values over the rise of managerial capitalism was essential in creating the premises for its expansion and globalization.

According to Immanuel Wallerstein (which proposes to us a perspective of world history between the 16th and 20th centuries), the world is not divided in empires or states, rather it is a single system organized by economic (and, to a good measure, capitalist) principles, in which the entire world becomes connected.¹⁷ Therefore, there are no more “Third World”¹⁸ countries and great empires, but periphery entities communicating with a core, which is strongly centered on these economic values. The spatial, geographical coordinates no longer enter the definition, the periphery and the core being able to exist in the same geographical region. There appears a division of labour within the entire system (the periphery supplying the core with raw materials and cheap labour, the core producing in turn complex goods, thanks to its technological superiority).¹⁹

At the same time, modern organizations had and still have a major role in the development and capitalization of the intellectual and creative potential of their employees and,

¹⁶ *Ibidem*

¹⁷ Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System vol. I: Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World-Economy in the Sixteenth Century*, Academic Press, New York, 1974, pp. 15-16.

¹⁸ *Idem*, pp. 5-6.

¹⁹ *Idem*, p. 350.

as a result, they fully contribute to the modernization of the latter's cultural models. Under the impact of the new values, of the expressing of the self and autonomy on one hand, and of the diminishing importance of work to current employees, on the other hand, current organizations look for solutions to regain the trust, involvement and loyalty of their collaborators/partners. The future of organizations seems to take more and more into account the creation of new organizational models in which employees of the future, viewed as partners, find new significance and meaning in their work. From this perspective, the projection imagined by many present companies goes towards building future cultural and organizational models of happiness for their new collaborators.

The state of modernity and the structural factors of modernity are the central themes of the third part. The main hypothesis of our thesis regarding the existence of an “unfinished modernity”, after the formula of Vintilă Mihăilescu, of a partially, selective and weakly internalized sharing of modern values by most Romanian employees is confirmed. *Autonomy* and *prospective rationality* are shared at a high level by most of the participants, but on the other side, *the sacred* and *collectivism* represent very strong anchor points within the Romanian society. One of the central ideas of these parts is tied to the fact that, within the decoding of the state of modernity within Romanian society it is important to specify both the degree of modern values and beliefs, as well as the degree to which we have managed to rid ourselves of the premodern ones. Therefore, the specific of the state of modernity is reflected, at a cultural level, by the force of the revolutionary modern values and beliefs, which, alongside the premodern ones, manage to create a *cultural amalgamation* whose effects are visible through the lens of “anomy”, the identity crisis, the lack of solidarity etc. As far as concrete existence is concerned, this means that *for modern man (the contemporary Romanian employee) the past is not a dead one, rather it is a past which continues to survive into the present in the form of shared beliefs, to a still quite high extent.*

The end of the third part is dedicated to the structural factors (the structural values) that suggest, in our study, the state of modernity and the way of structuring modern thinking. Therefore, a core of the structural values that define the modern way of thinking has resulted, it consisting of: the improvement and the expression of the self, the satisfaction with life, the goals

which create meaning in life, the significance of work, and, last but not least, the notion of progress, change (the idea of continuous progress, of continuous improvement). On the other hand, the main structural values of the premodern way of thinking are related to religion and traditions, to beliefs in destiny and luck. However, despite seeming opposed to one another at first sight, the structural values of the premodern thinking style are an integral part of the core of modernity, of its fundamental features. They exist in the very core structure of modernity.

The fourth part aims to analyse the relationships between the sharing of modern values, the perspectives regarding work and the level of income. But work has not always been regarded with good eyes, in its established form of “ethics of labor” of modernity. Referring to our study, the analysis of the relations between modernity and work suggests that work is a modern instrumental value, but its significance and its motivating potential lies to a great extent in the association of work by the individual with a high degree of sharing of modern values, especially those related to autonomy, prospective rationality and secularism. Moreover, the decrease in the importance and significance of work seems to be caused by the fact that its cultural model does not meet the needs and values of modernization of the self. Therefore, in order to respond to its primordial purpose, continuous progress, the new cultural model of work (as a result of the process of continuous modernization) will have to incorporate the continuous improvement of the self, to offer the opportunity to capitalize and express one’s self in professional activities.

The relationship between the state of modernity and income is not without challenges. Thus, the sharing of modern values (autonomy, prospective rationality, lay and individualism) records the lowest scores for those with low incomes and the highest ones for those with high incomes. By contrast, employee categories that share pre-modern values (heteronomy, retrospective rationality, the sacred, and collectivism) at a higher level report the smallest incomes, while employees with the lowest scores for these values report the highest incomes. Based on these results, our hypothesis is that the strong sharing of modern values is associated with ever increasing earnings, and the degree of sharing of premodern values decreases significantly for each new breakthrough in earnings.

The fifth part explores the relationships between the sharing of modern values and the cultural models of happiness seen in terms of *satisfaction with life* (the subjective quality of life,

according to Veenhoven, of the “way people personally appreciate life”²⁰), *subjective well-being* (“the affective balance”, according to Bradburn, which sheds light on the relationship between the life status of the individual and the psychological reactions to this status²¹) and of the *life-dream* (according to the model proposed by J. Walter Thompson Intelligence about the “life-dream” at a global level, specific to nations²²). Thus, a first idea emerging from this exploration is related to the fact that modern values regarding *autonomy*, *prospective rationality*, *secularism* and *individualism* play a crucial role in structuring and appropriately measuring the model of cognitive happiness (of life satisfaction) in the mind of Romanian employees. At the same time, in this mental model of life satisfaction, two premodern values – *the sacred* and *collectivism* – also play a decisive role, by guiding the system of *cognitive happiness* towards a more spiritual and/or collective (communal) direction. But, whatever the direction, the essence of the cultural model of cognitive happiness in the Romanian collective mentality remains strictly related to the self, to its degree of autonomy; all the facets of satisfaction with life being expressed in terms of what the self does value, of the expression of the self through oneself, through material aspects, through relationships, the sacred, etc.

The cultural model of *affective happiness* is also closely linked to the state of modernity and to the coherence of modern thinking. Thus, alongside a very high autonomy and prospective rationality, a high level of individualism and secularism seem to be responsible not only for the feeling of intensely positive emotions and feelings, but also for negative ones, even intensely negative ones. On the other hand, the degree of sharing of premodern values has a relatively low impact on positive and negative affects.

Finally, modern thinking has a crucial impact on the cultural model of life goals (life dreams). In our view, a possible interpretation of the cultural model of life goals might be the following: *autonomy* plays the role of source of life goals, *prospective rationality* provides them with the necessary tools, and *secularism* and *individualism* provide them with the specific concrete content and objectives. Wealth and/or fame, together with power, is the key to the equation of individualism.

²⁰ Ruut Veenhoven, „Developments in Satisfaction-Research”, *Social Indicators Research*, vol. 37, nr. 1, 1996, pp. 1-46.

²¹ Norman Bradburn and Charles Edward Noll, *The structure of psychological well-being*, Aldine, Chicago, 1969, p. 1 *apud* Sergiu Bălățescu, *Fericirea în contextul social al tranziției postcomuniste din România*, Editura Eikon, Cluj-Napoca, 2014, p. 58.

²² <https://www.slideshare.net/jwtintelligence/the-global-dream/5-4> THE GLOBAL DREAM THIS

Conclusions of the study

By taking into account the results recorded within our sample of participants, the main conclusions of this study are as follows:

1. A state of “unfinished modernity” defined by the partial sharing and internalization of modern values, by a modern and premodern mixture. Thus, we find a high sharing of the values of *autonomy* and *prospective rationality*, on the one hand, but also a leaning towards *sacred* and *collectivism*, on the other. Weber's “desecration” and “rationalization of the world” and Durkheim's “anomy” are found within the state of modernity of our sample. At the same time, both “desecration” and “rationalization”, as well as the reduction of the conflict between modern and premodern beliefs, of the degree of cognitive dissonance in the collective mind are still far from reaching completion as transformational processes. Both are still strongly anchored in religion and traditions, in destiny and luck, in a collectivist vision of the world.
2. A close link between the sharing of modern values on one hand and the attitude towards work and motivation as part of work on the other. Thus, the category of employees that shares modern values to a high degree is significantly more motivated in work and has a more constructive attitude towards work than the categories of employees who share these values to a lesser extent. In our interpretation, the degree of internalization of modern values has a decisive impact on the process of mental transformation in terms of the cultural model of labour, its meaning and significance at both the individual and social level.
3. A strong relationship between the sharing of modern values, on one hand, and the level of income, on the other hand. Thus, the differences between the levels of income seem to influence the choice of values. For example, the category of employees with incomes of over 1000 Euros is more attached to modern values than the category of employees with income under 500 Euros (which are more tied to premodern values).
4. Modern values related to *autonomy*, *prospective rationality*, *secularism* and *individualism* play a decisive role in the structuring and dosage of satisfaction with life in the minds of Romanian employees. At the same time, in this mental model of life satisfaction, two premodern values – *the sacred* and *collectivism* – also play a decisive role, by guiding the system of *cognitive happiness* towards a more spiritual and/or collective (communal)

direction. Also, a high degree of sharing of modern values has a strong impact on the structural model of *affective happiness* being associated with significant differences in positive feelings, as opposed to a lower degree of sharing.

5. The close relationship between the sharing of modern values and the cultural model of life goals. The high adherence of Romanian employees to modern values is associated with different life goals than those with a significantly lower degree of sharing these values.

All these conclusions cannot be generalised, being limited by the particular nature of our study (833 employees from 17 multinational and national companies in Romania). In exchange, they might open new perspectives and hypotheses which can be verified in future research,

The study presented in this thesis falls within the theories of modernization developed in the 1950s and 1960s that suggest that modern societies converge to modern values by abandoning traditional ones²³ and in the pursuits of Schwartz regarding the way the values of a society affect the values of organizations.²⁴

According to this thesis, we can say that the self appears to be the main weapon of modernization and the main demolisher of the old lifestyle, dominated for so long by Christian principles. The modern, economically rational individual is based on the premeditated pursuit of his personal interests, which leaves behind the old patterns anchored in the sacred and in traditions. And in an increasingly individualist modern world, more and more aspects of existence are being reduced to the pursuit of personal goals, to the personal gain according to the rationally designed success model of the individual. The dynamic of modernity implies, in this scenario, an endless race to maximize the achievement of one's own life goals. But the self is, to a certain extent, a mixture of contradictions and it is natural to have divergent goals that can encompass the whole range of contents, from material to spiritual.

²³Tradition vs. Modernity : The Continuing Dichotomy of Values in European Society
<https://www.cairn.info/revue-francaise-de-sociologie-1-2008-5-page-153.htm>

²⁴ Cultural Values in Organisations: Insights for Europe
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/234021865_Cultural_Values_in_Organisations_Insights_for_Europe