



THE IMAGE OF DIMITRIE CANTEMIR AS A SPIRITUAL LEADER OF THE ROMANIAN EDUCATION SYSTEM – A RESEARCH ON HIS VISUAL IDENTITY

Mihaela-Simona APOSTOL¹, Adriana-Anca CRISTEA²

¹Faculty of Political Sciences, "Dimitrie Cantemir" Christian University, Bucharest, ¹E-mail: elaapostol@yahoo.com

²Faculty of Tourism and Commercial Management, "Dimitrie Cantemir" Christian University, Bucharest, ²E-mail: atearics@gmail.com

Abstract

In the universal culture, Dimitrie Cantemir image is represented by an outstanding personality of the 18th century, famous due to his multiple achievements in many fields. The study aims to describe the manner in which different education institutions bearing the name Dimitrie Cantemir build their famous image. The paper also makes researches about the existence of recurrent elements, their way they are used and the manner in which they choose to visually honour their spiritual leader. Having chosen the patronage of a great personality such as Dimitrie Cantemir generates the instantaneous recognition of the name and qualities that the collective memory assigns to him. Such famous qualities are implicitly transferred to the organization that chooses him as spiritual leader and that wishes to appropriate its achievements through him. At the same time, by the constant circulation of the organization's name, it maintains and refreshes his memory into the collective memory, being loaded in its turn with the values that that particular institution circulates.

Key words:

Culture, visual communication, education

JEL Codes:

1. Introduction

The image of personalities maintained by the social memory glides according to the representations that each community maintains and shares. The human communities, in our case the education structures, choose from the gallery of outstanding personalities those that they consider representative and of which the patronage brings them an added value. It is a double respect paid to the chosen personality, which overflows in its turn, just as the saints incarnated as spiritual leaders, a light of the superior knowledge. This cultural choice immortalizes representations which, in time, reach to that point where the group is identified, individualized and manages to make its own history.

The cultural connection to the great personalities of the Romanian identity pantheon brings with itself multiple benefits. The choice of being patronized by a great personality as Dimitrie Cantemir triggers the instantaneous recognition of the name and quality assigned to them by the collective memory. These recognized qualities are implicitly transferred to the organization that chose him as leader and that wishes to connect, in a spiritual manner, to his achievements. At the same time, the spiritual leader, by the constant circulation of the organization's name, maintains and refreshes the collective memory, which overflows in its turn, the values that the institution circulates and in

certain cases, even the institution honours, by its activities, the promotion of its spiritual leader's achievements.

Certain visionary organizations understand this interdependence connection and they realize the importance of such a fact, promoting and consolidating the image of the spiritual leader by the presentation of his creation and achievements. The retrospection of Cantemir's name and creation leads to the consolidation of the fame assigned to the institution that carries such actions.

2. The scholar's Portrait represented in the masterpieces of the artists of that time

Dimitrie Cantemir's portraits cannot be detached from the moments when they were created; they stand for stages of the scholar's life. Out of the six portraits depicting Dimitrie Cantemir, it is only the posthumous ones that made a career and became a representative image (figure 5). Such images bearing a mark value were taken and retaken, processed and adapted for different artistic techniques and prints on different formats. They are used in paintings, sculpture, engraving, philately, numismatics, institutional identity image etc.



Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3



Figure 4



Figure 5



Figure 6

The first image (figure 1) depicts Dimitrie Cantemir in a new garment, European clothes, wig, but with oriental wearing accessories, a turban and one twisted silk baldric.

The painting is entitled "The portrait of a noble European from Constantinople" and it was made at the end of the 18th century. The specialists think that it depicts Dimitrie Cantemir in his youth. The portrait was made by an unknown artist and this is the reason for which its origin is still a mystery. Nowadays, the painting is hosted at the Arts and Ceramics Museum in Rouen [1]. This image is not considered as a representative one, due to the fact that we do not know for sure if it depicts Dimitrie Cantemir or not.

The second image of Dimitrie Cantemir, an engraving, (figure 2) depicts Dimitrie Cantemir as ruler of Moldova. He wears a large and heavy gown of furry fringe, under which we can see the knight's armour. This image is not very familiar; it shall be taken over by artists on rare

occasions as a new variant of the classic baroque image depicting Cantemir in a white wig and knight's armour.

A third image left is an engraving made in 1712 by the artist A. Osupov (figure 3). This image is also forsaken; it only stands for a historical document, as opposed to the other three representations. The image is not romantic, interesting and special. It depicts a common Cantemir character, with no brilliance and it does not give an impetus to our imagination.

The following three engravings (figure 4) represent the posthumous image of the scholar in the presentable books of his son, Antioh. The engravings depict Prince Dimitrie Cantemir wearing a knight's armour, with a mace in his right arm and white ermine gown over his shoulders, with a white wig on his head. This type of visual representation of the scholar is characteristic for many subsequent artistic creations. This image of emblematic value shall be taken over and over by the plastic artists in paintings, sculpture, graphics, philately, numismatics, etc.

3. Identity construction of the visual image of Romanian education institutions under the patronage of Dimitrie Cantemir

In the universal culture, Dimitrie Cantemir image is represented by an outstanding personality of the 18th century, famous due to his multiple achievements in many fields. In the contemporary European space, his personality is recognized by the foundation within University of Oxford of an Institute for East European Studies bearing his name [2].

In Romania, there are many education and research institutions that chose Dimitrie Cantemir as their spiritual leader. Thus, a series of primary schools, secondary schools (high-schools), colleges, post-graduate schools, universities and research institutes bear the name of the great scholar.

The middle schools that chose Dimitrie Cantemir as their spiritual leader are situated in the following localities: Baia-Mare, Brăila, Constanța, Fetești, Galați, Oradea, Vaslui etc. Among them, there are some that chose an emblem of the scholar's image; other schools use non-figurative graphic identification elements, while certain schools do not have a personal image.



Figure 7



Figure 8



Figure 9



Figure 10

The middle school in Matca locality, Galati County, posts on its site an image (figure 7) that complies with the original models of that time [3]. Figure no. 8 depicts the humanistic scholar Dimitrie Cantemir in a stylized manner, leader of music, letters, geography, mathematics, a complex symbol chosen by Middle School no. 3 of Baia Mare [4]. In Constanta, the Middle School no. 38 makes use of the classic image of the scholar, but this time the visual emphasis focuses on the dynamics of circular lines intended to suggest the spiritual ascending, and the pure and saturated colours are intended to convey the young spirit and the enthusiasm of the new generation [5]. Certain schools choose an individualized modern manner to convey the idealistic message of their spiritual leader, that is culture and education advocate at the highest level. An illustrative example is represented by Figure no. 10, which stands for the individualized image of Dimitrie Cantemir Middle School of Braila [6].

In case of the high-schools and colleges that chose their name Dimitrie Cantemir, some of them use on their sites classic elements of imagistic representation: scholar's portrait, the heraldic shield and the letter block.

Dimitrie Cantemir Economic College of Suceava (figure 11), Dimitrie Cantemir National College of Onesti (figure 12), Dimitrie Cantemir Theoretical High-School of Iasi (figure 13) chose figurative representations of the humanist scholar, unlike Dimitrie Cantemir Military College-High-School of Breaza (figure 14), Dimitrie Cantemir Agricultural College of Husi (figure 15), Cantemir Vodă National College of Bucharest (figure 16), which chose as emblems non-figurative representations identified by texts and the heraldic shield, making references to the concepts of a certain system of values, elegance, of a certain cultural standard.

The identity elements chosen by Dimitrie Cantemir Economic College of Suceava (figure 11), as we have mentioned, make use of the figurative representations of the scholar's image, an immediate reference to his personality by using his portrait in a modern and easy key [7]. He message makes direct visual connections with the institution's famous identity: computer – economic college; pen – education institution and the scholar's portrait – spiritual leader; in addition, the blue colour in the background makes allusions to higher

wishes and aspirations, to rigour, being often used by the education institutions on specific character.

Dimitrie Cantemir National College of Onesti (figure 12) makes use of certain elements that particularize Dimitrie Cantemir in the visual landscape, by the chosen colours that make allusion to the bridge of time, building a chromatic delicate and harmonious dialogue [8]. The portrait of the price scholar, delicately captured in the background, takes shape in a fading way by the quantitative contrast. The colours of the emblem use a restrained chromatic range, which integrates in a balanced manner with the elegant shape of the heraldic shield and of the text depicting an arched line, usually associated to positive states.

The image of Dimitrie Cantemir Theoretical High-School of Iasi (figure 13) is individualized by the simple manner that only emphasized line elements, conferring clarity in expression [9]. The emblem is classified in a manner specific to the compositions related to education institutions, i.e. image in the left, followed by a text informing about the name of the organization.



Figure 11



Figure 12



Liceul Teoretic
„Dimitrie Cantemir” Iași

Figure 13



Figure 14



Figure 15



Figure 16

Dimitrie Cantemir Military High-School College of Breaza (figure 14), due to the specificity of its specialization, connects to the patriotic feelings using the national colours [10]. Such colours are placed within the Polish-type heraldic shield, characterized by the beauty of shapes and elegance of proportions. The chromatic discourse is necessary to be decrypted in a heraldic language so as to surprise the richness of meanings. The colours of the emblem, apart from the referrals to the three-colour flag, may be individually decrypted in a heraldic key: red symbolizes boldness, love for the country; yellow symbolizes the richness and

gold of the mountains and blue stands for sincerity, nobleness of the Romanian people. The yellow coloured text, written in golden letters, mark the name of the high – school and it individualizes the emblem that may be easily intermingled with different football teams: F.C. Steaua or F.C. Barcelona.

Dimitrie Cantemir Agricultural College of Husi (figure 15) makes use of the heraldic shield within which, on an azure blue background, mentions the initials D.C., written in modern gothic style [11]. The heraldic shield is bordered with the tracery specific to medieval miniature arts, which is a distinctive mark of the Irish miniature portrait artists.

Founded in 1878, Cantemir Voda National College of Bucharest (figure 16) is the oldest education institution that bears the name of the humanist scholar Dimitrie Cantemir [12]. The graphic solution that the college is C.N.C.V. initials written in an elegant and calligraphic manner, conveying the style of the Enlightenment period.



Figure 17



Figure 18

In case of postgraduate education institutions bearing the name of the prince scholar: Dimitrie Cantemir Postgraduate School of Târgu Mureș (figure 17) [13] and Dimitrie Cantemir Postgraduate Sanitary School of Iasi (figure 18), the visual representations are much more elaborated, as they address to another type of public [14]. Both emblems choose blue colour as mark of the superior intelligence and intellectual rigor, thus emphasizing the aspirations of postgraduate institutions to train high skilled graduates.



Figure 19



Figure 20

In case of higher education institutions as well, the blue colour is chosen to define the qualities towards which the organizations aspire to provide to their students: access to knowledge, culture and intellectual insight. In Romania, there are two universities bearing the name of the prince scholar: Dimitrie Cantemir Christian University of Bucharest (figure 19) [15] and Dimitrie Cantemir University of Târgu Mureș (figure 20) [16].

Dimitrie Cantemir Christian University of Bucharest chooses as its identity images a modern painted portrait of the prince in armour, wearing a blue ermine gown and bearing the signs attesting its rank [15].

The emblem of Dimitrie Cantemir University of Târgu Mureș is characterized by a non-figurative element, which contains the heraldic shield, a blue background and U.D.C. initials inside of it [16].

4. Conclusions

Choosing the spiritual patronage of a great personality such as Dimitrie Cantemir brings an added value to the image of the organizations. The association with the great humanist scholar, who marked an era, generates outstanding identity effects for the education institutions bearing his name. The inestimable value of the cultural heritage created by the great scholar has a multiplier effect by the subtle impact of associating his name with the Romania school, irrespective of its profile and level. Each education institution in Romania bearing the name Dimitrie Cantemir chose a personal manner of individualizing itself, by making use of both elements of imagery as well as other graphic elements. On the other hand, there are also other education institutions that decided not to have a personal emblem.

Most of the times, secondary schools make use in the composition of their identity of many elements that fade away the image of the scholar, creating entireties of attraction and memorable power. Colleges and higher education institutions chose in most of the cases simple compositions on a blue background, which is the colour associated to: communication, knowledge, culture, rigor and intellectual insight.

For the Romanian culture and education, it is extremely important to permanently celebrate the memory and value of our predecessors. This example may be implicitly followed by choosing a great personality as spiritual leader, as Dimitrie Cantemir for instance.

The identity elements of such institutions become components of the image and implicitly of the

organizational culture, so that the new generations may assimilate a specific system of values to their own behavior.

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