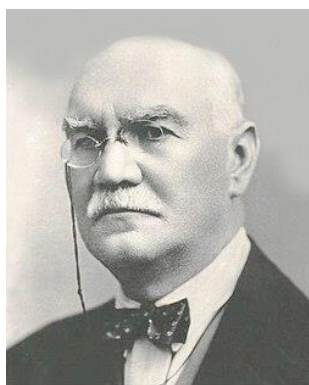


**PHILOSOPHICAL MEDALLION****CONSTANTIN RADULESCU-MOTRU  
– CREATOR OF ENERGETIC PERSONALISM****Constantin Radulescu-Motru**

(b. February 2/15, 1868, Butoiești commune,  
Mehedinți county – d. March 6, 1957, Bucharest)

Constantin Rădulescu-Motru (February 2/15, 1868, Butoiești commune, Mehedinți county - March 6, 1957, Bucharest). After his secondary and high school studies in Craiova (1880–1885), he simultaneously attended the Faculty of Law (1885-1888) and the Faculty of Letters and Philosophy in Bucharest (1885-1889), where he had as teachers Titu Maiorescu and C. Dimitrescu-Iasi. He obtained his license in philosophy with the work *Empirical reality and the conditions of knowledge*. In 1889 he became a student at the École de Hautes Études in Paris (1889–1890), where his teachers were the materialist philosopher Jules Soury and the psychologist Th. Ribot and where he worked in the experimental psychology laboratory of H. Beaunis. He continued to specialize in psychology and philosophy in Munich (with Carl Stumpf) and in Leipzig (in W. Wundt's laboratory). He defended his doctorate in philosophy under Wundt's guidance with the thesis *Zur Entwicklung von Kant's Theorie der Naturcausalität* (1893).

Back in the country, he was librarian of the Carol I University Foundation (1894–1898). He entered, through a competition, the University of Bucharest, becoming a lecturer in the history of ancient philosophy and aesthetics (from 1897) and a university professor (from 1904). He taught courses in logic, methodology, theory of knowledge, psychology. Tudor Vianu and Mihai Ralea were among his students.

He founded the magazines: "Philosophical Studies" (1897-1914), which later reappeared under the name "Philosophy Magazine" (1923-1944); "New Romanian Magazine" (1900-1914); "The European Idea" (1919-1928), which continues "New Romanian Magazine", "Annals of Psychology". He founded and led the Society of Philosophical Studies (1910), later renamed the Romanian Society of Philosophy.

He was also Director of the National Theater in Bucharest (1918), member of the Romanian Academy (from 1923-1948) and its president (1938-1941). In 1940, he was expelled from education by legionnaires, under the pretext of retirement.

As a politician, he was a conservative-democrat, being a member of the Conservative Party (1904-1906), the Democratic Conservative Party (1906-1924), after which he opted for Averescu's People's Party and, finally, for the National Party -Peasant. Doctrinally, he spoke for a "peasant state", in fact for a culturalization of the peasantry and an increase in the economic and social level of village life.

In developing his philosophical system, known as energetic personalism, Rădulescu-Motru started from the necessity of a new theory of existence and knowledge, which would remove the object-subject dualism, established by materialism and idealism.

**Ontologically**, Rădulescu-Motru criticized materialism (which he confuses with metaphysical materialism) because it reduces spirit to matter, and idealism because it reduces matter to spirit. Or, says the author of personalism, there is an original unity between the physical and the psychic. It is the unity of universal energy, from which the physical, with its distinct characteristics, and the psyche, with its specific structures, would derive.

Rădulescu-Motru developed his energetic conception in the direction of a finalist evolutionism. He considered that the original reality evolved from inorganic to organic and, from here, to the emergence of human consciousness. This evolution would be finalist oriented and would aim at the production of man, of human personality.

Therefore, Rădulescu-Motru's conception is constituted as an *energetic personalism*, being *personalist* in the fact that it puts the person at the center of reality, as its goal, and, at the same time, *energeticist* as it considers that the person is a real form of energy and that everything has an energetic substrate.

Although it wants to elude materialism and idealism, the ontology of energetic personalism fails because the energy established as the primordial factor, which unifies the physical and the psyche, is closer to the psyche. Thus, the philosopher attributes consciousness (that's right, dissolved in energy and understood as a form of energy) to the organic world and even the physical world. However, energetic personalism poses, even if it does not solve justly, the real

problem of the close connection between consciousness and the physical reality different from consciousness and that of the correlative evolution of the two forms of existence. This vision will lead to some viable ideas concerning the human personality.

**Gnoseologically**, in his work *Elements of metaphysics* (1912), in the definitive edition *Elements of metaphysics based on Kantian philosophy* (1928), the philosopher observes that materialism commits the error of considering consciousness and knowledge as a mirror of the external world and of not recognizing the contribution of the subject in knowledge. Or, in this way, materialism does not explain, however, the suitability of the subject to the object to be known, as it considers that the two terms of the cognitive process are completely different, external to each other and even broken from each other. The author of *Elements of Metaphysics* also rejects idealism because, opposed to the materialist conception, it exacerbates the cognitive subject, substantializes it and establishes it in an autonomous substance. Although on a path opposite to the materialist conception, idealism arrives, in turn, at the error of conceiving the subject and the object of knowledge as torn between them. In addition, Kantian epistemological idealism does not solve the problem of the unity of science either, as it breaks the logical level from the empirical one.

Rădulescu-Motru tries to solve the epistemological problem and, thereby, the problem of the unity of science, through a conception that affirms and explains the unity of consciousness through the unity of personality, and the unity of personality through the unity of existence in general. It is his personalist-energetic conception, which he elaborated extensively in his 1927 work, *Energetic Personalism*, but he had already expounded his energetic ideas in his 1902 work, *Science and Energy*.

Therefore, according to energetic personalism, epistemology is based on anthropology, and anthropology is based on ontology.

**Anthropologically**, Rădulescu-Motru conceives personality as the unity of the physical and the psyche, considering it as a form of universal energy and, therefore, of the fusion between the physical and the psyche. Given that unity does not exclude differences, the philosopher states that the physical depends on the entire environment, and the psyche on the entire history of culture. So, through its psychic side, personality is also understood as a social being.

Among the two dimensions of personality, an important place is given to soul life. In humans, soul life is characterized by anticipation, that is, by the ego. The ego is not the same as consciousness, which is also attributed to animals, but it is anticipatory consciousness. Anticipation (goal) precedes activity.

Personality is defined not only as a complex, bio-psycho-social structure, but also as an activity, as work. Human activity is distinguished and is distinguished from existing actions in other species by its anticipatory, oriented

character. Through anticipation, human activity is determined not by causality, but by finality.

Depending on the types of work, the philosopher distinguishes types of personalities. Thus, he divides work into agricultural work and specialized work. He divides specialized work into informed work and organized work. Accordingly, he believes that agricultural work would produce the telluric personality, informed work the archaic (protean) personality, and organized work the professional personality.

Rădulescu-Motru, however, speaks not only of the individual personality, but also of the collective personality, of the people, and believes that this also has a physical background, given by the connection with the land, and an ideal background, given by culture.

The theory of personality includes many valuable ideas, the most important regarding defining man as a complex, bio-psycho-social being, understanding man as work, capturing the oriented character of human activity, considering the people as a collective personality, distinguishing personality from individuality, the first being related to the social plan, the second from the biological plan.

Based on the theory of personality, the philosopher also develops his conception of vocation. Not every personality is also a man of vocation, but every man of vocation is a personality. In explaining vocation, the philosopher starts from the concept of "I". Namely, the vocation assumes the noble side of the self, oriented towards the permanent interests of society and has a creative character. The man of vocation does not take care of himself, but of the requirements of his people. Vocation is a calling aimed at the progress of the community, the social good. It is innovative and materializes in work. At the same time, it is not broken by tradition either.

Vocation theory also has a certain elitist coloration, implying the idea that social progress results only from the activity of vocation people.

**In the field of social and political philosophy**, Rădulescu-Motru dealt with the existence of collective personalities, of peoples or nations, with application to the Romanian people, to their community of origin, language and destiny.

Ioan N. ROȘCA

## EUGENIU SPERANȚIA



### **Eugeniu Speranția**

(b. May 6/18 1888, Bucharest – d. January 11 1972 )

1. Eugeniu Sperantia was born in Bucharest on May 6/18, 1888. He attended the secondary and university education in Bucharest; in 1912 he completed his Ph.D in law with the thesis called: „Pragmatic Apriorism”.

He subsequently specialized in Berlin and upon his coming back in the country (1914) he had a position in a department in the secondary education after which he was appointed lecturer (1921) and professor (1923) in the philosophy of law and sociology within the Faculty of Law and the Orthodox Theological Academy, both from Oradea.

Among the most important scientific studies and researches we enumerate: Pragmatic Apriorism (1912), Definition and Prehistory (1912), The Philosophy of Magic (1916), The Beauty as Great Sufferance (1921), The Philosophy of Thinking (1922), The Ideal Factor (1929), Social Phenomenon as Spiritual Process of Education (1929), Course in General Sociology (1930), Problems of Contemporaneous Sociology (1933), The Historic Spiritualism (1933), Judicial Encyclopedia, with an Historic Introduction in the Philosophy of Law (1936), Immanent Lyricism (1938), Introduction in Sociology (1938).

Eugeniu Sperantia was one of the few Romanian thinkers that attended the international congresses of philosophy of the time, collaborating at the same time with foreign magazines of philosophy.

2. The thinker’s philosophical work is characterized by a strong biological, social and metaphysical feature.

None of the fundamental philosophical problems can be solved, according to Sperantia, if social reality and life, which is the original principle of existence, are not taken into consideration. In other words, there is a unique formula with the

help of which both biologic phenomena and psychological acts may be expressed, starting with the simplest ones.

What seems to stay in the way of incorporating a single science dealing both with organic and psychical acts, would be the individuality or material discontinuity of organic beings on one hand and the fluid continuity of the moods, on the other hand.

Any living creature is defined by unity and its synthesized activity, whereby it assimilates amorphous and disparate elements, appearing thus as a permanent preservative and expansive process of synthesis. But creating syntheses is one and the same with conquering and creating. The phenomenon of conscience is defined by the same features: the tendency to preserve itself as a process of synthesis, under analogue forms: expansion, conquest, construction.

This resemblance of features leads us to the idea, according to Sperantia, that both at the basis of biological and psychological phenomena lies the same impulse, that psychology could have great advantages by using biology and also that, biology would obtain precious information by using and consulting psychology. Sperantia is strongly convinced that we would reach very interesting knowledge if we decided to consider conscience (despite all vicissitudes of its short existence and in all relationships with its peers) as representing the minimal vital phenomenon and hence, as presenting in itself, in abbreviated form, all essential and distinctive features of life in general.

According to Sperantia, the logical laws are laws that the thinking subject requires alone and which it forces itself to comply with. Having a binding feature, they may be breached but when this is happening the thinking subject feels the need of a reprimand or reprobation, or at least of an apology and seeks to make things right.

If life represents the total acts of thinking and movement, then the world is only the content and virtual aspect of life. A reality can only be conceived for and by a living creature.

3. Along with philosophy in general, the philosophy of law was also challenged for many times, being often attacked in a fervent way and of course, groundlessly.

Sperantia – who found out that philosophy had been severely discredited in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, being challenged by the ascension of the scientific spirit, by the ephemeral time of materialism and empiricism – considered, at the time he was teaching his course in Cluj that, a “progressive affirmation” is close to the philosophy of law.

According to Sperantia, the philosophy of law was closely correlated in the last centuries with social and political sciences of those times. The periods of great social and political turmoil, wars or revolutions brought along with them great projects of social reform. At the same time with these projects it appears,

however, an interest in the studies related to the justifying bases of the right and state.

Starting from the idea that social organization closely follows the logic of thinking, Sperantia reaches the conclusion that, even if philosophy followed the social and political oscillations to a great extent, it corresponds to a general exigency of the human mind, which it renders the feature of stability.

Sperantia is one of the most fervent supporters of the philosophy of law, being aware of the fact that it is the only one that can contribute to a proper creation of the law. That is why he militates against the exclusion of philosophical problematic from the General Theory of Law. The philosophy of law gains, in his conception, practical connotations, to the meaning that “in all branches of scientific research it is more and more difficult to challenge the truth that between the philosophical conception of the world and the solution to problems of detail there is such an intimate correlation that any insignificant discovery or verisimilar hypothesis may cause a modification of the philosophical trend”.

In Kant's spirit, Sperantia argues that the philosophy of law must examine which are the aprioristic or transcendental bases of law in general. Besides these aprioristic bases, the philosophy of law must also take into consideration the influence of external, extrinsic factors which are important in the elaboration of judicial order. Besides these two factors, a third one has a significant role in the functioning of law. It is the finality of the right as technical means of progressive spiritualization of the humankind.

Because a philosophy of law must be framed within a broad vision about world, it must, in Sperantia's opinion, be preceded by a philosophy of the Spirit. The statement is correct and it was applied with success especially by Kant and Hegel. Since the characteristic and primordial function of the spirit is that to create norms, it results that the law has a spiritual foundation, and the spirit-related problematic must be found, specifically, in the problematic of law. The purpose of the philosophy of law conceived by Sperantia is the spiritual substantiation of the law which embedding the science, it offers it the possibility to ascend to principles or to first causes.

4. Eugeniu Sperantia, known for having a rich culture founded on thorough readings in the field of social sciences and nature, succeeds to carry out a philosophy of the law in connection with all other fields. Without fear of error, one may state that Sperantia is the philosopher that frames the law within an universal vision about the world in general; the law is framed within and is part of an integrated world and the philosophy of law is the one that requires and renders it the endorsement of unity with the great world of ideas that transits to an optically founded reality.

Although it is a part of a unitary whole, the law is, at its turn, a unitary reality, which is different from other realities, which confers it a different feature.

To this purpose, Sperantia stated that “the philosophy of law shall consider the right as a unitary whole, in what it has identical with itself always and everywhere –which makes it to be a unitary reality, in what it differentiates it from any other reality and in what it assigns to it an own place and feature inside the whole imaginable and thoughtful world.” From this way of raising the question, it results that the law, as a different reality, is part of a much broader world and in which it brings its characteristic way of being.

Starting from the framing of the law within the broad area of social sciences, Sperantia tries to catch, however, its the characteristic elements, its essentiality, that is what it distinguishes it in its idealism and reality itself.

The main distinction made by him is the one between the science of social life (the sociology) and the science of law and, correlatively, between the social philosophy and the philosophy of law. “Sociology – argues Eugeniu Sperantia – ascertains certain phenomena, it seeks for their causal explanation and the regularity of their relationships, while the judicial point of view is not that of causal explanation but of logical justification”.

It is very interesting the way in which Sperantia approaches the concept of constraint. He remarks that the sanction or non-sanction doesn’t characterize only the norms of law. It is exercised under all aspects of the social life. The society itself is a reality which constrains us and forces us to subordinate ourselves to its way of being. Moral is also, at its turn, an internal constraint. In contradiction with Trade who argued that not only constraint is the engine of the social life but also imitation, Sperantia, will show that in case of imitation, even if we are not in the presence of an outer constraint, it is however the result of an inner, involuntary impulse that in fact, constrains to a certain adaptation to environment. Sperantia states that in fact, constraint is one way of imitation: “through it, the process of unification, hence of imitation, universalizes and smoothens itself.”

Starting from the ascertainment that social life is a manifestation of the human spirit, Sperantia requires that the general and imitable laws of thinking should apply also here with all consistency. In fact, according to him, the need for consistency is the most general need of the human spirit.

Approaching the notion of the norm characterized by constraint and identifying the constraint with fundamental logical concepts, such as those of identity and non-contradiction, Sperantia, succeeds in performing a substantiate logic of the norm.

Dealing with the laws of evolution of right, Eugeniu Sperantia, assimilating what other thinkers brought positive in this matter and completing with his own contributions, determines the following laws:

- 1.The law of progressive intentionality: the right evolves through a transition from instinctive and automatic to intentional;



2.The law of progressive rationality: the right evolves through a transition from irrational to rational;

3.The law of transition from anonymous enactment to enactment by established bodies;

4.The law of progressive organization of sanction – which, implying an increasing intervention of intentionality and rationality, represents a corollary of the two laws;

5.The law of continuity or of psychological adaptation of the new institutions to the old mentality;

6.The law of progressive solidarity of society with the individual;

7.The law of evolution from particular to universal (supported by Giorgio del Vecchio);

8.The law of transition from a “status” to a “contractus” (or the law of Sumner Maine) which could be also called –Sperantia says – the law of gradual affirmation of human personality (thus appearing as a corollary of law 6);

9.The law of transition from psychological inferior grounds to superior grounds;

10.The law of gradual simplification of the procedure;

11.The law of sweetening and individualization (extrinsic and intrinsic);

12. The law of progressive organization of creation and self-preservation functions of the right;

13. The law of functional and adaptive motivation.

All these laws would be reduced, according to Sperantia, to two general laws, that is:

a) The right – as one of the social aspects of life – similarly evolves with any vital process;

b) The right – as spiritual fact – evolves through the progressive affirmation of human spirituality

The evolution of practical behaviour and of the human spirit is carried out through a permanent and progressive union of means of “intermediation” (as a transition from immediate to mediate).

5. Despite having an obvious biological conception about the world, Sperantia does not exclude though aprioristic, transcendental factors in establishing the right. On the contrary, he strongly highlights their role. “The law – says Sperantia –appearing always as a spiritual synthetic product aspiring to a maximum of harmony and consistency, a philosophy of law must be preceded by at least one concise introduction in the philosophy of Spirit”. The spirit creates itself certain exigencies to which it understands to obey, because they express the life of the Spirit itself and they make it possible. Which are these universal and

imperative exigencies without which the spirit itself couldn't exist? They are the following:

- the spirit conceives itself as universal;
- the spirit considers itself as sufficient to itself;
- the spirit is and requires always to be subjected to a universal norm enacted by itself;
- the exigency of universality is the condition of rationality;
- any confinement of the universality of a norm represents for the spirit a defeat of its fundamental and primordial exigency;
- the sensible experience is a series of defeats of aspiration of the spirit to the universal;
- any defeat of the aspiration to the universal represents a negation of identity of the real with the spiritual and the rational;
- the horror of contradiction, the impulse to reject and avoid any contradiction is the defensive attitude of the spirit which tends to preserve its identity with itself and its aspiration to the universal norm;
- the individual spirit ("the ego"), as we know it in subjective conscience, postulates the objective existence of the spirit;
- thanks to the exigencies of universality, "the ego" conceives "the alter" as its own exteriorization;
- "the ego" assigns to each "alter" the same position of purpose in itself and the same requirement to be subjected to a universal norm. The consequences of identity of the subjective spirit and of the application of the same norm are:
  1. the exigency of "equality of rights";
  2. the exigency of "reciprocity";
  3. the exigency of "compensation"

The real "social conflict" is reduced to the subjective, inner conflict, among the affective tendencies and rational norms. Any interdiction that starts from the normal conscience is a form of imperative of non-contradiction, a refusal of our logic, such as any exigency of the moral conscience is in fact still a logical existence.

Naturally, *Sperantia* is not content only with establishing the judicial imperatives which, as we have seen, they are exigencies of the spirit and they show as systematically the appearance that such imperatives have in the social contingency.

Spiritual life assumes social life, the latter being a constituent of the former: spiritual life is not possible without social life. Two strong tendencies are noticed in social life: on one hand, the tendency to possess material goods and on the other hand, the tendency to possess spiritual goods. While the latter tendency almost animates the humans and intensifies sociality, the former tendency alienates the humans, hence threatening the social cohesion. The explanation for these adverse effects of the two tendencies lies in the fact that while spiritual goods are susceptible of a simultaneous,

unlimited affiliation, material goods, being exhaustible, are susceptible only of a limited affiliation. The exigencies of animality on one hand, the limitation of goods on the other hand, threatens not only the social life but also the spiritual one. That is why the spirit cannot remain indifferent, but reacts, reducing or limiting the tendency of possession of material goods by certain norms. By doing so, the spirit is not the only one subjected to confinements: Organic life itself is subjected to norms, but to certain norms which are dictated to it from outside. Logical thinking creates alone norms for itself, according to which it develops, without which it wouldn't be a thinking but just a simple incoherent dream.

Social life cannot dispense with norms, because it would be fully precarious without norms. This is why the law intervenes and establishes the necessary norms. Of course, besides the proper judicial norms, social life is followed by habits, customs, manners, commons laws, rules of politeness and ceremony, religious rites, etc., such as the individual conscience is normalized, besides the logical laws, by the laws of association. The right though, is not the result of fortuity or of human conscience taken in the amplitude of its formations, but "it is a rational and international creation", resembling to this respect with technical constructions.

The law must accomplish a high function: that of insuring human spirituality by protecting the social life, indispensable to the spirit.

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