# EXPRESSIONS OF FORGIVENESS IN THE SYSTEM OF ROMANIAN POPULAR CULTURE

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*Abstract: The man of the Romanian village always sought the peace of his fellow man by forgiving his mistake, brought him close to his heart and advised him that the only way to obtain peace of soul and good is contemplation: "the wise man keeps the straight path", says a saying from the elders and who follows this way goes far. The expression "far reaching" is the result of understanding. Let's realize that one's inability to forgive destroys the ability to think of the one who wants to be forgiven for wrongdoing. Forgiveness must not only be found with the person who wronged us, but with our reconciliation that we have passed a time in life through which we want good. It is a form of spreading and affecting all areas of our lives, but also those around us. The joy of forgiveness is shared with our close partners because it fills our mood, behavior and reactions with release. Unforgiveness affects the individual's personality, inner peace and even the joy of being.*

*Keywords: forgiveness, culture, doubt, traditions, expressions*

**Motto:** "All traditions are socially constituted categories that organize our life, existence and reproduce the social world in interdependence and, often, subordination to the religious system of the group." (Ispas, 2003:83)

Considering the explanation of the word "to forgive" in the explanatory dictionary of the Romanian language, that of absolving someone of a punishment, of no longer considering him guilty of the mistake made, of exempting him from the moral obligation to consider himself guilty, in the conscience of the Romanian people, forgiveness constituted and represents a right to the rehabilitation of the person who has fallen into error before the community, a desire to express regret for what was done by the one who committed the respective reprehensible acts that brought damage both to his image and and the family from which he came. Forgiveness was the path to freedom, peace, joy and health, correction and rightful redemption of the offender by the society in which he lived. Forgiveness was an attribute of the one or those who, following the recognition of the deed and his regret for what he had done, reconsidered his integrity as a member of the community, returning to all the rights before falling into error. It was the path paved with important gratitude and forgiveness both to those who have wronged and to oneself. Both in the family and in the community of which he was a part, the one who committed the reprehensible act was investigated with a penetrating moral investigation of the act or activities that led to the decay of the repudiated one.

The expression: "I forgive you, but I do not forget you" does not fulfill the forgiveness in the totality of the fulfillments that the one who has fallen into error expects from the one to whom it is revealed. This expression is very widespread among the people and represents a distortion of the teaching of the Christian man. It suggests that one gets over the fellow's mistake, but it is not a complete forgiveness. Either way, full forgiveness is a requirement of Christian love. Love "suffers all things..., endures all things" (I Cor. 13, 7), according to the

Pauline expression. In conclusion, there is no full forgiveness bearing in mind the evil. Studying Christian teachings, remembering evil means being overcome by evil. Forgiveness therefore implies forgetting. This should not be understood as erasing the memory, but as covering the fellow's mistakes, understanding that no one is without mistakes. From this expression, we could ask ourselves what is the role of forgiveness in the life of the man of this world? The forgiveness we have to grant to our neighbor puts us in a correct relationship with those around us. Thinking that we are Christians, we hope for forgiveness from God for all our evils. The danger that grazes us is that of using a double measure: one by which we want mercy and forgiveness and which is directed to God, and another by which we want justice and fairness and which is directed to our neighbor. From the Lord's Prayer and from the complete explanations, we understand that the forgiveness we ask from God is directly proportional to the forgiveness we offer to our neighbor. Thus, according to the words of the Savior Christ, "if you forgive people their mistakes, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. And if you do not forgive people their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses" (Mt. 6, 14-15). I started by defining the entire factual content of the word "to forgive" with the present indicative "forgive", a transitive verb that directly receives the complement and leads to the expression of expressions: to spare someone from a punishment, to overlook the fault , one's mistake, to stop finding someone guilty. But, perhaps, the expression "to forgive (someone) God" can make us think that it is also our desire to believe that death has freed him from the torments of a serious illness. How profound in popular thought, an expression of an efficacy of the desire to forgive one's fellow man. "May God forgive him", say the pious when they talk about a dead person. "God, forgive me, says the one who missed (or was about to miss) an inappropriate, indecent word. But the word "to forgive" can also mean an excuse, "to excuse" someone. The adjective expression "unforgivable", for example, means something reprehensible, which can hardly be forgotten or forgiven. And yet there is forgiveness. The death of the erring fellow forgives everything before the community and, in turn, those who know him ask for forgiveness of sins. Another expression in which the word "forgive" nuances a completely different requirement of the one who uses it is the formulation "please forgive me", an expression that be deeply ignored. Forgiveness was and maintains its status as a state of mental healing of the one who fell into a mistake that could be absolved, restoring his quality and rights as an integral human being in the community. Forgiveness was a desire of the one who was given back the rights to forget his deeds, it was, in fact, a search by the inhabitants of the community to reintegrate the one who had made a mistake in the reference system of the respective society. We shall find, in the folk-tales, that those who erred by the unjust orders they gave, were the sovereigns themselves, the emperors of those ancient times, with their selfish characters and ignorance of the human frailties of their subjects. For them, forcing subjects to fulfill their absurd orders, were the desires to demonstrate their authority and to violate the right to life of the one who appeared to be needy. I have asked myself, many times, who gives the right to forgiveness? If there is a right of forgiveness and full understanding of this fact in the world we live in? I studied the popular literary creations, first of all, as a way to start towards the path of defining forgiveness and I found that the profane man, without high education, simple and bent on the traditions inherited from his grandparents - ancestors, understood forgiveness as a healing of the soul, through the soul understanding the living in him, the heart that pulsed his blood throughout his body, aware that he can make mistakes at any moment of his life. In popular culture, forgiveness was considered a privilege, an attempt to seek the right of the wrongdoer:

> "Romanian village civilization has its own genre, starting from an ancient background, lost in the mists of the ages, and which can still be brilliantly shown by the pre-Christian mythology found today in our villages on both sides of the Carpathians, and it has a perfection, a living experience, of continuous enrichment towards pure forms, as shown to us, above all, by our popular art. In this way, the Romanian village civilization, present before our eyes, takes us into

> the depths of millennia and, through direct observation, unravels historical problems for us where the written document is completely missing." (Bernea, 2006:7)

The man of the Romanian village always sought the peace of his fellow man by forgiving his mistake, brought him close to his heart and advised him that the only way to obtain peace of soul and good is contemplation: "the wise man keeps the straight path", says a saying from the elders and who follows this way goes far. The expression "far reaching" is the result of understanding Let's realize that one's inability to forgive destroys the ability to think of the one who wants to be forgiven for wrongdoing. Forgiveness must not only be found with the person who wronged us, but with our reconciliation that we have passed a time in life through which we want good. It is a form of spreading and affecting all areas of our lives, but also those around us. The joy of forgiveness is shared with our close partners because it fills our mood, behavior and reactions with release. Unforgiveness affects the individual's personality, inner peace and even the joy of being. It has been observed that after a hug, the feeling of protection, security, self-confidence increases, being a real inner strength and source of health. The expression: "Embrace is the state of childhood, it is the state of joy, it is the state of friendship, it is the state of harmony, it is the state of love, it is the state of happiness, it is the state of forgiveness, it is the state of healing, it is the state of trust..." proved the state of well-being between the one who forgiven and he who has been forgiven for his mistakes. A detailed x-ray of this way of thinking specific to the Romanian people can be made, placing a special emphasis on the way in which space, time and causality are found in this model that governs the life of traditional communities:

> "What I pursued is the deciphering of a specific way of thinking, expression of a mentality and entic coordinates. Space, time and causality are researched as concrete phenomena and categories that demonstrate a conception and a vision of life specific to the Romanian people." (Bernea, 1997:8)

Work, the satisfaction of multiple, intense material needs generated not only the existing condition of man, but also "man's cultural attitude towards reality, on the first steps of history. Through the transmission of experiences and their transformation into action, thanks to the knowledge of the natural environment, time and the dimension of space, the Romanian village man created not only his past and present, but laid the foundations for the future, passing from that irreversible physical and biological time to social-historical time even at subjective time. Lucian Blaga emphasized this "ontological mutation" of man's transition from the state of submission to the environment, to the cultural state, through which man, aware of his power and value, will build his own universe, his own world, imposing laws, norms, behavioral, in relation to his millennial experience, but also to his needs. Along with the work and the acquisition of experiences through laborious activity, the fund of empirical knowledge developed continuously. The variety of empirical knowledge is extremely large from one region to another on the globe, to different human civilizations and even to the same people, at different stages of history. The millennia of knowledge of nature and its use for the development of human civilization have generated a real "science" of the people, a credit of popular spirituality, which can once again constitute the argument for the antiquity, continuity, and perenniality of a civilization. Even though forgiveness has to do with the wrongs that others have done, the act itself is intimately connected to our healing and liberation. "We don't forgive to help another person. We do not forgive for others. We forgive for ourselves," this expression gives deep peace. Forgiveness is a process of letting go of negative feelings, where people discover how they feel and think and realize that they no longer want pain or hurt to control their lives. The choice to forgive represents an approach to freedom. Forgiving someone who wronged you is never easy, but if you end up dwelling on that incident, reliving it over and over again, your mind is likely to become loaded with negative thoughts and pent-up anger. However, when you choose to forgive, you are no longer trapped in the past actions of others and can finally feel free: "It is the world in which

man has a purpose, the element guided by knowledge, of truth not from the light, but that truth that hides in the mystery of the shadow, dual, ambiguous. The elevated man finds the truth in all the representations expressed by art, he consciously penetrates into the world of the other, into the image of the imagined image. Jesus was the one who restored man to the world. The man who was once lost in fratricide: greedy, immoral, misfit, insecure and criminal. The limits of the existential absurdity of that world which believed itself to be full power was demonstrated by the divinity to cease to exist through death. A corpse fallen into the disgrace of the living." (Mureșanu, 2017:15)

The biblical model presents "transactional" forgiveness from a psychological and theological angle, presupposing the completion of several steps such as the recognition of the harm suffered by the person who was affected, the clarification of the harm suffered and the reasons for its production, using memory and confrontation defending repentance and request of forgiveness from the guilty party. We tried to conclude by emphasizing the fact that forgiving the guilty, regardless of whether he asked for forgiveness or not, could raise awareness of the existence of two stages of forgiveness: decisional and emotional. The first stage involves replacing grudge with goodwill, no longer wanting bad things to happen to that person, emotional forgiveness being more difficult, because negative emotions can easily return when an incident reactivates memories of the offense suffered or when the one who forgave is forced to bear the long-term effects of the action of the one who wronged him. Although the confession and expression of regret by the wrongdoer smooth the process of forgiveness, they do not necessarily constitute a condition of forgiveness, emphasized by the expression: From dowry he forgives more, From request he leaves more. Even if some acts seem unforgivable, the promise of the Bible is that we can do it all (and the scope of the indefinite pronoun is as bewildering as it is encouraging) through the power of the One who suffered, without protest, the greatest injustice from the Universe. In fact, in his last hours of life, betrayed, abandoned by his own, hanging empty between heaven and earth, crushed by the burden of the sins of the world and mocked by all the people, Jesus prayed for his enemies. The evangelist Matthew reports that, in the chorus of mockers that accompanied the last moments of his life, in which passers-by, priests and robbers crucified with him had joined, a challenge returned, like a chorus: "If you are the Son of God, come down Get off the cross!". Nothing was easier for Him, but if He had released His feet and hands from the cross, the gate of forgiveness, and then the gate to life, He would have slammed down before us. So perhaps the best reason to forgive, of all, is for His sake.

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