

Revista Românească pentru Educație Multidimensională

2016, Volume 8, Issue 1, June, pp. 7-10

Infidelity – the Imorality of the Other

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Doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.18662/rrem/2016.0801.01>

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Infidelity – the Imorality of the Other

Iulian APOSTU¹

Abstract

Although having different conceptual meanings, the sociologists see the contemporary individualism as being a consequence of the crisis of social connections. The level of fusion between the partners decreases and the solidarity also asks for its right to re-conceptualization because the fusion between the partners is more and more influenced by the individual values and advantages, rather than those of the conjugal group. In this context, even the claim of fidelity requires to be re-analysed. The ethics of fidelity seems to be more about the claim of the other's minimum morality, while the personal escapades appear as simple, inherent experiences. The study aims to analyse the motivations for infidelity, identifying, at the same time, the other's personal opinions on infidelity. Therefore, we start from the premise that modernity today is more concentrated on the individual, and this orientation creates a model of society based on the triad autonomy – authenticity – individuality (Sandu, 2015, p. 59). In this regard, the social norm matters only in placing the other within the moral parameters of social ethics, while own morality doesn't wish to be subject to social control, nor private laws (Dubar, 2001).

The study is based on a sociological survey, based on a qualitative research, the research instrument being the semi-structured interview.

Keywords: *fidelity, infidelity, modernity, individualism, conjugal ethics.*

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Introduction

Nowdays, the new guidelines in love seem to be more reordered by the priority of the self, and only afterwards, by the rules of the couple. Love is no longer a generally legitimate state, but arises from what accompanies it – the amorous feeling (Roussel, 1989). Love, therefore, becomes *ingrident or tone* for the conjugal relationship, and its intensity dictates the partner's fidelity or his potential tendency towards infidelity (Banovcinova, Levicka, 2016). In this regard, Jaques Salome states that the very belief that a partner will never let himself be sensitized by the feeling of love for a person outside the conjugal relationship becomes “the most paradoxical difficulty, since it leads us to the myth of juvenile omnipotence, which determines us to believe that we have the power to master the feelings” (Salome, 2003, p. 161).

The gender approaches of this issue studied both in Europe and Canada or America shows us that between 20 and 30% of men and 15 to 20% of women have had relationships with partners outside the couple” (Dallaire, 2005, p. 13).

Therefore, studies shows the orientations of the phenomenon based on individual opinion or by reference to the other. It also shows that the social imperatives, even of low intensity, still influence the individual's behaviour who, in order to avoid social contempt and negative self-image (Frunza, 2016, p.71) tends to ethically appreciate the other more than himself.

The result of the research

The data analysis obtained during the study shows that fidelity is a consequences of certain attitudes or qualities that the partner has. For men, physical appearance is the most discussed aspect, being followed by sincerity, while for women, the uncertainty of autonomy and empathy are the most important qualities that stimulate fidelity. In other words, men justify infidelity by the lack of attraction towards the partner, while women declare their vulnerability as a consequence of the stress generated by the restriction of personal liberty.

An aspect common for both partners is that infidelity appears as a reaction to the *cause of causes* – the lack of attraction for men and the censorship of feminine autonomy lead to communication issues and their resolution is through calling to the false remedy – easing through infidelity. Also, the most common excuses for justifying own infidelity is releasing the frustration in men, and the need of love and affection in women. The phenomenon shows a tendency of *depersonalization* of the individual of its old

landmarks of the social imperatives (Terec-Vlad, Terec-Vlad, 2014) in favour of the confort generated by the feelings of own individuality.

Another important aspect revealed by the study is the reporting to infidelity itself. However, the existence of own infidelity doesn't cause remorse, nor feelings of guilt because own infidelity isn't associated to the insecurity of the couple. The other's infidelity is criticized vehemently, being a violation of an intimate area, an *intimate property*, and the explanatory model of this attitude shouldn't be searched in the landmarks of solidarity, but also in individualism.

Conclusions

The data obtained from the research shows that individual fidelity and conjugal fidelity are not similar concepts, but, sometimes, even opposing. The fidelity of the individual is regarded as sets of individual needs which give the tome, increase and maintain the personal confort while conjugal fidelity becomes a responsibility, an imperative for the other.

Fidelity is not a form of self-evaluation for the other. Self infidelity becomes the excuse for conjugal disfunctionality while the infidelity of the other becomes a motivation for separation.

The paradigm that arises from this context of value dissonance derives from the fact that the society builds individualities more than solidarities. Both partners manifest as individualists but pretend the other's solidarity.

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