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**AN OVERVIEW OF PHILOSOPHICAL COUNSELING IN ROMANIA**

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**Abstract:** This paper explores the books, articles and developments of philosophical counseling in the Romanian cultural space. To accomplish this, we first discussed some of the highlights of philosophical counseling and noted that it differs from other types of counseling. We also identified the main Romanian translations in this field in order to see how philosophical counseling was received in Romania. Next, we analyzed the contributions of Romanian authors to provide an overview, differentiating between books and articles, and we identified several topics of interest to them (fundamental philosophical counseling, ethical counseling, philosophical organizational and business counseling, etc.). In the last section of this paper we discussed the steps taken to institutionalize the profession of philosophical counselor in Romania. This paper is valuable because it describes the current state of knowledge in this field of philosophy in the Romanian cultural space. This overview leads to the facilitation of further developments, both in theoretical research in this field and in practice in the office of the philosophical counselor.

**Key words:** philosophical counseling, philosophical counseling in Romania, applied philosophy, philosophical practice.

## 1. Introduction

Philosophical counseling has become, in recent decades, one of the current concerns and interests both for philosophers with studies – in order to become a philosophical counselor is sufficient a level of undergraduate studies – and for potential clients. It is, therefore, an already well-defined field, with specialists and practitioners belonging to different areas of philosophy, who through their life experiences and with the help of the philosophical framework try to help potential lovers of wisdom to overcome their existential problems. Thus, nowadays, philosophical counseling offers an alternative to other types of counseling and is also delimited by them. Even if in terms of purpose – a reflected and fulfilled life – philosophical counseling is similar to spiritual (or pastoral) counseling, there are some differences that place these two in a relationship of complementarity. We can make a distinction between the methods used in these two types of counseling, and, certainly, we can make another distinction between the relationship established between the philosophical counselor and the client and the relationship pastoral counselor or pastor (or priest) – the parishioner. Also, as we will mention in the next section, philosophical counseling differs from psychological counseling in that it addresses rather the practical or everyday problems of the clients, and it doesn't explore the problems related to the psychological dimension of life.

In this paper, we propose an overview of the reception and development of philosophical counseling in the Romanian space. We start from the hypothesis that although, as we will show in this article, there are already master's degree programs in philosophical counseling or undergraduate courses at some faculties of philosophy in Romania, philosophical counseling is only at the beginning of practical reception, being mainly received at a theoretical level. Therefore, based on the stated hypothesis we can formulate the thesis of this paper and, more precisely, that in the Romanian philosophical space there are many thinkers who see in the promises of philosophical counseling a way for the return of philosophy in the agora.

Therefore, in order to support the present thesis with arguments, we propose in this paper the following: 1) to list the Romanian translations of the books written on the topic of philosophical counseling; 2) to identify the works (books) written in Romanian about philosophical counseling; 3) to list the writings (articles) of Romanian philosophers about philosophical counseling and its subdomains – for this we consulted the SCOPUS and Web of Science databases; 4) to analyze the institutional perspective, in order to mention the offer of training and improvement for practitioners.

The present paper is a philosophical work as it discusses philosophical counseling, and therefore the method used to demonstrate the proposed thesis is entirely a philosophical method. We will try to show in a descriptive, hermeneutic and critical way the ones proposed in this article.

## **2. Highlights in philosophical counseling**

Philosophical counseling is an eminently philosophical practice. Therefore, it can be attractive to anyone who wants to discover and clarify their own philosophy of life, with the aim of gaining optimal control over everyday worries and problems, “metaphysical pain” and, most often, meaning of life. Rather, philosophical counseling is for people who need dialogue, not diagnosis (Marinoff 2009, 39). Walsh (2005, 497) writes that philosophy is primarily a way of life; wisdom has no other origin than the Greek beginnings of philosophy. Thus, being first of all a way of life corresponding to an ethical or moral responsibility, a praxis of love and care for the interaction with others, philosophy leads the one who practices it to his / her inner harmony. This is important in understanding philosophical counseling and, at the same time, it leads to a better delimitation from the other forms of counseling.

Walsh (2005, 499) also discusses a tacit dimension of everyday experience, which would take precedence over a reflected or theoretical dimension of life. What he understands as the practice of philosophical counseling concerns precisely that dimension of life, which those who aren't involved in the philosophy field cannot observe and, moreover, cannot pass through the filter of reflection. Therefore, philosophical counseling first deals with the problems of the practical dimension of life, while the reflective application of theoretical speculations to specific problems is secondary.

Philosophy has rather become a field of academic research in recent centuries, lacking the practical character presented above. We can say that each person has his own “philosophy of life” and, in this sense, philosophy is, as Walsh (2005) points out, a way of life. We live by certain guiding principles, by certain prejudices, most often taken from others. The role of the philosophical counselor is to observe these own philosophies of the clients, to discuss them and to guide the latter to possible philosophical developments. Also, the wisdom gathered over the centuries is accessible to everyone, and the philosophical counselor is best able to engage the client in fascinating, enlightening and useful discussions in changing his lifestyle. Moreover, the philosophical counselor has no patients, he has clients, he doesn't make diagnoses, he only discusses the client's problems from a philosophical perspective. Therefore, the mission of philosophical counseling is to put the client in his / her own way of living the life in a virtuous way.

When referring to philosophical counseling, as Vasile Hațegan (Hațegan 2018a, 531) observes, Achenbach writes that this doesn't deal with philosophical systems, it doesn't construct any philosophy, it doesn't not administer philosophical opinions, it only sets in motion a way of thinking, that is, philosophy. Achenbach's reformulations represent the point zero of philosophical counseling, he was the first philosopher in Europe to open a philosophical practice cabinet in 1981 at Bergisch Gladbach. Moreover, they made Achenbach's admirers, the philosophers who later dealt with such activities, to develop their own ways of approaching clients' problems. By the emergence of this field, a philosopher can become a practitioner, giving up academic debates or, if he / she does not give up academic research, as Marinoff points out, at least the philosopher allocates time to practice, advising clients in the office (Hațegan 2018b, 168). It should be that although Achenbach is considered the founder of philosophical counseling, one of the best-known practitioners is Lou Marinoff, a specialist in the philosophy of science, who, after working in the field of applied ethics, understood the public's need for philosophical counseling (Iftode 2010, 23).

It is clear, then, that philosophy is out of the ivory tower, out of the academic sphere, and brought back into everyday life, with philosophers using their skills acquired through years of reading and meditation to help others to solve concrete life problems (Iftode 2010, 24). Of course, this shift in perspective on what philosophy means requires a substantial change in strategy in the academic field. As long as the counseling relationship is seen as the intersection between academic philosophy and the client's day-to-day problems, it is clear that the former faces problems posed in colloquial language.

We note, therefore, that the relationship between academic philosophy and philosophy applied to everyday problems requires increased interest. For example, Donald Robertson (1998, 7), following in the footsteps of Ran Lahav, argues that, in the last resort, philosophical counseling is the effort of bringing the academic philosophy closer to daily life by proving that philosophical ideas are not lacking connections with life. Marinoff (2019, 19) writes that philosophy teachers must take responsibility for the fact that philosophy has remained in the "academic tower" for so long. Moreover, for Marinoff (2019, 19), philosophy represents the foundation of the whole rational inquiry, whether it is scientific, theological, ethical, axiological, or aesthetic; in addition, it is the source of speculation. People have strong beliefs about themselves, about others and the world, and whether or not these are well-founded is a philosophical question that a practitioner should offer a solution to. Likewise, people make daily inferences about themselves, others, and the world, and whether these are valid or invalid is also a matter for philosophical counseling.

According to Peter Bruno Raabe (2002, 14), philosophical counseling is not the same as academic philosophy, because the same relationship cannot be established between the philosophical counselor and his client as between the teacher and the student. In the act of counseling, writes Raabe, philosophy is not “stripped” of the personal context, as it is during meetings between teachers and students. The act of philosophical counseling is dominated by the presence of abstract and universal considerations in accordance with the personal and certain problems of the client. According to Raabe (2002, 14), the purpose of philosophical counseling is to aim to understand the client and his philosophy of life, and then the counselor can help him to have a better understanding of himself. Therefore, the act of counseling always starts from the client's philosophy and not from the counselor's own ideas or academic knowledge, for a very simple reason: most of the time, the client is not philosophically trained and does not have the ability to understand the language of academic philosophy. As such, concludes Raabe (2002, 15), the philosophical counselor, in order to fully carry out his tasks, he seems to be fighting on three fronts. First, he struggles to distinguish philosophical counseling from any kind of psychotherapy, which subjects clients to a rigid diagnosis and, implicitly, to a recovery program; then, he has to deal with academic philosophers who do not consider philosophical counseling an important field, and finally, against those who apply philosophy, but without the necessary training.

Lahav (2001) also rejects the hypothesis that philosophical counseling is something like psychotherapy. Moreover, he points out that while psychotherapies focus on what is happening to the patient, trying to understand and change the mental conditions responsible for his issues, philosophical counseling is the pursuit of wisdom that goes beyond the individual, which leads him outside of himself, making him see things differently than before (Iftode 2010, 28). For Lahav (2001, 13), the act of counseling does not mean practicing psychotherapy. The philosophical counselor and the client do nothing but philosophize.

It follows, therefore, that the philosophical counselor does not deal with the analysis of psychological facts or processes, such as guilt or the desire for freedom, but, together with his client, he deals with probing the concept of guilt or the idea of freedom. Likewise, others may have problems at work that they cannot overcome. In this case, the counselor is asked to establish the circumstances that lead the client to have a low yield and together with him to outline possible solutions. As such, the act of philosophizing is used to help the person feel better (Lahav 2001, 13). According to Lahav (2001, 13), the basic idea of philosophical counseling is: philosophy can be used to reach the self-understanding of the client, because each individual lives according to his own philosophy. A person's emotions, beliefs, hopes, feelings, fantasies, and way of living correspond to a philosophy of life, usually implicit, that involves assumptions or

opinions about the nature of life and the world. In other words, the way a person treats life can be seen as answers to fundamental philosophical questions about life, the nature of love, the meaning of life, or the value of work, for example. However, although people embody personal philosophies through their daily attitudes, they are often unaware of the nature of these attitudes, their assumptions, their structure, or their logic (Lahav 2001, 13-14). For Lahav, the purpose of philosophical counseling, and thus the task of the philosophical counselor, is to help clients to expose and clarify the network of concepts and ideas that underlie relevant aspects of their lives, to discover and examine the assumptions hidden in their way, to explore the conceptual interconnections or, in other words, to investigate the philosophy of the way of life of the client. Therefore, the life of the individual in contemporary Western culture is largely devoid of what may be called wisdom, and philosophical counseling comes to cover precisely this lack (Lahav 2001, 14).

### **3. Reception of philosophical counseling in Romania**

In this section we will discuss philosophical counseling in Romania. We start from the observation that in the Romanian philosophical space, philosophical counseling is still in its infancy and there is interest in it, especially at the theoretical level. However, we cannot ignore the fact that the level of philosophical practices is already present in the Romanian space, there are even philosophical counseling offices and therefore counselors who manifest their skills in this regard. Among the most well-known philosophical counselors in Romania, we mention Laurențiu Staicu (who has a philosophical counseling office at Bellanima Medical Center) and also Sandu Frunză, who combines both theoretical studies and practical counseling skills. Also, Aurel Codoban, Florin Lobonț, Antonio Sandu, Cristina Miculete, Ioan Lesuțan or Petruț Dinu are a few other philosophical counselors. It should be noted that, as we will mention in the third section of this study, there are institutional approaches to offer those who want to become philosophical counselors or practitioners. Thus, as we will show in the following, in this cultural space there are some translations of the classic writings in the field of philosophical counseling. There are also some translations found at the intersection of philosophical counseling and psychotherapy. At the same time, we will focus on Romanian contributions in the field of philosophical counseling, researching, and the writings of Romanian authors, whether they are some collective volumes or scientific articles. Moreover, we will try to outline a portrait of philosophical counseling at the institutional level in Romania.

### 3.1. Translations

For a start, to illustrate the reception of philosophical counseling in Romania, we propose a short discussion about the main books translated into Romanian in this field. It should be noted that although there are several prolific authors in the field of philosophical counseling worldwide, only a few of Lou Marinoff's books have been translated into Romanian. These can be classified as follows: a) books on philosophy as a way of life that can be useful to philosophical counselors: *Filozofia ca mod de viață* (La philosophie comme manière de vivre) (Hadot 2019); *Ce este filosofia antică?* ("Qu'est-ce que la philosophie antique?") (Hadot 2020); *Exerciții spirituale și filosofie antică* ("Exercices spirituels et philosophie antique") (Hadot 2015); b) books for the wide audience, i.e. books accessible to the average reader, the uninitiated, who may not have the exercise of philosophical readings; these are: *Înghite Platon, nu Prozac! Aplicarea înțelepciunii eterne la problemele de zi cu zi* ("Plato, Not Prozac! Applying Eternal Wisdom to Everyday Problems") (Marinoff 2009); *Întrebări fundamentale: Filosofia îți poate schimba viața* ("The Big Questions: How Philosophy Can Change Your Life") (Marinoff 2013); *Puterea lui Tao. Cum să-ți găsești liniștea în vremuri tulburi* ("The Power of Tao: A Timeless Guide to Happiness and Harmony") (Marinoff 2015); *Filosofie pentru viață și alte situații periculoase* ("Philosophy for Life and Other Dangerous Situations") (Evans 2013); *Consolările filosofiei* ("The Consolations of Philosophy") (De Botton 2018); c) a book dedicated to the specialist in practical philosophy: *Ghidul filosofului practicant: Teorie, metode aplicații* (Marinoff 2016), re-edited and published under the title *Practica filosofică* ("Philosophical Practice") (Marinoff 2019).

In close proximity to philosophical counseling, two of the translations of Irvin Yalom's works can be included, which approach philosophical counseling from an interdisciplinary perspective. Starting from some phenomenological principles, he develops *Psihoterapia existențială* ("Existential Psychotherapy") (Yalom 2010) and ends up discussing the meaning of life, death, freedom or loneliness; dimensions of life that are also discussed in *Călăul dragostei și alte povești despre psihoterapie* ("Love's Executioner and Other Tales of Psychotherapy") (Yalom 2008). Of course, it should be noted that Yalom is a psychiatrist and psychotherapist, but in the above works he offers interpretations and customs of philosophy that can be useful in the practice of counseling.

As we can observe, there are few works of philosophical counseling that have been translated into Romanian. Of course, this scientific deficit reflects the need of being aware of the importance of philosophical counseling in the Romanian cultural space. In fact, this deficit is compensated by the efforts of some Romanian philosophers through their writings in the area of philosophical counseling. Therefore, we will continue to present the main Romanian contributions in this field, first

listing the published books, and then focusing on the latest publications in the form of scientific articles.

### 3.2. Romanian contributions in philosophical counseling

#### 3.2.1. Books

In the Romanian cultural horizon, a book that contains an entire chapter dedicated to philosophical counseling is that of Cristian Iftode (2010), *Filosofia ca mod de viață: sursele autenticității*. Inspired by the French philosopher Pierre Hadot, Iftode manages to highlight the fact that philosophy can be seen as a way of life and that, moreover, it can be a source of self-authenticity. This book is a significant event of the Romanian culture, because as we will continue to show, in the decade that followed it, more and more Romanian thinkers wrote or only reflected on the benefits of philosophical counseling, i.e. how philosophy can become a source of authenticity for everyone, especially for those who do not study philosophy at the academic level. Of course, for a coherent and specific illustration, we will present further the works published in the last years, classifying them according to the interests of the authors. So, going back to the author mentioned, we also notice that in a recently published book his interests are directed towards the ethical dimension of life; more precisely, *Viața bună: O introducere în etică* (Iftode 2021) is a meditation and, at the same time, a critical presentation of the various ethical perspectives on the good life.

Another philosopher for whom philosophical counseling has become, above all, a way to assess the authenticity of the human being is Sandu Frunză. His first book on philosophical counseling, *Ești o ființă autentică: despre tine, filosofie, comunicare, dezvoltare personală și leadership* (Frunză 2018a), is a plea for access to an authentic life. Also, emphasizing the relationship between communication and philosophical counseling; more specifically, starting from the way in which new technologies can optimize the conduct of philosophical counseling sessions, the author addresses these issues in two recent papers: *Comunicare și consiliere filosofică* (Frunză 2019a), also translated into English as *Philosophical counseling and communication* (Frunză 2021a), where the author promotes the idea that: “it is ever clearer that if reality is built on communication, our life is based on this balance: *we need as much philosophy as technology*” (Frunză 2021a, 13) and he develops a reflection on the necessity of philosophy and communication in the age of technology; and *Filosofie și comunicare cotidiană: Cărțile ar putea să îți schimbe viața* (Frunză 2020), volume in which the author discusses in the first part about philosophical counseling and existential communication, and we can also find relevant references about philosophical counseling books published in Romanian. Thought as reading notes, they present the author's journey in the field of

philosophical counseling. Moreover, inspired by the pandemic context, the Romanian philosopher invites some colleagues from the academic field to a dialogue on this topic, i.e. to discussions about the role of philosophy and philosophical counseling in crisis situations, published in *Filosofie și pandemie: Dialoguri despre consiliere filosofică și practici filosofice* (Frunză 2021).

From another perspective, Antonio Sandu and his collaborators, in the volume *Consilierea filosofică apreciativă* (Sandu 2019) develop how this type of counseling can be used in organizations and social services, including theoretical, methodological and practical elements that can be applied in this approach. This approach is guided by the principle according to which the stories of the subjects are analyzed and from these, further, are extracted those affirmative elements, which can be the foundation of the philosophical counseling process. At the same time, Antonio Sandu is a prolific author in the field of the applied ethics, therefore of philosophical counseling, writing the following: *Appreciative ethics: a constructionist version of ethics* (Sandu 2012), *Etica și practica socială* (Sandu 2015) or *O etică centrată pe valori în sfera publică* (Sandu 2017).

Also, Vasile Haġegan is one of the most active Romanian authors in the field of philosophical counseling. We can affirm this given the fact that Haġegan's books, either as the main author or as the coordinator of some collective works, cover the vast field of philosophical counseling. One of the reference works in the Romanian cultural space is *Consilierea filosofică: De la practică la profesie* (Haġegan 2018c), which presents in detail both the specifics of philosophical counseling and the particularities of the profession of philosophical counselor. Then another important work is *Meditația filosofică: instrument în consilierea filosofică* (Haġegan 2019a), which presents a useful method in the counseling process: philosophical meditation.

Of course, there is also a special interest on the part of this author, as in the case of Sandu Frunză, for the relationship between communication and philosophical counseling, as we learn from *Forme ale comunicării în practica filosofică* (Haġegan 2020a). On the other hand, from the position of coordinator, Haġegan's books cover the subdomains of philosophical counseling. Whether it's written about the connection between counseling and ethics, *Consilierea filosofică și etică: Reflecții și practici în România* (Haġegan 2019b), or philosophical counseling at the organizational level, *Consilierea filosofică în organizații* (Haġegan 2020b), or about the need for philosophy in times of crisis, *Practica filosofică în perioade de criză* (Haġegan 2020c), the mentioned author manages to bring together the reflections of some professional philosophers; these can be useful for the daily life of people who are less familiar with philosophy.

Certainly, as already mentioned, the best known and one of the most original Romanian philosophical counselors is Laurențiu Staicu. In his

books, *Trei istorii metafizice pentru insomniaci* (Staicu 2017) and *Socrate în blugi sau Filosofia pentru adolescenți* (Staicu 2020), in a language accessible to any reader, he tries to explain the benefits of philosophy in everyday life, discussing about the major themes, such as reality, truth, freedom, goodness, love or trying to answer questions such as “who am I?” or “what is really real?”.

Therefore, it can be noted from the above the interest of Romanian thinkers for a wide range of topics related to philosophical counseling, and this can be explained immediately by their different orientations and specializations in various fields of philosophy. Given this multiplicity of points of view, philosophical counseling is rather outlined as an interdisciplinary field within philosophy. It remains to analyze the content of scientific articles to strengthen this affirmation.

### 3.2.2. Articles

In order to identify the articles published by Romanian authors about philosophical counseling, we searched the SCOPUS and Web of Science databases. Thus, we selected the most important scientific articles written by Romanian authors about philosophical counseling and related subdomains. For a defined presentation of the ideas presented in these articles, we will present them according to their subject. Therefore, in this section we distinguish the following categories: fundamental philosophical counseling, philosophical counseling and ethics or ethical counseling, organizational and business philosophical counseling, spiritual - philosophical counseling, as well as a category dedicated to interdisciplinarity. As such, we will look up to show, once again, the validity of the previous affirmation: namely that even at this level of research, Romanian authors focus on several dimensions of philosophical counseling.

**Fundamental philosophical counseling.** The attention of the Romanian thinkers for the fundamental philosophical counseling is distinguished by pinpointing the conditions for its development, as well as the rethinking of some ideas formulated by the pioneers of this field. From the hermeneutic point of view, we can always re-evaluate and reinterpret the texts and, therefore, the attention of the Romanian philosophers is often focused on the reinterpretation of some classic works (Mesaroş 2019; Frunză 2019c; Frunză 2018b), on the writings of some Romanian philosophers, who through interpretation can contribute to the development of philosophical counseling (Frunză 2018c). They also focus on rethinking the foundations of philosophical counseling (Haţegan 2018d; Haţegan 2018e), as well as the discussion of some classical issues of philosophy from the perspective of philosophical counseling (Staicu 2019; Medveschi 2021).

**Ethical counseling.** Reflections in the area of ethical counseling revolve around a number of topics of interest and topicality. Some philosophers discuss the relevance of classical ethical texts, stating that a good life is still possible if we use these as a starting point (Cozma 2021; Frunză et al. 2019). Other philosophers address the ethical issues that arise with the development of digital technologies (Frunză and Grad 2020; Frunză 2021b). On the other hand, the existence of moral dilemmas in everyday life raises the concerns of some researchers for possible solutions and ways of application, depending on the specifics of the problem (Popescu 2015). There is also brought into discussion the fact that in the practice of the philosophical counselor there is an issue of using informed consent as an expression of freedom (Staicu and Buda 2019).

**Organizational and business philosophical counseling.** Romanian philosophers have also focused on how philosophical counseling can intervene at the organizational level (Frunză and Grad 2020; Frunză et al. 2019). At the same time, as some authors point out, when we discuss business, philosophical counseling can intervene at the individual or group level (Hațegan 2020d).

**Spiritual - philosophical counseling.** In a postmodern society, Frunză (2018d) notes a return to the spiritual needs of man of yesteryear. Nowadays, it is an almost obvious fact that there are people who talk more and more about a lack of meaning of life, and some of them find their consolation through a spiritual reevaluation. Therefore, spiritual - philosophical counseling appears as a bridge between a life devoid of the pleasure in living and a truly authentic life. Thus, Romanian philosophers have researched the relationship between religion, spirituality and philosophical counseling (Hațegan 2021; Frunză, Frunză, Grad 2019) in order to clarify the relationship between them and their benefits in human life.

**Interdisciplinary openings of philosophical counseling.** By this type of counseling, we refer, for example, to the way in which philosophical ideas can be capitalized at the level of various daily activities or research. Philosophical counseling intersects to some extent with some ideas and principles used in psychotherapy (Popescu 2015) or it may also occur in areas such as medicine (Gruia 2019; Staicu and Buda 2019; Frunză, Frunză, Grad 2019). Also in this sphere of the intersection of ideas with other fields, there is the ambition of philosophers to clarify the distinction between philosophical counseling and psychological counseling (Frunză 2019c). Finally, some researchers discuss the opportunity offered by new technologies and, therefore, the development of communication methods and their use in the act of philosophical counseling, as noted by Frunză (2021).

Therefore, we note that in the academic area, philosophical counseling is characterized by the interdisciplinarity of the problems undertaken to solve. However, what decisions have been taken in the

Romanian cultural and intellectual environment to coordinate the training of specialists in this field? In other words, are there training courses in philosophical counseling? We answer these questions in the next section.

### **3.3. From theory to practice: towards the institutionalization of the profession of the philosophical counselor**

In Romania, philosophical counseling appeared on the occasion of the publication of a book as we mentioned above, after almost three decades after the first activities in this regard. It must be mentioned that nowadays there are more and more approaches for this activity to become an opportunity for those who study philosophy.

Thus, we note the fact that a few years ago a philosophical counseling course appeared at one of the most prestigious university centers in Romania, Babeş-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca. Also, there is currently an optional course at the “Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University of Iaşi, within the Philosophy specialization, Faculty of Philosophy and Social-Political Sciences. A philosophical counseling course also exists at the Faculty of History and Geography, Department of Human, Social and Political Sciences, within the “Ştefan cel Mare” University of Suceava. But perhaps the most important step in training in philosophical counseling is the master's degree program, in English, at the Faculty of Political Science, Philosophy and Communication Sciences, West University of Timișoara.

Also regarding the training courses, we point out the course of professor Sandu Frunză, *Practician în consultanță și consiliere filosofică* (Practician in philosophical consultancy and counseling), on the Udeemy platform. However, the idea that a bachelor's degree in philosophy is sufficient to provide the future philosophical advisor with the necessary training is popular. In addition, there are the *Association of Practitioners in Counseling, Philosophy and Ethics* and the *Center for Philosophical Practices, Philosophical Consulting and Counseling* where those who really want to pursue a career can take courses or become members.

At the end of this section, we add that in Romania there are several philosophy journals where articles on philosophical counseling and practice are published, as well as on ethical counseling. We therefore mention the following publications: *Agathos: An International Review of the Humanities and Social Sciences*; *Hermeneia: Journal of Hermeneutics, Art Theory and Criticism*; *JSRI: Journal for the Study of Religions and Ideologies*; *Meta: Research in Hermeneutics, Phenomenology, and Practical Philosophy*; *Postmodern Openings*; *Revista de Filosofie Aplicată*.

#### 4. Conclusions, implications and recommendations

Summarizing the above, we find that the reception of philosophical counseling in Romania is based more on its academic side. There are books and scientific articles, written in Romanian or English that cover specific dimensions of philosophical counseling, thus making an important contribution to the development of this field. There are also some centers or associations for conducting the act of counseling or for the training of future counselors, as well as some specialized university programs. However, with regard to the dissemination of such information, i.e. the status of philosophical counselors, its benefits and the benefits of philosophy in general suffer when it comes to the public. Therefore, our recommendation, at the end of this paper, is to try to promote philosophical counseling, and for that, those who are able to practice philosophy should perhaps discuss more about the importance of solving existential problems, as well as discuss the differences between philosophical counseling and other types of counseling. We consider that through this approach, we have captured the current stage of philosophical counseling in the Romanian space, and any expert interested in this field can consult the results obtained.

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