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FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
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Education Across Borders

Education in the 21st Century: Challenges and Perspectives

Aikaterini Dimitriadou
Eleni Griva
Angeliki Lithoxoidou
Alexandros Amprazis
(Editors)

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Education Across Borders

Education in the 21st Century: Challenges and Perspectives
Florina, 19-20 October 2018

Aikaterini Dimitriadou
Eleni Griva
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The authors were asked to produce updated versions of their papers and take into account the discussion that took place after the presentation and the suggestions received from other participants at the Conference. On the whole, the e-Proceedings present a comprehensive overview of ongoing studies in Education Research in Europe and beyond.

The editors carried out a review of the updated versions of the papers that were submitted after the Conference. The editors do not necessarily endorse or share the ideas and views presented in or implied by the papers included in this book.

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Acknowledgements

It is our pleasure to present this volume consisting of selected papers based on oral and poster presentations from the 4th International Conference *Education Across Borders*, held on 19th -20th October 2018, at the University of Western Macedonia, Florina, Greece.

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We would like to extend our gratitude to the international and national scientific committee for their valuable contribution to organizing the 4th International Conference Education Across Borders. The members of the Scientific Committees have offered their scientific expertise and provided support on the process of reviewing papers.

We would also like to give special thanks to conference presenters and participants/audience members, as well as we wish to thank our undergraduate and postgraduate students who greatly contributed to the organization and success of the Conference.

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Contents

OPENING CEREMONY SPEECH, *Aikaterini Dimitriadou* 1

KEYNOTE SPEECH, The Homeopathic Principle of the Telephus Myth, and its Implementation in the Balkan Educational Mechanisms from Mid C19 to C21, *Nikos P. Terzis* 3

REFLECTION ON THE 4th INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE, *Aikaterini Dimitriadou*.....8

GENDER REPRESENTATIONS AND LANGUAGE EDUCATION: THE CASE OF THE PRIMARY SCHOOL TEXTBOOK FOR THE TEACHING OF GREEK LANGUAGE IN THE FIRST GRADE, *Christos Alexopoulos, Anastasia Stamou*.....10

ATTITUDES TOWARDS PLANTS: EVALUATING THE INTENSITY OF THE "PLANT BLINDNESS" PHENOMENON IN GREEK PRIMARY SCHOOLS, *Alexandros Amprazis, Penelope Papadopoulou* 21

RESEARCH AND PLANNING: A FRAMEWORK FOR PRE-SERVICE PRIMARY EDUCATION TEACHERS IN EDUCATIONAL ROBOTICS, *Simos Anagnostakis* 27

EARLY FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING: ITS CONTRIBUTION TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF STUDENTS' COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT, *Alexandra Anastasiadou, Konstantina Iliopoulou*...38

HISTORICAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION THROUGH VIDEO GAMES: A TEACHING PROPOSAL FOR THE NUCLEAR DESTRUCTION OF HIROSHIMA AND NAGASAKI IN PRIMARY EDUCATION*, Asimina Andrikou, Dimitrios Geros, Efthalia Gerou* 51

TRANSLANGUAGING IN ATHENS: DEMOCRACY BEYOND AND INTO THE MULTILINGUAL CLASSROOM, *Athanasia Angeli* 62

TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN THE REGION OF PRESPES DURING THE PERIOD 2010 – 2017, *Konstantinos Arapidis, Ifigeneia Vamvakidou* 75

THE BANDS AND THE TRADITIONAL MUSICIANS OF FLORINA 1912-2018, *Evaggelia Aristeidou* 88

ASSESSING FIVE DIMENSIONS OF PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITIES: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY IN GREEK EDUCATIONAL CONTEXT, *Aikaterini Balasi, George Iordanidis* 98

ASSESSMENT METHODS AND PURPOSES IN THE EFL CLASSROOM: TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS, ATTITUDES, AND CHALLENGES, *Dora Chostelidou* 109

TRUST IN HUMAN-ROBOT INTERACTION: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW*, Panagiota Christodoulou, Dimitris Pnevmatikos, Nikolaos Fachantidis* 121

COMMUNICATIVE AND CULTURAL COMPETENCE IN LEARNING FRENCH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE FOR THE ALBANIAN NATIVES, *Cicko Pavllo, Mihallaq Zilexhiu*.....131

LINGUISTIC TRANSFER IN EFL; ALBANIAN LEARNERS AND TRANSLATION ISSUES VIEWED IN CORPUS-BASED DISCOURSE*, Juliana Çyfeku*.....140

THE INFLUENCE AND CONTRIBUTION OF THE LITERARY WORKS ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE HUMANISTIC, INTERCULTURAL AND NATIONAL VALUES IN EDUCATION, *Sunčica Denić, Sena Mihailović Milošević*..... 150

A CRITICAL ACTIVITY IN A NON-FORMAL EDUCATIONAL SETTING: THE CASE OF A REFUGEE CAMP, *Georgia Fountoulaki, Argyro-Maria Skourmalla*.....160

LEARNING-RELATED RESULTS OF THE ERASMUS+ INTERNATIONAL CREDIT MOBILITY: THE EXPERIENCE OF ARISTOTLE UNIVERSITY OF THESSALONIKI, *Sophia Fourlari*.....172

IDENTIFYING INTERCULTURAL ELEMENTS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEXTBOOKS OF THE 5TH AND 6TH GRADE OF PRIMARY SCHOOL IN GREECE, *Chionia Frantzezou*.....186

OUTDOOR EDUCATION AS AN ENTRY FIELD OF INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION IN THE FRAMEWORK OF SCHOOL EVOLUTION TOWARDS SUSTAINABILITY, *Ioannis Garitsis, Vasilios Sotiroudas* 200

BELIEFS ABOUT THE EXISTENCE OF EMOTIONS IN THE AFTERLIFE: *A DEVELOPMENTAL STUDY, Triantafyllia Georgiadou, Dimitris Pnevmatikos*.....212

A SURVEY OF POMAKS' (PARENTS') VIEWS ON THE TEACHING OF THE GREEK LANGUAGE AT PRIMARY SCHOOL (MINORITY PRIMARY SCHOOLS)*, Nikolas Georgitsis*.....225

THE INTERCULTURAL PORTFOLIO AS A TOOL FOR DEVELOPING/ASSESSING LEARNERS' MULTILINGUAL AND MULTI/INTERCULTURAL SKILLS AND STRATEGIES, *Eleni Griva, Ifigenia Kofou* 233

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT IN EDUCATION, *Valentina Gulevska*.....247

ALBANIAN PUBLIC OPINION ON EUROPEAN UNION: A PILOT RESEARCH STUDY IN THE REGION OF KORÇA, *Jorgji Jordan, Dalina Jashari* 253

INTRODUCING AN INQUIRING WAY OF THINKING IN PRIMARY SCHOOL: THE CASE OF THE INNOVATION GROUP "YOUNG SCIENTISTS IN ACTION"*, Anastasia Kappatou* 261

THE SPONTANEOUS FOCUSING ON QUANTITATIVE RELATIONS (SFOR) ON PRESCHOOL STUDENTS*, Maria Karagiorgou, Konstantinos P. Christou* 269

ACADEMIC TEACHING PRACTICES IN MATHEMATICAL COURSES: THE CASE OF ARISTOTLE UNIVERSITY OF THESSALONIKI, *Chrysoula Karampatzaki, Florentia Antoniou* 280

FROM MULTI-GENRES COMPUTER GAMES TO MULTI SKILLS LANGUAGE TEACHING AND LEARNING: A THEORETICAL PROPOSAL, *Athanasios Karasimos, Vasilios Zorbas* 292

GOVERNMENT TRANSLATION AND INTERPRETATION IN CYPRUS: THE INTERPRETER'S PERSPECTIVE, *Dimitra Karoulla-Vrikki* 304

COMBINING BIOLOGY EDUCATION & EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABILITY IN PRESCHOOL: INSIGHTS FROM THE 3RD CYCLE OF A DESIGN RESEARCH STUDY, *Maria-Christina Kasimati, Marida Ergazaki*.....313

AN INTERDISCIPLINARY COLLABORATION ON AN EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM AT THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM OF FLORINA, *Kostas Kasvikis, Zoi Godosi, Liana Gkelou, Elena Efeoglou* 323

PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS ABOUT REFUGEE CHILDREN INCLUSION IN GREEK SCHOOLS, *Evmorfia Kipouropoulou* 335

STUDENTS TEACHERS' CONCEPTS OF PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY: INVESTIGATING THEIR TEACHING PRACTICE PORTFOLIOS, *Emvorfia Kipouropoulou, Vassiliki Papadopoulou* 346

THE GREEK SCHOOL OF ZEMUN, *Georgios Klokidis* 355

THE PERIOD 1912 - 1922 IN TURKISH AND GREEK SCHOOL HISTORY TEXTBOOKS*, Andreas Kotsakis, Nikolaos Liazos*.....365

SCHOOL RECESS AS SCHOOL LEISURE TIME AND SCHOOL UTILIZATION: PUPILS' PERCEPTIONS, *Georgios Lainakis, Ioannis Thoidis* 379

THE TEACHING OF LOGARITHMS IN UPPER SECONDARY SCHOOL USING VARIOUS DIDACTIC TOOLS, *Eleni Lappa* 387

DOING GENDER ON FACEBOOK: THE CASE OF SECONDARY SCHOOL PUPILS AND POTENTIAL APPLICATIONS IN THE CLASSROOM, *Christopher Lees* 397

MENTAL CALCULATION STRATEGIES FOR ADDITION AND SUBTRACTION WITH INTEGERS, *Ioanna Lemoni, Charalampos Lemonidis, Konstantinos P. Christou* 409

DIFFERENCE IN THE USE OF FRACTION REPRESENTATIONS BY 6TH-GRADE STUDENTS PRODUCED BY AN EXPERIMENTAL INTERVENTION, *Charalampos Lemonidis, Anthoula Gkertsaki* 423

VISUAL LITERACY PRACTICES IN TEACHING COMMUNICATION AND FEELINGS MANAGEMENT, *Angeliki Lithoxoidou* 434

FLORINA CITIZENS'VIEWS AND SUGGESTIONS REGARDING THE SUSTAINABILITY OF THEIR PLACE, *Angeliki Makatsori, Georgios Malandrakis*.....442

IMPLEMENTING INNOVATIVE TEACHING METHODS FOR GREEK AS L2 IN THE SCHOOL OF MODERN GREEK, ARISTOTLE UNIVERSITY OF THESSALONIKI, *Christina Maligkoudi, Nickie Panteliou* 449

IMPROVING EFL STUDENTS' LISTENING AND SPEAKING SKILLS THROUGH STRATEGY AND SONG USE, *Polyxeni Manoli, Chrysoula Kavga* 461

WOMEN IN SCHOOL LEADERSHIP: VISIONS AND EXPECTATIONS, *Apostolia Matziouri, Stavros Kamaroudis, Konstantinos Tsioumis* 473

"TAMING" COLLOCATIONS IN THE EFL/ESL ARENA, *Silvana Neshkovska* 482

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION IN ALBANIA: THE OUTCOMES AND NEW PERSPECTIVES IN KORÇA'S REGION, *Irena Nikaj* 492

CURRICULA: THE PERCEPTIONS OF CANDIDATE TEACHERS REGARDING THE VALUE OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (RE), *Evmorfia Nikiforidou* 499

THE ARGUMENTATIVE ARTICLE – A TEACHING SCENARIO FOR PRIMARY SCHOOL, *Ioannis Papadakis, Aggeliki Sakellariou* 508

UNDERSTANDING INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION OF TEENAGED STUDENTS: FOCUS ON PERSUASIVE STRATEGIES, *Isaak Papadopoulos* 519

PROMOTING REFLECTION: ANALYSIS OF CRITICAL INCIDENTS FROM STUDENT TEACHERS' PRACTICE, *Vassiliki Papadopoulou, Aggeliki Sakellariou, Christina Koutsou*.....535

IMPLEMENTING AN INNOVATIVE CURRICULUM FOR YOUNG REFUGEES IN A NON-FORMAL EDUCATIONAL SETTING IN GREECE*, Anastasia Papapostolou, Anna Mouti* 544

SCREEN VS. PAPER. CAN TECHNOLOGY CHANGE THE WAY STUDENTS LEARN?, *Josif Petrovski, Kristina Petrovska* 554

INCREASING ENGLISH PRONUNCIATION CONFIDENCE THROUGH IN AND OUT-OF-CLASSROOM PRACTICE ACTIVITIES, *Pojani Vasilika, Robert Stratoberdha* 562

THE CHINESE ABACUS IN THE LIGHT OF INSTRUMENTAL GENESIS, *Apostolos Popotis, Konstantinos Nikolantonakis* 575

A WALK IN THE STREETS OF FLORINA: A LOCAL HISTORY PROJECT FOR PRIMARY SCHOOL STUDENTS, *Paraskevi Pougaridou* 586

WALKING BY THE CORMORANTS*, Paraskevi Pougaridou*.....595

USE OF ICTs IN SCHOOLS CASE STUDY: "KORÇA REGION", *Prodani Rafail, Blerina Çeliku, Klea Prodani* 603

GREEK PRIMARY TEACHER'S PRACTICES FOLLOWING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM, *Angeliki Samanta, Dimitrios Psillos* 611

A SOCIAL SEMIOTIC APPROACH IN MATHEMATIC PROBLEM SOLVING OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS, *Chrysoula Samata, Konstantinos Nikolantonakis* 617

POSSIBILITIES OF DEVELOPING CITIZENSHIP AT THE GREEK LYCEUM: A RESEARCH APPROACH TO STUDENTS' VIEWS, *Evangelia Seira*.....628

WRITING AND GRAPHOMOTOR SKILLS IN ATTENTION-DEFICIT HYPERACTIVITY DISORDER, *Kyriaki Selemidou, Maria Peikou, Klio Semoglou*.....638

MULTIMODAL TEXTS AND LINGUISTIC DEVELOPMENT IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION: COMICS' IMPACT ON ORAL LANGUAGE SKILLS, *Christina Sidiropoulou, Ifigeneia Pagouni, Kostas D. Dinas*.....645

PUPILS ARE PAINTING THE CITIZENSHIP IN FLORINA, *Eleni Sotiropoulou, Kostis Tsioumis, Ifigeneia Vamvakidou* 655

A SMALL-SCALE RESEARCH ABOUT SKYPE AS A SYNCHRONOUS SOCIAL MEDIUM AND ITS USE AND WRITING PRACTICES AS AN EDUCATIONAL TOOL, *Nikolas Soutopoulos* 668

ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENT: ENHANCEMENT OF THE USE OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING STRATEGIES, *Stavre Benita, Vasilika Pojani* 687

THE STUDENTS' VIEWS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN MACEDONIA FOR THEIR TEACHING PRACTICE PROGRAM (THIRD PHASE), *Pavlos Stavridis*.....696

THE SOCIAL CONSEQUENCES OF USING SOCIAL NETWORKS SITES: SPREADING FEAR THROUGH APOCALYPTIC PROCLAMATIONS AND PROPHECIES, *STOJANOSKA Gordana, ZHOGLEV Zlatko* 707

CREATIVE THINKING IN YOUNG STUDENTS, *Vasiliki Theoharopoulou, Polyxeni Manoli, Klio Semoglou* 715

HOW CAN PROJECT-BASED LEARNING CULTIVATE STUDENTS' 21ST CENTURY SKILLS?, *Evangelia Triantafyllou* 722

STUDYING THE IMPACT OF A PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM ON SCIENCE TEACHERS' PRACTICES, *Christina Tsaliki, George Malandrakis, Penelope Papadopoulou, Petros Kariotoglou*.....730

CREATIVE WRITING AND SPEECH AS PART OF CREATIVE LEADERSHIP IN EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT, *Christos Tsantakis, Triantafillos Kotopoulos* 739

"LESSON FOLDER" OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES AT PRIMARY SCHOOL: A NEW SCHOOL TEXT BOOK – CHALLENGE FOR A GREEK SCHOOL AND ITS STUDENTS' EDUCATION, *Ioannis Tsompanopoulos, Konstantinos Asikis* 749

THE ARTICULATION BETWEEN ARITHMETIC AND ALGEBRAIC THINKING, *Vasileios Tzirtziganis* 755

A PHILOSOPHY-INSPIRED LEARNING ENVIRONMENT FOR BIOLOGICAL CLASSIFICATION: OUTLINE & INSIGHTS FROM A CASE STUDY WITH 5th GRADERS, *Eftychia Valanidou, Marida Ergazaki, Renia Gasparatou*.....766

NATIONAL "RE-PRESENTATIONS OF THE BALKAN AREA IN THE COVERS OF THE ILLUSTRATED HISTORY'' MAGAZINE (2009-2018), *Germanos Vasileiadis, Ilias Sailakis* 776

CHALLENGES IN L2 LEARNING & TEACHING IN THE COMBINED HIGH SCHOOL "TAKI DASKALO" IN BITOLA, *Vasilevska Jasmina, Elena Sotirov, Valentina Bogojovksa, Natasha Kotevska, Vesna Trajkovska, Kristijan Veljanov* 783

POSITIVE DISCRIMINATION POLICIES IN EDUCATION, THE CASE OF GREECE, *Dimitris Zachos, Maria Patsikouridi*.....795

CRAFTING A CULTURAL IDENTITY THROUGH SOCIAL LOCATION MAPS, *Vasilios Zorbas, Ioannis Karras* 805

CAN CHILDREN IN KINDERGARTEN USE THE CONTROL OF VARIABLES STRATEGY METHOD? THE CASE OF FLOATING / SINKING PHENOMENA, *Anastasios Zoupidis, Konstantinos Soultanis* 816

REFUGEE STUDENTS IN GREEK SCHOOL: MAPPING THE SITUATION IN CENTRAL AND WESTERN MACEDONIA, NEEDS AND SUGGESTIONS, ROUND TABLE, *Nikos Akritidis, Konstantinos Konstantopoulos, Konstantinos Dinas, Nektaria Palaiologou, Soula Patsiou* .824

OPENING CEREMONY SPEECH

Dear representatives of the national and international authorities,

Dear colleagues and students from the co-organising Universities of the three neighbouring countries, the UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN MACEDONIA, the «ST KLIMENT OHRIDSKI" UNIVERSITY – BITOLA & UNIVERSITY OF «FAN S. NOLI" – KORÇË,

Dear participants from Cyprus, Athens, Thessaloniki, Patra, Corfu and other Greek universities,

You are very welcome to the Faculty of Education in Florina!

We consider ourselves privileged to represent the host institution of this International Conference for a second time. Please, give me the opportunity to remind you that the idea of "Education across Borders" was born in the Faculty of Education in Florina, with professor Lemonidis being the godfather of it. I can see him here, among the audience.

Thanks to this Conference, and while being located in the most distant North West corner of Greece, our Institution has the opportunity to share interests in academic study and fieldwork with the aforementioned universities, thus creating a common ground for academic research, scientific knowledge, communication, as well as exchange of ideas and culture.

Such an initiative

- connotes multilateral cooperation between higher education institutions in the Balkans,
- increases the degree of transparency and compatibility among higher education in the area,
- facilitates the development of innovative practices in education and training,
- supports the development of innovative ICT-based content, services, pedagogies and practices for lifelong learning
- develops multi/interdisciplinary approaches and
- contributes to the creation of sustainable learning communities.

Above all, such an effort is made to promote interaction among participants with diverse socio-cultural backgrounds on both personal and institutional level.

Apparently this initiative contributes to academic and personal benefits for the participants. It introduces the idea that borderlands cannot be inferred or deduced only from the defined political and economic structures of the neighbouring countries.

Considering the human factor, we can realize that the lives of people living and working at the borders are part of the border cultures; these people coexist on the same or the other side of the legal state demarcation, the borderline; and they share forms of particular conceptualisation with other borderlanders.

These characteristics underpin the core concept of this Conference. Above all, they constitute fundamental strands of both cooperation and interaction among the three neighbouring countries and even the whole Balkan area.

So, I am happy to announce the beginning of the 4th International Conference. We would like you to

share your thoughts and ideas being derived from the Conference and we wish you a pleasant stay in Florina!

Florina, 19th October 2018

Prof. Aikaterini Dimitriadou
Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities
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THE SOCIAL CONSEQUENCES OF USING SOCIAL NETWORKS SITES: SPREADING FEAR THROUGH APOCALYPTIC PROCLAMATIONS AND PROPHECIES

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Abstract
Theoretical background of this work is the theory of mass media within which are threated the issues of social networks and their influence today (Giddens, 1998). This research about social consequences of using social networks sites are also very closely connected with the issues of "media literacy" and religion studies, and especially with beliefs and meanings of the people for above-mentioned issues influenced by the mass-communication media (Fulcher and Scott, 2011). More precisely, the theoretical background of this work is addressed to the theoretical discourses about the role of web resources for critical thinking (Macionis and Plummer, 2012). From methodological point of view, this work is based on qualitative researchmethods, which use qualitative methodological approach (Silverman,2010) and as a main method of collecting and analyzing data were content analysis and data analysis (Bryman, 2012; Davids and Sutton,2011). The emergence and widespread use of social networks has made the communication easier, but that prevalence came followed by a lot of negative consequences. Often, they are used for the non-selective and unchecked publishing of information that relates to a certain global destruction scenarios. Also, they are related to a current geopolitical, military, climate, demographic, astrophysical, macro and micro historical and genetically events on a local or a global scale and raise that fear almost at the level of hysteria. Many omens and "evidences" of older prophecies related to those prophets and/or events that have already been fulfilled with great "accuracy", are also used. This paper classifies these announcements and prophecies, the social networks on which they appear and spread, and addresses their social consequences. Such announcements can cause a different level of fear - from a mild panic and the accumulation of life supplies for survival, to the phenomenon of violent behavior and murderous and suicidal drives.

Keywords: social consequences, networks, fear, apocalyptic proclamations,prophecies

1. Introduction: Theoretical background and methodology

Theoretical background of this work is the theory of mass media analysis within which are threated the issues of social networks and their influence today. The very early roots of the

theoretical background could be found in early theories of media of Canadian authors Harold Innis and Marshall McLuhan. The first one, with his idea that different media has strong influence on the organization of forms of society. And second one (Marshall McLuhan), especially with his assertions that "the medium is the message" and the world under influence of electronic media became a "global village" (Giddens, 1998, p.377).

The roots of theoretical backgrounds of this work could be found within the Symbolic interactionism theory of media, founded by Herbert Blumer (Macionis and Plummer, 2012, p.776) and within the "theory of moral panic", established by Stanley Cohen who investigated following the symbolic interactionismtradition (Macionnis and Plummer, 2012, p.776-777). The pioneer of the media analysis Harold Laswell said that the most important for media analysis is to answer to the following questions: *who says, what, in which channel, to whom with what effect?* (See Macionnis and Plumer, 2012, p.781). This work has also, his theoretical background in the *theory of communicative action*of Jurgen Habermas, which try to explain the changes in public sphere in the contemporary society, established originally in 1962, and developed in 1982. and later (Macionnis and Plumer, 2012, p.788), as well as in theory of Jean Baudrillard for "the world of hyper reality" and the John Thompson's theory about the media and modern society within which are three types of interaction: face-to-face, mediated and mediated-quasi-interaction (Giddens, 1998, p.379-381).

This is also connected with the *theory of new media* which was emerged in 1980s an umbrella term and includes a wide range of phenomena and practice as following: new kinds of textual forms (the internet, virtual words…); new patterns of media consumption (hypertext, convergence); new ways of representing the world (blogs, digitalization…), the self (avatar, personal homepage) and community (bulletin boards,chat rooms, social networking); new relations between media producers and consumers (file sharing, gift economy, participatory culture, user-generated content). It is important to emphasize that the new media tend to blur the distinction between interpersonal and mass communication. (Chandler & Mundy, 2011, p.293)

The most of the research about social consequences of using social networks sites, are also very closely connected with the issues of "media literacy" and religion studies, and especially with beliefs and meanings of the people for above-mentioned issues influenced by the mass-communication media (Fulcher and Scott, 2011). More precisely, the theoretical background of this work is addressed to the theoretical discourses about the role of web resources for critical thinking (Macionis and Plummer, 2012).

From methodological point of view, this work is based on qualitative research methods (Creswell and Clark, 2011), which use qualitative methodological approach (Bryman, 2012; David and Sutton, 2011; Silverman,2010) and as a main method of collecting and analyzing data were content analysis and data analysis (Bryman, 2012; David and Sutton,2011).

1.1. Research questions

Main research question:
What are the social consequences of using social networks sites, especially from point of view of spreading fear through apocalyptic proclamations and prophecies?

The other research questions:
- Will isolation from social networks protect users from fake news?
- Why exactly social media?
- What is media literacy?
- What types of fake news exist?
- What are the types of the sources of apocalyptic prophecies on social networks?
- Are there any signs that can reveal fake/false news on social networks?
- Is it possibly with some organized educational activity (i.e. media literacy) to overcome the negative consequences of the fake /false news?

1.2. The sample

The sample of this research was intentional and was spreading to the sites published on the social network Facebook within the period, 18.09.2017. - 09.10.2018.

2. Fake news on social media and how to recognize it?

Why exactly social media? The reason is simple - they become one of the most explored sources of information nowadays. Although part of the population prefers television as a source of information, it is necessary to emphasize that it often happens that some television companies use portals and social networks to download and publish unfiltered and unverified news. So it happens that social networks make a breakthrough with the fake news and to a population that for various reasons does not use these networks and the Internet in general.

This raises the question: *Will isolation from social networks protect users from fake news?* Certainly not, the information twilight is also a bad option. What is needed is building media literacy that will, above all, enable effective, safe and responsible use of social networks. Media literacy, according to Adams and Hamm, is the ability to create individual meanings from the visual and verbal symbols that are taken daily from television, commercials, film, digital media.

Media literacy, according to Adams and Ham, is the ability to create individual meanings from visual and verbal symbols that are taken daily from television, advertisements, film, digital media "(Adams & Hamm, 2001, p. 33). According to Aufderheide, media literacy is the ability to access, analyse, evaluate and communicate information in all its forms (Aufderheide, 1993: 6). It is a necessary skill to be an active and conscious participant in social processes and who understands society in the right way.

There are seven *types of fake news*:

1. Satire - without intent, but with the potential to cause harm,
2. Misleading use of information to frame events or individuals,
3. Imitation of the right sources - for example photomontage from an accident,
4. Fully fabricated content in order to deceive and harm - the publication of unconfirmed and arbitrary information,
5. False link between the content and the title - in order to get the potential reader to click the news,
6. Sharing genuine content with fake factual information and
7. Manipulating real information and images - especially when the sources from which they come are anonymous.

Such a spread of fake news usually aims to provoke the reader's feelings, especially fear, shock, anger, and hatred. They are guided by the desire for provocation, prejudice towards certain groups, and it can also be about organized political propaganda. In a number of cases it is a matter of profit (as many clicks on the news), and often, the goals are a sensationalism that is caused by "quasi-journalists". A lot of new media aim to be first and fastest, with the news. Their nature, too often is to be feverish, frenzied, frantic, frail, false (fake), and fallible (Fulcher & Scott, 2011, p. 364).

3. The Revelation Bookof St. John as a source of apocalyptic prophecies

> *Then the fifth angel blew his trumpet, and I saw a star that had fallen from heaven onto the earth, and the angel was given the key of the shaft of the Abyss. When he unlocked the shaft of the Abyss, smoke rose out of the Abyss, like the smoke from a huge furnace, so that the sun and the sky were darkened by the smoke from the Abyss, and out of the smoke dropped locusts onto the earth: they were given the powers, that scorpions have on the earth* (Revelation 9:1,2,3).

Apocalyptic prophecies and hints at the end of the world are nothing new and unexpected. Usually, such expectations are bound up with signs such as the transition to a new century / millennium, unusual occurrences in nature, mass social turmoil, etc.; i.e. phenomena that in their naked essence do not have any sign that they are generators of force that would destroy the world or mankind.

Of course, one of the most commonly used sources of such prophecies is the New Testament, more specifically - the Revelation of St. John, where it is unequivocally indicated that the world will be destroyed in terrible torments and all sinners will be punished. The only thing that is missing in this context is the exact date of this event which contributes to the ever increasing number of attempts to hit it.

John Burton beliefs that the important determinant of apocalyptic texts is their reading in a portable sense and that they bring a general truth that provides a detailed view of the human

world (Barton 1996, p. 17). If we apply this claim to our subject, then we can say that the final text of the New Testament - the Revelation to St. John answers three questions:

1. Will the world be destroyed? *Yes!*
2. When will this happen? *Unknown (but there are signs that will indicate that the day is nearing)*.
3. What is the cause of the destruction? *The permanent sin, the sinfulness of the sinners, the loss of faith, and the blasphemy against God.*

Any further attempt to give an exact answer to the questions about the specific date and which are those signs that announce it, enters into a field of speculation that is equally and uncertain and dangerous. The problem is complicated in modern conditions in which there is information flood and easy access to data. While this level of development of science and technology is not expected to place emphasis on the lumbar interpretation of signs and records, the opposite is often the case. It is precisely this that is used for placing false information that has smaller or greater consequences for the social and life of individuals.

4.Classification of the sources of apocalyptic prophecies on social networks

The frequent use of non-selective and unchecked information disclosure is most often associated with certain global destruction scenarios associated with some current event. These events can be:

1. *Geopolitical*: seeking and "finding" signs at certain geographical locations associated with a religion, linking political figures with the emergence of the so-called third antichrist or the leader who will initiate and lead the destruction of the world, and is mentioned in Revelation to St. John.

2. *War*: wars of a larger scale, conflicts driven by religious motives, interpretation of the great number of victims in these conflicts as punishment that God gives to certain nations or nations.

3. *Climatic*: connecting the elementary disasters with God's rage. Often, such sources are specifically intended for the US, which are often hit by typhoons.

4. *Demographically*: a sharp increase or decline in the number of a particular population, migrations of epic or biblical proportions.

5. *Astrophysical*: Pelin's star is mentioned in the revelation of St. John in all possible formats - asteroids, meteoric rains, black holes, and even the planet Nibiru that moves along the path to collide with the Eart.

6. *Development of science*, especially of genetics: the creation of a race of superior people produced in a laboratory that would be used for a war to fully subdue the world.

7. *Technology and technological development*: the development of artificial intelligence which at some point would be removed from control.

8. *Calendar*: transitions in new time periods - new century, new millennium, years ending with number 666 (better known as the number of the Beast in Revelation of St. John), the appearance of the Millennium Bird in 1999 (a computer error that would destroy the world).

It is unnecessary to emphasize that all possible ways are used to reach the reader. A frequently used way is a rigged webpage, and it is the one that uses the one that is portrayed as a NASA web site. The names of well-known and lesser-known prophets of different religions, procedures such as numerology, references to old documents such as the Mayan calendar, etc., are used,too.

5.Education as a shield of fake news - developing media literacy

Last year's Change Management Center research showed that almost 30% of young people prefer web portals,and 19.1% chose social networks as a media(http://www.iri.org/sites/default/files/2017-9-18). The very number sounds that the development of media literacy as soon as possible is needed to prevent the consequences of faith (belief) in the above prophecies.

It is obvious that all the prophecies that were related to the last date-have not come true. But the consequences of them are terrifying. Only two examples can illustrate the most horrible, and that is the death consequences:

- In 1997, the Christian UFO Group of the Eastern Gate, the appearance of the Halle - Bop comet, interpreted as a sign of the end of the world and the return of Jesus. This interpretation resulted in the suicide of 40 members of this group (https://www.livescience.com/14295-failed-doomsday-rapture-suicides.html).

- "Ask Astrobiologist" NASA's public information website, received over 5,000 questions about the Mayan prophecy from the public. Some asked if they should kill themselves and / or kill their children or their pets. (Morrison, 2010).

Hawks-Slayer identifies 10 *signs that can reveal fake/false news on social networks*:

1. The news is making you angry,
2. The web page has a strange domain name - for example, ends with "co" instead of "com"
3. If it comes to results from surveys - they are installed! This is done with the help of skillfully cited questions, misinterpretation of the results or dialing the population that will give the previously anticipated answers,
4. The story is a bit more interesting, fun or bizarre,
5. The website declares that it does not bear any responsibility for the consequences of the published news,
6. The site identifies medications for incurable diseases,
7. It is certain that some kind of catastrophe,
8. Renowned websites do not publish the disputed news,
9. Other stories on the website are unreliable,
10. The source used for the story is in the shadow (anonymous, it is not revealed).

It is certain that greater information and higher education are the basic prerequisite that the reader will alarm more deeply to check such news. Of course, this will also hinder the sharing and further spread of the news. However, *the development of media literacy should become*

part of systematic learning and be acquired at a younger age, given that the age limit of access to social networks is constantly falling.

6. Conclusion

1. *Theoretical background* of this work is the theory of mass media within which are threated the issues of *social networks* and their influence today (Giddens, 1998). This research, about social consequences of using social networks sites, is also very closely connected with the issues of "media literacy" and religion studies, and especially with beliefs and meanings of the people for above-mentioned issues influenced by the mass-communication media (Fulcher and Scott, 2011). More precisely, the theoretical background of this work is addressed to the theoretical discourses about the role of web resources for critical thinking (Macionis and Plummer, 2012).
2. From *methodological point of view*, this work is based on *qualitative researchmethods* (Creswell and Clark, 2011), which use *qualitative methodological approach* (Bryman, 2012; David & Sutton, 2011; Silverman,2010) and as a main method of collecting and analyzing data were content analysis and data analysis (Bryman, 2012; David & Sutton,2011).
3. The emergence and widespread use of social networks has made the communication easier, but that prevalence came followed by a lot of negative consequences. Often, they are used for the *non-selective and unchecked publishing of information* that relates to a certain global destruction scenarios.
4. Also, they are often related to a current geopolitical, military, climate, demographic, astrophysical, macro and micro historical and genetically events on a local or a global scale and raise that fear almost at the level of hysteria. At the same time, many omens and evidence of older prophecies related to those prophets and/or events that have already been fulfilled with great "accuracy" are also used (par ex. The Revelation by St.John, as a source).
5. This paper classifies these announcements and prophecies, the social networks on which they appear and spread, and addresses their social consequences. Such announcements can cause a different level of fear - from a mild panic and the accumulation of life supplies for survival, to the phenomenon of violent behavior and murderous and suicidal drives.
6. It is certain that greater information and higher education are the basic prerequisite that the reader will alarm more deeply to check such news. Of course, this will also hinder the sharing and further spread of the news. However, the development of media literacy should become part of systematic learning and be acquired at a younger age, given that the age limit of access to social networks is constantly falling.

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