

About “the End of Public Relations” and the Integrated Model of PR

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Abstract: *After the end of philosophy, ideology, and religion, the announcement of an end of public relations may seem a logical continuation. The text that follows pauses upon the answer that Remus Pricopie gives to this challenge regarding public relations. He suggests an integrated model which would transform public relations into an important factor in the creation of a social balance. This model is founded upon the art of consensus, research and the authority of ethical codes. Ethics prove to be a fundamental factor in the development of an efficient communication in the new global context.*

Remus Pricopie - a strong voice in PR

The development of applied disciplines in the field of communication sciences meets a dynamic that resembles the dynamic of other disciplines of social sciences or even from the sphere of exact sciences. In the field of communication sciences, the discipline and the practice of Public Relations capture the interest of a growing number of researchers and practitioners. The sphere of inter-human relations, as well as the one of organizational communication, reveals the growing importance we must grant this field. Although just one century old, it seems to be a part of the very human essence, of the authentic need to communicate and of the healthy functioning of society¹.

1 The present text is part of a larger research that analyses the problem of ethics and ethical expertise in the romanian context, financed from the grant CNCSIS ID_2265.

In spite of all these, there is a continuously growing body of critiques of the discipline and the practice of public relations. They are mostly concerned with the fact that public relations have not succeeded in becoming a separate domain able to enjoin itself among other domains. According to these critiques, public relations are meant to be swallowed either by marketing, or by other sub-domains of communication sciences. Thus we are induced the idea of an “end of public relations”.

Such an end to public relations has to be understood through a general frame of discourse which, coming from other domains, speaks of the end of philosophy, religion, ideology etc. In each of these cases it is actually about the end of a certain means of practice and understanding of the domain in question. This is why we are inclined to believe that the end of public relations does not mean an extinguishment or dissolution of this type of thought and action in close means and with a greater force of persuasion and framing in the new global system. It is more accurate that we perceive this as a necessity to continuously redefine the discipline and to find models that bring a specific contribution to the development of the global society.

In this context we notice the continuous effort of Romanian theoreticians to set an image, content and means of action peculiar to public relations, both as academic discipline, and as social practice. An important endeavor in this respect is the one suggested by Remus Pricopie, a strong voice in the field of public relations in Romania. He is an author of the new generation and through his works he mirrors the mature stage that public relations as a discipline has reached in our country. To emphasize the importance of Pricopie’s contribution to the field, Dumitru Borțun states that when it comes to Remus Pricopie

“the problem of definitions is refined to the elaboration of a typology of Public Relations that can offer a true delight to those frantic about ‘clear and distinct notions’... it has the indisputable value of introducing a new methodological rigor and an intellectual discipline that are absolutely necessary to research in this field”.²

To singularize the major role in the creation of a frame of analysis and research in Romania, Ioan Drăgan circumscribes Remus Pricopie’s research to:

“the noble category of academic works of synthesis and of encyclopedic span regarding a fundamental domain of communication, the one of the system of public relations”³.

Remus Pricopie’s research has the merit of retorting to two challenges. On the one hand, his preoccupations are a major contribution to the development of a new

2 Dumitru Borțun, *Relațiile publice și noua societate*, București: Tritonic, 2005, p. 56.

3 Ioan Drăgan în Remus Pricopie, *Relațiile publice. Evoluție și perspective*, București: Tritonic, 2005.

organizational culture based on the growth of the importance of public relations in Romania. On the other hand, he circumscribes his investigations to an optimistic perspective, meant to counteract the attempts to minimize the importance of public relations, or the attempts to criticize public relations and announce the end of the domain.

In this context, the author is interested in the development of the discipline and the way in which a history of the discipline is established. He is convinced that following a certain analysis we can understand the peculiarities of public relations and the connection to other disciplines. In this background, his research is orientated towards stressing the indispensable role of public relations in building social balance.

A question that is on the author's mind is how does the discipline of public relations grow, how do PR become autonomous as an academic discipline and how do they function as a distinct organizational practice. Remus Pricopie is aware of the fact that there is no institutionalized answer to keep us from making errors. However, to counteract the challenges brought by the deconstruction of public relations, Remus Pricopie militates for a model of public relations that converge everything that is valuable and productive in PR in a coherent and operational formula⁴.

One way to show the kind of enterprise that Remus Pricopie suggests is to singularize the fact that his answer to the challenges that public relations have to face can be noticed starting with his observations on Edward L. Bernays work: *Crystallizing Public Opinion*⁵. From his discourse, Pricopie synthesizes the existence of three dimensions that make the profession of public relations a distinct one: 1) it does not only contribute to increasing the visibility of an organization, but it also represents an art of consensus; 2) research is an important part of professional activity; 3) consensus has to be settled on the solid ground of an ethical code. In the following part, we explain how the author theorizes these aspects in the context of the development of this discipline in Romania.

Public relations as the art of consensus

Beyond the concerns regarding increasing the visibility of an organization, the practice of public relations is for Remus Pricopie an art of consensus meant to bring benefits to the organization, to its different types of public, but also to the community as a whole. This perspective is shared by other authors, like Denis L. Wilcox, Philip L. Ault and Warren K. Agee⁶, or Cristina Coman, who, analyzing different definitions of public relations, notice that some key words are to be found in most of them. A few examples are: performance, bilateral communication, public interest, the

4 Remus Pricopie, *Relațiile publice. Evoluție și perspectivă*, București: Tritonic, 2005, p. 13.

5 Edward L. Bernays, *Cristalizarea opiniei publice*, București: Comunicare.ro, 2003.

6 Denis L. Wilcox, Philip H. Ault, Warren K. Agee, *Public Relations Strategy and Tactics*. New York: Harper Collins Inc., 1992, pp. 6-7,

managerial dimension. These elements consider that public relations practiced with professionalism can bring a higher level of trust to an organization. Credibility resources are based on the valorization of public interest, on a better communication with the environment in which it acts, based on a bilateral communication grounded on the information gathered in the environment in question, the growth of the benefits of the organization through obtaining obvious benefits regarding the satisfaction of the interests of the public in question⁷. In this context we cite for an author like Cristina Coman it is essential that the idea of reciprocity appears as a key element in the establishment of public relations. This means that, using an accurate communication strategy, the organization and the public start acting as partners that develop a new type of understanding, of mutual trust and support⁸. This mutuality is part of the very logic of existence of an organization. Using the term organization, Cristina Coman offers the following work definition, taken from Mihaela Vlăsceanu:

“An organization represents a planned coordination of people’s activities, with the purpose of accomplishing a shared, explicit purpose, through the division of work and of positions, and a hierarchy of authority and responsibility”.⁹

The problem of responsibility implies, according to Cristina Coman, this commitment to mutuality. Remus Pricopie investigates the theme of engagement and responsibility from the perspective of ethical exactness assumed by correlating the public interest and the individual interest. Thus, we now understand why analyzing the four models of public relations (press-agentry/publicity model, public information model, two-way asymmetric model, and two-way symmetric model), Remus Pricopie expresses his liking for the latter. Regarding the model introduced by Bernays and other professionals in the '60s, Pricopie retains their preoccupation to recreate the domain through grounding it on ethical and deontological foundations. The novelty consists in the interest

“to identify those needs of the public that can be covered by policies practiced by the organization. The public interest is just as important for the organization as its own interest, and public relations are competitive only if they mediate between the two interests, so they reach a balance point”¹⁰.

The effort of building public relations as a different domain from other communication domains had as reference mark in Romania this ethical vocation of communication and of the reciprocity of interests. Public interest as a major component of public relations is also emphasized by Dumitru Borțun when, being preoccupied with

7 Cristina Coman, *Relațiile Publice. Principii și strategii*, Iași: Polirom, 2001, p. 21.

8 Cristina Coman, p. 20.

9 Mihaela Vlăsceanu apud Cristina Coman, p. 23.

10 Remus Pricopie, *Relațiile publice. Evoluție și perspective*, București: Tritonic, 2005, 39.

the ethical feature of public relations, he considers that: “aligning the organization’s interest to the public interest transforms the short-term profit in long-term profit. It represents the main reference point for the evaluation of ethical communication”¹¹. What Romanian authors, among whom Remus Pricopie is a scientific authority, are preoccupied with is finding a solution to make public relations functional as a two-way symmetric model. Hence the special interest in the ethical component of research and all other activities that configure the domain.

Research as an instrument to develop public relations

For Remus Pricopie research is an important feature of professional activity, the very feature that makes the public relation specialist not just an interface that mediates the message of an organization, but also, among others, a creator of image, a seeker of answers and solutions to the problems and requirements of the public, a responsibility factor in the organization’s relationship with the public. This responsibility component brings into discussion the importance of research in answering to the necessities of different public categories. James E. Gruning is definite about the fact that:

“Research is needed, however, to provide a framework, from a public relations perspective, that practitioners can use to apply ethical criteria to strategic decisions”¹².

A fundamental aspect in distinguishing the importance that research has in public relations is suggested by Pricopie by analyzing the way Joye L. Gordon defines public relations from the perspective of symbolic interactionism. Such an approach is meaningful as a method of revealing the importance of the action of different types of public, just as of different individuals, on influencing the action of an organization. Joye L. Gordon’s effort to define public relations aims at emphasizing new horizons of research and interpretation. The novelty is firstly in the fact that in this context everything is viewed from a systemic perspective which allows building the image of an organization as part of the whole, as an entity depending in it’s interferences with the other parts of the whole. Pricopie notices that these parts do not have stable or predefined forms. They depend on the way individuals receive them, make sense of them, give meaning to them and eventually redefine them. Accordingly, the well-functioning of an organization depends on the process of interpretation made possible by different participants to the public space in which the organization acts¹³. Mutual

11 “Quoting Simion Bărnăuțiu, I recommend all relationists: if you do not wish to wonder astray, hold on to public interest”. Dumitru Borțun, p. 67.

12 James E. Grunig, Furnishing the Edifice: Ongoing Research on Public Relations As a Strategic Management Function, *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 18(2), p. 165.

13 Remus Pricopie, p. 43

persuasion is a constitutive aspect of the action that public relations entail, each actor being a participant to the symbolic social construction. It is this aspect that Gordon points to when he states that public relations imply the active participation to the social construction of significations¹⁴. The importance of Remus Pricopie's reflections on symbolic interactionism derive from the fact that he reaches the sedimentation of the importance of the individual as a social actor, as an active participant in the creation of a certain social reality. Thus, in the development of public relations, the stress shifts towards the role of the PR specialist in the creative development of the discipline and in its acknowledgement in the general field of reflection and of signifying human activities.

In this context, research can be used for a greater variety of requirements. It creates a binding between participation and the individual exigency and the strategic management plan. The importance of research can be highlighted through the elements that Grunig appoints as a contribution of public relations to the strategic management of an organization:

“public relations contributed to strategic management in six specific ways: (a) regular research activities, (b) research to answer specific questions, (c) other formal approaches to gathering information, (d) informal approaches to gathering information, (e) contacts with knowledgeable people outside the organization, and (f) judgment based on experience. All but the last of these six contributions consist of methods of scanning the environment of the organization for information relevant to strategic management”¹⁵.

Research is for Remus Pricopie one of the most important resources for establishing public relations as an autonomous discipline through ensuring the solid ground of an “ethical and efficient communication”. At the same time, it helps integrate the activity of a certain organization in a coherent model of action that involves all the entities that are part of the relation. Moreover, research can contribute to a dynamic of the discipline that corresponds to the level of adaptability, creativity and efficiency required by the new global context.

The ethical code and the professionalization of public relations

Remus Pricopie considers that the art of consensus represented by public relations is exercised through the conscious development of ethical relations, based on the solid ground of ethical codes. Out of the great complexity of problems that come up in the debate regarding ethical codes, I would like to remind the fact that one of the widespread opinions is that the importance of ethical codes derives from the fact that

14 Joye L. Gordon, apud Remus Pricopie, p.44.

15 James E. Grunig, p. 161.

“they set out to establish clear standards for the exertion of the profession, to clarify these standards to the employers and to distinguish between the public relation professionals and all those engaged in unethical communication and manipulation. Establishing a professional ethic behavior code and assuming social responsibility is essential”¹⁶.

Therefore, the ethical aspects of communication have a major role from the perspective of the way in which the profession of relationist is seen. Remus Pricopie adopts the same view as other authors who consider that “a profession designates a full body of theoretical knowledge and practical skills which are exercised by certain people inside a formal frame established through legal settlements and/or professional self-regulation”¹⁷. Starting with this, he is interested in adopting a convergence model with four central points: 1) education, 2) professional associations, 3) accreditation and/or licensing, 4) the code of ethical behavior. He is convinced that only considered together, these four points can give account on the public relation’s degree of professionalization¹⁸. Analyzing, for the past years, the activities of professional associations, he is lead to the conclusion that ethical problems are their main preoccupation¹⁹. If in the activity of specialized associations there is a growing need for clear ethical exigencies, the specialized literature is one step behind:

“Not least, another drawback, with major implications on the way the public relations are practiced and perceived, is the one related to the ethics of the domain. Some definitions do not mention this aspect, while others, although they do, they leave the term without specific coordinates. Moreover, the specialized literature generally lacks in this respect; the articles or books that deal with ethics in public relations are relatively small in both number and scholarly ground. And, if we desire to place public relations on an ethical foundation, we first have to focus on the elements that make up the foundation”²⁰.

Starting with the principles formulated before by K.D. Day, Q. Dong and C. Robinson²¹, Remus Pricopie valorizes the professional behavior codes as an important element in developing the professionalism of those who practice public relations as a profession. These codes are based on various ethical systems, among which Remus

16 Irina Stănciugelu, *Măștile comunicării. De la etică la manipulare și înapoi*, București: Ed. Tritonic, 2009, p. 262.

17 Remus Pricopie, p. 207.

18 Remus Pricopie, p. 206.

19 Remus Pricopie, p. 54.

20 Remus Pricopie, p. 58.

21 K. D. Day, Q. Dong și C. Robinson, *Public Relations Ethics. An Overview and Discussion of Issues for the 21st Century*, in R. L. Heath (ed.) *Handbook of Public Relations*, pp. 403-409, Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, Inc, 2001.

Pricopie mentions: 1) the deontological system that gives greater importance to facts rather than effects, 2) the teleological system more interested in the public relations activity's finality, rather than the activity itself, 3) the situational ethical system that points out the influence of contextual peculiarities that pertain to a certain ethical conduct, 4) the relativist individual ethical system which relativizes the importance of an ethical code and focuses on the ethical conscience of each individual²². Beyond these distinctions, it is important to notice that all the important professional associations either have made their own ethical code, or they have adhered to an existing one. The ethical component is part of the practitioner's professionalism in the field of public relations.

It is already a widespread idea among specialists that relationists' professionalism is related to the way in which they comply to the law and ethical rules, they promote programs full of social responsibility, they do not unfold actions that put to disadvantage the public that the organization refers to, they take legal and ethical responsibility for the text they edit²³ etc. Moreover,

“the essence of this professional morality involves the idea that professionals are more constrained by their professional values than they would be were they not professionals, because their professional ethics places professional values at a higher position in the ethical hierarchy”²⁴.

Public relations as an innovating discipline

Public relations are a border discipline, also having the role to mediate between data offered by other disciplines of communication or humanities. To explain this status, Remus Pricopie borrows the term hybridization. In this sense, he evokes Adela Rogojinaru's studies, which describe public relation as a hybrid science which has the capacity to assimilate various scientific sources and to use diverse instruments, thus constituting itself as a border science with an innovating trait²⁵ Adela Rogojinaru embraces the term hybridization being convinced that it is a useful term. It reveals much more about the specificity of public relations than the term inter-disciplinarily, in spite of the legitimate bias that researchers have nowadays to call their own preoccupation inter-disciplinary analysis. The author is convinced that hybridization can better explain the internal dynamics of the apparition of a new conceptual field

22 Remus Pricopie, pp. 211-212.

23 Doug Newsom, Bob Carrell, *Redactarea materialelor de Relații publice*, Iași: Ed. Polirom, 2004, p. 35

24 Robert P. Goss, A Distinct Public Administration Ethics?, in *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory: J-PART*, Vol. 6, No. 4 (Oct.,1996), p. 577.

25 Adela Rogojinaru, *Relațiile publice. Fundamente interdisciplinare*, București: Tritonic, 2005, p. 86.

peculiar to public relations. We can notice that “hybridization represents a model of trans-disciplinary than of inter-disciplinary²⁶”. Beyond the ambiguity of the debate about the fashionable term inter-disciplinary or trans-disciplinary – which is more and more in use in our country – Pricopie notices that this hybrid feature is part of the innovating structure of public relations.

Remus Pricopie points out the fact that public relations interfere with other domains, both as a scholarly discipline, and as a social practice, its border setting being accomplished by constantly referring to the existing sciences. This interference can lead to two types of conclusions. It helps us to see the specific differences of public relations in reference to other disciplines. At the same time it is the one to set free the imagination of those who speak of an inclusion step by step of public relations in other disciplines, or even an extinction of public relations in favor of kindred domains that seem to have proven a greater power of adaptability and efficiency. In this sense, one of the disciplines and social practices evoked here is marketing. Researching the specificity of public relations, Pricopie makes audacious analysis meant to highlight the resemblance and differences between public relations and marketing with the purpose to circumscribe public relations as an autonomous discipline.

There are some authors that, generalizing the resemblance between the two disciplines, prove that public relations is a declining discipline and it will, in time, be inevitably absorbed by marketing. Pricopie proves a balance specific to well trained researchers when he highlights the existence of some resemblance between marketing and public relations. Among these we can recall the fact that they are both branches of strategic management, they use communication in achieving their goals, they act in the space of public opinion, to broadcast their message they use means of mass communication. The differences are just as obvious and they can be detected in the variety of types of relations entailed by public relations and marketing. Pricopie mentions three models of such relations. A first one is the conservative model, in which the central element of marketing is the science of economy unfolded on the product-market axis, without any space of interference with public relations. A second model is the liberal one, of total marketing, which has the tendency to completely absorb public relations. A third model is the integrated one, which brings an integrating perspective in which marketing has the central role and develops efficient relations with other instruments of communication, such as marketing communication, advertising and public relations. Following the integrated approach suggested by James G. Hutton, Remus Pricopie highlights the overlapping areas as well as the ones peculiar to each domain. Among the domains peculiar to public relations, Remus Pricopie recalls:

“relations with investors, relations with the local community, communication with employees, public affairs/relations with the governmental structures,

26 Adela Rogojinaru, p. 95.

relations with the mass-media, communication in crisis situations, organizational identity, managerial communication, donations, sponsorships etc”²⁷.

Thus, the public relations proficient must not be taken as a simple sales agent who acts according to the rules and principles of marketing. As Dumitru Borțun states: “Selling an image is not the same as selling a product, although the latter may too imply selling representations, significations²⁸”. Moreover, Remus Pricopie underlines the existence of a clear bordering of public relations and marketing even in the way they share the sphere of influence inside the frame of autonomous communicational disciplines. For example: an activity like advertising, when it is commercial advertising it belongs to the sphere of marketing, when it is institutional advertising which promotes ideas from organizations or social advertising which promotes causes of general interest, it belongs to the sphere of public relations²⁹. In its own turn, marketing offers public relations valuable data in the unfolding of its own activity. We can not disregard the fact that market research gives public relations important information about consumers, a public important to public relations³⁰. The activity of public relations also exerts a certain pressure on marketing to adopt some elements peculiar to public relations, like the exigency of an ethical behavior towards consumers. Thus grows the importance of ethics in managerial practice³¹. Moreover, we can observe the existence of a tendency in all the domains that interfere with communication, either older disciplines or recent ones, to take into consideration the importance of ethics in order to enhance its credibility and influence³². What remains peculiar this time again to public relations is the fact that they militate for a meta-ethical integrated system to combine the elements of ethical pragmatism with the ones of a dialogical ethic³³.

Following the highlighting of the innovating feature of his discipline, Remus Pricopie offers an original perspective on the development of public relations as an academic discipline and as a social practice in the Romanian context of public action. In this sense, he values the major resources of research in this domain on the international level, making his research an important contribution to the development of these resources. To answer as many questions as possible about defining public

27 Remus Pricopie, p.190.

28 Dumitru Borțun, p. 189.

29 Remus Pricopie, p. 191.

30 Doug Newsom, Judy VanSlyke Turk, Dean Kruckeberg, *Totul despre relațiile publice*, Iași: Polirom, 2003, p. 25.

31 Jane Collier, Theorising the Ethical Organization, *Business Ethics Quarterly*, Vol. 8, No. 4 (Oct., 1998), p. 646.

32 Delia Cristina Balaban, Ioana Iancu, Radu Meza (eds.), *Pr, Publicitate și new-media*, București: Ed. Tritonic, 2009, pp. 56-65.

33 Robert van Es, Tiemo L. MeijUnk, The Dialogical Turn of Public Relation Ethics, *Journal of Business Ethics* 27: 2000, p. 69.

relations, Remus Pricopie suggests an integrated model that focuses, on the one hand, on the normative aspects meant to point out the action area and the forms of manifestation of the public relations, and, on the other hand, the existence of certain authorities to set the reference between norms and practices:

“By integrated model I understand a complex model, made from a normative model - that sets points or a priori values for communication parameters - to which a series of authorities are associated, meaning the three agents by which the functionality of the normative model can be guaranteed. The relation between the two types of constituents is bi-univocal, neither of them being able to act independently, without altering the initial parameters³⁴”, writes Pricopie.

Remus Pricopie chooses this integrated model because he is convinced that it can be put into practice, and that it establishes not only the norm, the standard of the profession of relationist, but it offers sufficient guaranties that this standard can be achieved by the majority of the practitioners. This model is conceived as a combination of two models: the model of bidirectional and symmetrical communication, suggested by Edward L. Bernays and the model of communication as a process in which participants reach mutual understanding, suggested by Grunig. The advantage of such an integrated model is that:

“the interaction between the organization and the public is a continuous one, poliphase, mutual understanding, in case this level is achieved, being the result of an intense exchange on information between the actors involved in the process”³⁵.

The deconstruction of public relations - an incentive for the development of the future discipline

From Remus Pricopie’s research we can construe that the critique of public relations must be understood within the dynamic entailed by the redefinition of the disciplines of the economical sphere, social sciences, psychology, philosophy etc. Instead of arguing convincingly against the peculiarity, autonomy and of the decisive role of public relations, the critiques are closer to underlining aspects that need redefining and clarifying meant to consolidate public relations. It is thus necessary not only to offer some answers to these critiques, but also a continuous effort to redefine concepts, instruments and even the discipline of public relations itself. The critique of public relations must be regarded from a different angle. We can not disregard the fact that “Public relations is a cultural practice. As such, it needs to be viewed in terms of its relationship to the culture from a critical perspective for the purpose of human

34 Remus Pricopie, p. 214.

35 Remus Pricopie, p. 214

emancipation³⁶". The results gathered from different contexts from public relations must be correlated with data that research points out in international public relations. We must keep in mind that

“the future of public relations mostly depends on the success in finding answers to the questions regarding what public relations is and what it does and the way its contribution to the global financial result of the organization can be measured”³⁷.

From the point of view of a technical discussion regarding the development of public relations, it is useful to recall some of the elements that Grunig considers important for the consolidation of the theoretical edifice of public relations and their role in strategic management.

The edifice:

- “Explains how public relations contributes value to organizations, publics, and society.
- Explains how an empowered public relations function makes a unique contribution to strategic management and distinguishes its role from that of other management functions, especially marketing.
- Prescribes techniques that public relations managers can use to fulfill their role in strategic management.
- Explains the critical role of relationships in the planning and evaluation of public relations programs.
- Identifies different models of communication and explains which models are the most effective strategies for cultivating relationships with publics.
- Incorporates ethics into the strategic role of public relations.
- Explains how to apply the theory globally”³⁸.

All these elements assumed by researchers and practitioners can offer an important contribution in the effort of making efficient and enhancing the visibility of the discipline and of the professionalism of public relations practitioners.

36 Thomas J. Mickey, *Deconstructing Public Relations. Public Relations Criticism*, Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publisher, 2003, p. 15. The necessity of cultural contextualization is pointed out by researchers also regarding other domains of communication. For example: the importance intercultural communication elements in advertising can be followed in Delia Cristina Balaban, *Publicitatea. De la planificarea strategică la implementarea media*, Iași: Polirom, 2009, pp. 251-257.

37 Doug Newsom, Judy VanSlyke Turk, Dean Kruckeberg, *Totul despre relațiile publice*, Iași: Polirom, 2003, p. 129.

38 James E. Grunig, Furnishing the Edifice: Ongoing Research on Public Relations As a Strategic Management Function, *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 18(2), p. 154.

Questioning various aspects of the development of public relations, Remus Principe opens the way to a new approach of public relations, meant to turn public relations into an essential factor of public action and social balance. Regarding the debate about the extinction of public relations, the author reveals a contagious optimism. On the one hand, his optimism is encouraged by the retrospective view that shows how, in the development of the discipline, professionals have created the premises of a possible agreement about the principles of defining public relations. On the other hand, looking towards the future, Remus Principe notices that there are still many things to mediate and reconcile, and the dynamic of public relations as part of communication sciences is visibly growing. Moreover, the applications of public relations accompany almost all activities, especially the institutionalized ones³⁹. On this background, the arguments about the end of public relations do not announce the death of a domain or its absorption into other practices or disciplines. This is about the critical attitude that gives birth to the legitimate preoccupation for the renewal, making efficient and consolidating public relations.

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³⁹Remus Pricopie, p. 19.

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