Mihail-Radu Solcan

Annotated Publications List

Books

[1] Mihail-Radu Solcan. *Arta răului cel mai mic*. Bucureşti: ALL, 1998. [The book is an introduction to political philosophy. It covers the following topics: human cooperation, rules, liberty, justice, equality and openness, power, property, individual rights, democracy and markets. On every topic there is an introduction to contemporary debates on political philosophy, followed by my own reconstruction and assessment of the solutions. The main objective of the book is to see how non-arbitrary rules are possible in a world of individual cases].

[2] Mihail-Radu Solcan. *Introducere în filosofia minţii din perspectiva ştiinţei cogniţiei*. Bucureşti: Editura Universităţii din Bucureşti, 2000. [The book is an introduction to the philosophy of mind from the point of view of the "computational turn" in philosophy. As in the case of the "linguistic turn" before, the real novelty is a set of tools (that might be used for various purposes). The first chapter of the book is a survey of different perspectives on the philosophy of mind. We point out that computer simulation might play a similar role to thought experiments in philosophy. The second chapter is a survey of the traditional philosophy of mind that uses thought experiments. The third chapter is an introduction to computational systems. Criticisms of the "computational turn" are also taken into account. The fourth chapter is dedicated to examples of computational approaches of the mind. The fifth chapter focuses on the new links between philosophy and other disciplines (especially psychology) fostered by cognitive science. The sixth chapter presents some of the open, difficult problems of the mind. The book includes an annotated bibliography].

[3] Mihail-Radu Solcan. *Freedom, Minds, and Institutions*. Bucureşti: Editura Universităţii din Bucureşti, 2003. [The book is built around the idea that total central planning is logically impossible. Instead of starting from individuals and their rights, it uses indirect methodological individualism and takes the impossibility of total planning as the basis from which it reaches until the fundamental plans, the individual plans.

Individual plans, as plans for action, do not isolate human beings. Connections develop as a natural consequence of human actions. Individuals exchange goods or develop common plans for complex actions. Each connection has a weight that helps individuals to compare it with alternative connections.

Working from the bare, abstract concept of a plan and its possibility conditions, the book makes room, in the end, for a richer structure, the network of individuals. It emphasizes the fact that any central intervention in such a web of interactions is bound to be arbitrary.

While the central total or piecemeal planning is lost in the maze of complexity, liberty is a sophisticated, rational way to cope with complexity].

[4] Mihail-Radu Solcan. *Eseul filosofic*. Bucureşti: Editura Universităţii din Bucureşti, 2004. [The main objective of the book is to show that TEX and LATEX are more than (excellent) typesetting systems; they offer a discipline for the mind that is extremely useful for writing philosophical papers].

Lecture Notes and Documentary Survey

[1] Mihail-Radu Solcan. *Logica modernă aplicată în filosofie şi ştiinţele sociale*. Bucureşti: Academia de Studii Social-Politice, 1987. [This is a handbook of the handbooks of modern logic. It exploits the idea of presenting books and ideas in context. Formal and informal techniques are introduced. Surveys of famous textbooks of Quine, Kleene, Grzegorczyk and others familiarize the reader with the basic ideas of modern sentence and predicate logic. I wrote it as a suport for my 1985 course in logic].

[2] Mihail-Radu Solcan. *Instituţii politice şi economice*. Bucureşti: Universitatea din Bucureşti, 2003. <http://fil.unibuc.ro/~solcan/shelf/ipe/ipehtml.html>. Lecture notes on the theory of institutions on CD.

Papers

[1] Mihail-Radu Solcan. Producerea de inteligenţă artificială cu ajutorul calculatorului – o alchimie a secolului al xx–lea? *Revista de filosofie*, 29(4):368–373, 1982. [This is a paper on the philosophy of artificial intelligence. Its main argument follows the Dreyfus line of skeptical approach to the artificial intelligence. I abandoned later this kind of skepticism towards artificial intelligence].

[2] Mihail-Radu Solcan. The logical structure of political doctrines. *Revue Roumaine des Sciences Sociales*, 27(4):7–15, October–December 1983. [The paper takes advantage of the esopic language of logic and investigates what is called there a "universal political doctrine". Though Popper is not mentioned explicitly, the main problem discussed in the paper is taken from *Poverty of Historicism* (the emphasis on the metaphysical grounds of planning and their lack of plausibility). Using well-known results in logic (Turing's uncomputability theorem) it proves that a "universal doctrine", which would contain instructions for its own change, is impossible.

If it is translated into plain language, the paper argues that comprehensive planning is logically impossible. I attempted to offer a "humane" explanation of the logical impossibility of planning in my book *Freedom, Minds, and Institutions*].

[3] Mihail-Radu Solcan. Rădăcinile culturale ale limbajului logicii moderne. *Revista de filosofie*, 33(2):147–153, 1986. [The paper explores the connections between the Chinese type of writing and modern symbolic logic].

[4] Mihail-Radu Solcan. Unexpected models. *Revue Roumaine des Sciences Sociales*, 30(3–4):71–73, 1986. [An attempt to use the apparatus of cost-benefit analysis in the development of a semantics for non-standard logics. In examining such problems as "Aristotle's tomorrow sea battle" we must take into account not only expected things, but unexpected ones too].

[5] Mihail-Radu Solcan. John Locke şi conceptul de proprietate. *Revista de filosofie*, (1):39–42, January–February 1992. [The work of John Locke is read as a gate to modernity. A paradox of the way of Locke towards modernity is examined. The paradox emerges when one considers Marx's work as pointing towards a contradiction in Locke's construction. Marx is wrong however when he treats a contradiction in a theory of capitalism as a contradiction of capitalism itself, leading towards its self-destruction].

[6] Mihail-Radu Solcan. Procese sociale şi terapie cognitivă. *Sfera politicii*, (9):22–23, September 1993. [The paper focuses on the role of knowledge in social processes. It analyzes the modern history of Romania and explains the failure of communism as a result of knowledge shortage resulting from the absence of free discussion].

[7] Mihail-Radu Solcan. După revoluţie: înstructurarea opţiunilor publice. *Revista de cercetări sociale*, 1(4):22–29, December 1994. [The first part is a public choice explanation of the 1990-1992 elections in Romania. The second part tries to clarify the nature of the support for post-communist and anticommunist parties in Romania. The hypothesis is that people brought into towns by the industrialization process during communism tend to support post-communist parties. Empirical evidence is considered in the case of the post-1989 political elite. In the case of the post-communist parties, around 60 per cent of the members of the elite are born in rural areas. In the case of the anticommunist parties only approximately 30 per cent are born in rural areas. Even if we take into account the small towns, this percentage is still only around 40 per cent].

[8] Mihail-Radu Solcan. Jocul libertăţii şi jocul puterii. In Adrian-Paul Iliescu and Mihail-Radu Solcan, editors, *Limitele puterii*, pp. 175–180. Bucureşti: ALL, 1994. [The main theme of the paper is the idea that the power unlimited by the rules of freedom leads to a distructive social dynamics].

[9] Mihail-Radu Solcan. Cum l-am descoperit pe Michael Oakeshott. In *Michael Oakeshott: Raţionalismul în politică*, pp. 131–136. Bucureşti: ALL, 1995. [This is a note on Oakeshott and his approach to the problem of the nature of the nazi political system. It argues that the main moment is the focus on the aim of the Nazis to obtain power and expand power. Thus power becomes an end in itself and this generates a dynamic political regime that does not stop its expansion].

[10] Mihail-Radu Solcan. Fals cuvânt înainte la *Mizeria istoricismului*. In *Karl Popper: Mizeria istoricismului*, pp. VIII–XVI. Bucureşti: ALL, 1996. [Popper rejected the idea of prefaces to his works, but the contract of the publishing house with the copyright providers required a preface to the Romanian edition of the *Poverty of Historicism*. Thus I wrote a "pseudo-foreword" explaining the nature of the philosophical ideas of Karl Popper and why there can be no "preface". Popper's philosophy of knowledge was anti-authoritarian. A preface would be a *place of authority* from which a judgment is formulated. There can be no such place].

[11] Mihail-Radu Solcan. Isaiah Berlin şi luarea în serios a ideilor. In *Isaiah Berlin: Patru eseuri despre libertate*, pp. 5–17. Bucureşti: Humanitas, 1996. [The main objective of the paper is to show, following Berlin, why ideas, not just true ideas, deserve our attention. There is no ideal or absolute truth with which to confront ideas. Discrepancy between ideas has its own value. Confronting ideas with ideas is crucial.

The relativity problem that such an approach raises is left open in this paper, but we stress the fact that Berlin did not accept relativism].

[12] Mihail-Radu Solcan. Note despre epistemologia socială aplicată. *Polis*, 4(4):93–98, 1997. [The hayekian solution of the problem of planning is taken as the paradigm of applied social epistemology. The paper examines the hypothesis that the breakdown of communism can be explained as the result of a knowledge dependency. Communism had to rely upon the import of new ideas, including ideas concerning economic structures and political institutions. When these ideas became corrosive, it broke down.

The paper considers the empirical evidence of a double system of information (for the general public and for the communist elite). The latter system is a secret system. It serves a double function: it gives access to real news and it gives access to new ideas from the external world, mainly from the West. As long as the West itself is dominated by socialist ideas, nothing happens. But when the free market becomes popular, the ideas connected with it destroy the system even when they are partially applied].

[13] Mihail-Radu Solcan. Capcane. *Sfera politicii*, (60):25–27, May 1998. The article is published together with other essays on "Romania as an exception". [The paper argues that exceptionalism is a trap. It examines the presuppositions of the idea of exceptionality. The article claims that individualism is the adequate methodology for the analysis of a world of cases. From this point of view, the discussion on exceptionality makes sense only as a discussion on cases for which there is no precedent. The paper suggests that the balance between the quest for precedents only abroad and the obsession that precedents are exclusively local is to be sought in a process of integration through competition].

[14] Mihail-Radu Solcan. David Friedman şi apărarea inteligentă a libertăţii economice. *Polis*, 5(1):187–193, 1998. [This is a review-essay on David Friedman's book *Hidden Order - the Economics of Everyday Life* (New York: Collins, 1996). It stresses the significance of "it depends" and "least bad solution"-type of answers in David Friedman. This means that we have

to take seriously arguments and not rigid social schemes, even preconceived "capitalist" ones].

[15] Mihail-Radu Solcan. Filosofia: între modestie şi umilinţă - încercare de comentariu. In Valentin Mureşan, editor, *Între Wittgenstein şi Heidegger*, pp. 91–100. Bucureşti: Alternative, 1998. [This is a contribution to a debate on the nature of philosophy among Romanian philosophers. It stresses the significance of the analysis of presuppositions for philosophy].

[16] Mihail-Radu Solcan. Naţionalismul şi dinamica puterii. *Polis*, 5(4):98–111, 1998. [The paper starts with a contrast between the "Mayflower view" and the "national view" of the constitutional foundations of the state. According to the first view the state is legitimate because it has at its roots a compact among its citizens, for example an agreement to preserve individual rights. According to the national view the state is legitimate because it has its roots in the common "blood" and the shared "historical land" of an ethnic community. Nationalism has two dimensions: the first is the aim of the reunion of the people of the same blood in one state; the second is the desire to put within the boundaries of the national state the historical and sacred territories. Practically, this leads however to the incorporation within the limits of the national state of alien ethnic groups. The reasonable solution seems to patch the national view of the state with elements of the Mayflower view, for example to stipulate ethnic minority rights. One can show, however, that this patching leads to inconsistent constitutional texts. Logically, from an inconsistent text can be inferred anything. Thus is laid the ground for arbitrary government and an expansive dynamics of the political power.

Examples from the recent history of South-Eastern Europe are examined. Further, the legislation of Romania is examined and examples of the patch of the Mayflower view upon the national view are analyzed].

[17] Mihail-Radu Solcan. Philosophical problems of the computer representation of knowledge. *Krisis*, pp. 109–116, July 1998. [The main aim of the paper is to show that computer science offers to philosophy new analytical tools].

[18] Mihail-Radu Solcan. Raţionalism şi relativism în scrieri ale lui Mircea Flonta. In Adrian-Paul Iliescu, editor, *Cunoaştere şi analiză*, pp. 74–87. Bucureşti: ALL, 1998. [This is one of the essays dedicated to the work of the Romanian philosopher Mircea Flonta, written mainly by his former students. The essays combine reconstruction and criticism. In the final part of the book Mircea Flonta answers to the criticisms.

My essay formulates the idea that Mircea Flonta's views in the philosophy of science may be characterized as "rationalist relativism"].

[19] Mihail-Radu Solcan. Democracy and reform. *Polis*, 6(2):83–93, 1999. [The paper analyzes Hayek's view on democracy. It explores the idea of different kinds of knowledge in society: functional knowledge v. experience knowledge. It argues that positions in the market v. democracy debate point towards different kinds of knowledge. The democrat emphasizes experience knowledge: democracy gives a sentiment of dignity to citizens. The advocates of the market insist on the role of functional knowledge. As an example, the paper compares former and latter views of John Gray with Hayek's vision].

[20] Mihail-Radu Solcan. John Locke şi ideea de libertate. In Silviu Culea, editor, *John Locke: Al doilea tratat despre cârmuire*, pp. 297–314. Bucureşti: Nemira, 1999. [This is an essay on Locke written for the Romanian readers of the *Second Treatise*. It develops the idea that the meaning of liberty is the non-arbitrary solution of conflicts. It tries to show that reading Locke makes sense not only when one tries to understand 1688-89, but also when one is puzzled by 1989].

[21] Mihail-Radu Solcan. Vină şi libertate: un comentariu la capitolul II din *Despre libertate*. In George Ene, editor, *Filosofia politică a lui John Stuart Mill*, pp. 223–259. Iaşi: Polirom, 2000. [An attempt to reconstruct the architecture of the central argument in the second chapter of John Stuart Mill's essay on liberty].

[22] Mihail-Radu Solcan. Hayek şi ideea de democraţie. In Adrian-Paul Iliescu, editor, *Filosofia socială a lui F.A.Hayek*, pp. 165–196. Iaşi: Polirom, 2001. [Notes on the evolution of Hayek's views on democracy].

[23] Mihail-Radu Solcan. Complexitate, cunoaştere şi instituţii. In Marcel Bodea, editor, *Complexitatea*, pp. 123–149. Cluj-Napoca: Casa Cărţii de Ştiinţă, 2002. [The main objective of the paper is to investigate the connection between the complexity of social phenomena and the role of knowledge in society].

[24] Mihail-Radu Solcan. Instituţiile şi teoria formală a acţiunii. In Adrian Miroiu, editor, *Instituţii în tranziţie*, pp. 17–54. Bucureşti: Punct, 2002. [The main aim of the paper is to identify the concepts and the analytical tools of economics used in the theory of institututions. The paper classifies the approaches inspired by economics in four groups: (1) an approach which combines public goods and transaction costs; (2) an approach focused on

the concept of public good; (3) an approached focused on transaction costs; (4) an approach which rejects both public goods and transaction costs].

[25] Mihail-Radu Solcan. Vechiul şi noul instituţionalism: o analiză comparativă. In Adrian-Paul Iliescu, editor, *Mentalităţi şi instituţii*, pp. 339–359. Bucureşti: Ars Docendi, 2002. [Notes on the old and the new institutionalism in economic thinking].

Volume Editor

[1] Mihail-Radu Solcan, editor. *Colloquim on Contemporary Topics in Philosophy of Science, Logic and Cognitive Science*: Bucureşti, 1998. Universitatea din Bucureşti. Published as an issue of the journal *Krisis*, july 1998. [The papers included in the volume have been the starting point for the debates at the Conference organized by me in Predeal, in 1997].

Readers and documentary digests

[1] Adrian-Paul Iliescu and Mihail-Radu Solcan, editors. *Limitele puterii*. Bucureşti: ALL, 1994. [This is a reader in political philosophy focused on the topic of the limits of power.].

[2] Mihail-Radu Solcan, editor. *Filosofia analitică*. Bucureşti: Academia de Studii Social-Politice — Universitatea din Bucureşti, 1982. [This is a reader in analytic philosophy. The main parts of the book are: (1) the concept of analysis; (2) logical positivism and ideal language philosophy; (3) postpositivist philosophy; (4) analytic social philosophy. It contains introductions to each part and surveys of the main lines of the development of analytic philosophy. Excerpts are from such authors as Jaakko Hintikka (for the concept of analysis), Wittgenstein (both from *Tractatus* and the *Investigations*), Łukasiewicz, Austin, Quine (from *Word and Object*). The part on social philosophy emphasizes the contribution of John Rawls to the development of a theory of justice].

[3] Mihail-Radu Solcan, editor. *Impactul social al biologiei.* Bucureşti: Academia de Studii Social-Politice, 1983. [The volume contains documentary surveys on four major topics: the origin of life, the evolution of human beings, ethical problems of biology and the conceptual structure of biological theories. The volume summarizes, among other things, the conceptions of Manfred Eigen and Peter Schuster about molecular evolution, Philip Liberman on Edmund Crelin on the speach of Neanderthal men, E. Wilson or Mary Midgley about genes. Nicolae Lotreanu and Mihail-Radu Solcan have written the introductory study].

[4] Mihail-Radu Solcan, editor. *Dezbateri pe marginea problemei corp-minte.* Bucureşti: Academia de Studii Social-Politice, 1984. [This is a documentary introduction to the body-mind problem. It argues in favor of a distinction between the body-mind problem and the (then officially emphasized as the "fundamental problem") matter-spirit problem. The main part focuses on Popper-Eccles views. The second part concentrates on physicalism. The third part is an introduction to the views of such influent authors as Ryle, Smart or Quine. The final part explores the impact of artificial intelligence on the debate and the researches on the ability of gorillas to learn a language].

[5] Mihail-Radu Solcan, editor. *Conceptul de mecanism economic şi diversele sisteme economice.* Bucureşti: Academia de Studii Social-Politice, 1985. [This documentary introduction was part of the professional "servitude" at that time, but offered me the possibility to discover the free market economics. The volume contains digests both on the planned and the market economy. It also has a presentation of Coase's and Williamson's views on the firm, on Mancur Olson and the rise and decline of nations, on Montias's views on economic systems. There is a short reader also on microeconomics, game theory (Schotter and Schwödiauer) and information theory (Marschack and Redner). I had put simply a number "1" on the volume, in order to underline the fact that it is much more to be said about economic systems].

[6] Mihail-Radu Solcan, editor. *Problema raţionalităţii în gîndirea filosofică şi ştiinţifică actuală.* Bucureşti: Academia de Studii Social-Politice, 1985. [This is a documentary introduction to the debate on rationality. It emphasizes the cultural aspect of reason and rationality in its first part. The second part is an introduction to the rationality of action (with digests of the views of economists, such as Shackle or Axelrod). The philosophical aspects are summarized in a small reader (with excerpts from Popper, Feyerabend, Agassi and others). There is also an ample presentation of the

views from the famous book of Douglas Hofstadter *Gödel, Escher, Bach* on logic, philosophy, art and artificial intelligence].

Reviews and documentary summaries

[1] Mihail-Radu Solcan. Prezentare documentară a cărţii lui Michel Wieviorka *L'Etat, le patronat et les consommateurs*. *Inex – Academia de Studii Social-Politice*, 305, 1978.

[2] Mihail-Radu Solcan. Prezentare documentară a cărţii lui Perry Anderson *Sur le marxisme occidental*. *Inex – Academia de Studii Social-Politice*, 309, 1978.

[3] Mihail-Radu Solcan. Lumea managementului în schimbare. *Inex – Academia de Studii Social-Politice*, 345, 1980. Prezentarea documentară a unor articole semnate de către Peter F.Drucker, Theodore Levitt, Herbert A. Simon şi alţii.

[4] Mihail-Radu Solcan. Opinii despre raportul între structuri sociale – pilitică – religie islamică (cu referire specială la iran). *Inex – Academia de Studii Social-Politice*, 350, 1980. Sinteză documentară a unor articole semnate de Paule Vieille, James A. Bill şi alţii.

[5] Mihail-Radu Solcan. Prezentare documentară a articolului lui roger gottlieb "marxism and the three forms of social primacy". *Inex – Academia de Studii Social-Politice*, 345, 1980.

[6] Mihail-Radu Solcan. Prezentare documentară a articolului lui Thomas Tymoczko "The four-color problem and its philosophical significance". *Inex – Academia de Studii Social-Politice*, 353, 1980.

[7] Mihail-Radu Solcan. Prezentare documentară a cărţii lui Leszek Kołakowski *Main Currents of Marxism*. *Inex – Academia de Studii Social-Politice*, 337, 1980.

[8] Mihail-Radu Solcan. Prezentare documentară a cărţii *Toward a Human World Order*. *Inex – Academia de Studii Social-Politice*, 344, 1980.

[9] Mihail-Radu Solcan. Prezentare documentară a cărţii lui Wolfgang Stegmüller *Haupströmungen der Gegenwartsphilosophie*, vol.II. *Buletin informativ – Academia de Studii Social-Politice*, 1:91–133, 1981.

[10] Mihail-Radu Solcan. Prezentare documentară a articolului lui Raymond Gumb "An explication of the notion of a consistent evolving theory". *Inex – Academia de Studii Social-Politice*, 400, 1982.

[11] Mihail-Radu Solcan. Prezentare documentară a cărţii lui Adam Schaff *Stereotypen und das menschliche Handeln. Inex – Academia de Studii Social-Politice*, 395, 1982.

[12] Mihail-Radu Solcan. Recenzie la cartea lui Wolfgang Stegmüller *Haupströmungen der Gegenwartsphilosophie*, vol.II. *Revista de filosofie*, 29(4):410–411, 1982.

[13] Mihail-Radu Solcan. Sartre despre libertate - prezentare documentară a contribuţiei lui Dagfinn Føllesdal la volumul Schilpp consacrat lui Sartre. *Buletin informativ – Academia de Studii Social-Politice*, 1:209–213, 1982.

[14] Mihail-Radu Solcan. Recenzie la articolul lui Michał Tempczyk "categories and elementary particle physics". *Revista de filosofie*, 30(3):281–283, 1983.

[15] Mihail-Radu Solcan. Recenzie la cartea lui Robert Nozick *Philosophical Explanations. Revista de filosofie*, 30(3):280, 1983.

[16] Mihail-Radu Solcan. Prezentare documentară a cărţii lui Julián Marías *España inteligible. Ştiinţe sociale şi politice peste hotare–Direcţii–Tendinţe*, 1986.

[17] Mihail-Radu Solcan. Articole despre James M. Buchanan şi Bernard Mandeville. In Laurenţiu Ştefan Scalat, editor, *Dicţionarul scrierilor politice fundamentale*. Bucureşti: Humanitas, 2000.

Translations (other translations than those included in readers and documentary digests edited by me)

[1] Samuel P. Huntington. *Viaţa politică americană* (translated by Mihail-Radu Solcan). Bucureşti: Humanitas, 1994. [Translation of Samuel P. Huntington's book *American Politics: the Promise of Disharmony*].

[2] Bertrand Russell. Despre denotare (translated by Mihail-Radu Solcan). *Buletin informativ – Academia de Studii Social-Politice*, 1:49–71, 1981. [Translation of Russell's paper *On Denoting*].

[3] John Searle. Au maşinile de calcul mai multă minte decât noi? (translated by Mihail-Radu Solcan). *Inex – Academia de Studii Social-Politice*, 401, 1982. Translation of "The Myth of the Computer", *The New York Review of Books* 29(7):3–8(1982).