

GEORGETA ADAM

RECOLLECTIONS OF THE SUMMER OF 2016

I play, therefore I think and I am!

If am to start from somewhere, I should say that Mircea Cartarescu's story "Mandebilul", from "Nostalg" volume, presents a genuine collection of Bucharest childhood games. A scrip writer might write a script inspired by this strange story. I had a deep feeling of joy reading the book "Outside the Block of Flats", too, a collection of 55 games and life stages of the generations who grew up wearing a string with the key of their flats hanging from it around their necks.

I certainly would not have stopped at these examples if I had not had the chance to participate in the European project Erasmus+ entitled MATH-GAMES: GAMES AND MATHEMATICS IN EDUCATION FOR ADULTS 2015-1-DEO2-KA204-002260, coordinated by an association from Germany joined by associations and institutes from another 8 countries: Bulgaria, Cyprus, Greece, France, Italy, Romania, Spain and Turkey.



Bucharest-June 2016: MATH-GAMES poster and the team of the 3rd meeting of Erasmus+ project MATH-GAMES in Romania

Therefore, let's not forget to play even in our adult life, especially because many games deal with Math rules, elementary Arithmetic, Geometry or even Math Analysis and Statistics. Our mind practices its abilities of knowledge, association, orientation by playing using Mathematical connections, which we are not aware of when we are children, but as adults we find a support in the logical organization of Mathematics.

During this scorching summer, in the period of 18th-21st of June, we had the opportunity to organize here, in Bucharest, in the beautiful "Mihail Sadoveanu" Metropolitan Library, the 3rd meeting of MATH-GAMES project, which is a three year long activity taking place between 2015 and 2018. On this occasion the participants were able to assess an important stage of the project, namely the completion of THE MATH-GAMES COMPENDIUM, a 200 pages volume, translated in 10 languages, Romanian included, with colour images, in which 33 games are described: the Targeter, Draughts, Damath, Tangram, the Sea War, 10 Dies Game, Domino, Marble Games, Ludo, Connect 4, Digit 9 Combinations, Black Jack Card Games, Math Scrabble, Monopoly, Petanque, Ticktacktoe, Stone, Paper, Scissors, 7 Steps, Classic Backgammon, Chess, Calculator Hopscotch, Magic Square, 4 seasons,

Steal the Heap, The Crow's Feet, Skip the Rope, Round Dance, 15 Digit Puzzle, NIM, Okey, Hopscotch, Sudoku.

More information can be found on the project site www.math-games.eu, where from you can also download a pdf format book of games in Romanian language.

The teams of the 9 countries consisting of experts and teachers, led by the coordinating "captain" Roland Schneidt, discussed and mapped out the next stage of the MATH-GAMES project, that is a methodological guidebook for teachers and students which describes in detail all the stages of the games, aiming at highlighting both the importance of Mathematics in playing and the lively and funny side of learning elementary Mathematics while playing.

Games traditions are to be found in European historical vestiges (The Targeter used to be played in Rome and by the Roman soldiers), in Asian legends (The Magic Square tells about the visions of the Chinese emperor Yu-Huang while watching a tortoise shield). Many games were invented by science men or by addicted American enterprisers, such as Monopoly. There are hardly any peoples without such fascinating games. NIM is a fascinating game played with matches' sticks and Sudoku was invented by famous American newspaper men.

This summer was the time of games spotted in parks, in libraries or shop-windows. Do you play chess, cards or backgammons? Do you skip the rope? Do you join a round dance in a village? Then you are a player and you are welcome in our team!



Chess players at Sinaia, little girl playing Hopscotch in the same park, an expert player in Athens admiring a chess shop-window.

"Ariadna' Association of Romanian Women Journalists proposed three active games for this Compendium, The Crow's Feet, Skipping the Rope and the Round Dance, on which professor Wolfram Meyerhofer commented as follows in the Compendium Prologue: "The Compendium promotes a third type of games, that is the active one, such as the Crow's Feet, the Rope, the Round Dance, Seven Steps and Hopscotch. They not only give ideas of lesson relaxation, but also promote Mathematic thinking in a new way-the students develop their sense of structure. I can define the next stage paraphrasing a famous line: "Hardly did I think I would ever learn to play", or "I play, therefore I think and I am"!