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Topics in Ethics and Ideologies

JOHANNES MICHAEL SCHNARRER

Ethics and its challenges • 4

IMRE UNGVÁRI ZRÍNYI

Ethical business institutions.
How are they possible? • 14

ROBERT ARNĂUTU

Prolegomena to Digital Communication Ethics • 23

ȘTEFAN COJOCARU

Social Projectionism: A Vision For New Ethics In
Social Welfare • 32

VERESS KÁROLY

Sin And The Experience Of Finiteness • 39

ERDOGAN YŪLDŪRYM

Dangers Of Morality And The Rationality Of The
Desire For Perpetual Peace • 47

LEONARD SWIDLER

A Clash Or Dialogue Of Civilizations?
A “Medieval” Or “Modern” Mentality • 59

ROBERT DANIEL RUBIN

The New Christian Right and the Death of Secu-
larism as Neutrality in the United States • 68

ȘTEFAN AFLOROEI

Efecte de limită ale ideologiei • 78

DAN ANDREI ILAȘ

Does a system of ideologies really exist? A comparative
approach to five ideological ideal-types • 90

DAN-EUGEN RAȚIU

The Subsidized Muse or the Market-oriented
Muse? Supporting Artistic Creation in Romania
between State Intervention and Art Market. • 106

Philosophical Inquiries

SANDU FRUNZĂ

Jewish Philosophy and the Metaphor of Returning
to Jerusalem • 128

SCIRI Conferences

ADRIAN COSTACHE

*Mark Tansey – Derrida Queries de Man. Application to
Derrida's Questioning of Hermeneutics* • 139

Miscellanea

MIHAELA PARASCHIVESCU

The Religious American • 147

ISTVÁN KIRÁLY V.

Ciphers and Existence – Karl Jaspers between West
and East – • 152

Book Reviews

MARIUS JUCAN

Andrei Pleșu - Comedii la porțile Orientului
Farces at the Orient's Gates • 161

MARIUS JUCAN

Adrian Neculau (ed.) - Viața cotidiană în comunism
Everyday Life in Communism • 163

MARIUS JUCAN

Daniel Barbu - Politica pentru barbari /
Politics for Barbarians • 165

MARIUS JUCAN

Jean-Francois Mattei - Barbaria interioara. Eseu
despre imundul modern / On Inner Barbarity. An
Essay on the Modern Vile • 167

MARIUS JUCAN

Matei Călinescu - Cinci fețe ale modernității.
Modernism, avangardă, decadență, kitsch,
postmodernism. / Five Faces of Modernity. Mod-
ernism, Avant-Guard, Decadence, Kitsch,
Postmodernism • 169

IULIA GRAD

Zygmunt Bauman - Comunitatea. Căutarea siguranței într-o
lume nesigură / The Community • 171

RIGÁN LÓRÁND

Attila M. Demeter Republikanizmus,
nacionalizmus, nemzeti kisebbségek - Republican-
ism, nationalism, national minorities • 173

FLOREA LUCACI

Claudiu Mesaroș - Filosofii cerului / The philoso-
phers of the sky above • 176

CODRUȚA CUCEU

Lucian Boia - The Scientific Mythology of Com-
munism • 179

SEBASTIAN DRAIMAN

Theodor Damian - Implicațiile spirituale ale
teologiei icoanei • 181

CRISTIAN ȚIPLE

Nicu Gavriluță - Mișcări religioase orientale. O
perspectivă socio-antropologică asupra globalizării
practicilor yoga • 182



Johannes Michael Schnarrer

Univ.-Prof. Dr.phil.,
Dr.Dipl.theol., S.T.L.
professor at the University of Karlsruhe, and at the University of Vienna
Author of the books: The common good in our changing world (1997); Allianz für den Sonntag (1998); Norm und Naturrecht verstehen (1999); Aktuelle Herausforderungen der Ethik in Wirtschaft und Politik (1999); Anything goes? Sittlichkeit im Zeitalter der Skepsis (2000); Solidarität und Sozialstaat (2000); Spannungsfelder praktischer Philosophie (2003); Reihe Komplexe Ethik 1 Sittliche Urteilsbildung in der vernetzten Gesellschaft - Grundlagen (2004)
E-mail: johannesschnarrer@univie.ac.at

Johannes Michael Schnarrer

Ethics and its challenges

I would like to look at some of the challenges of ethics today. Therefore, in the first part I say something about ethics, the ethical theories and ethical concepts. Afterwards I am going to explain a little bit about the human dimensions, the dealing with experiences (i.e. work); because the human person has to decide the right thing in the right place on the right time, and in relatively freedom. In the end, there are some ideas about applied ethics which is necessary to focusing on the practical issues, too. Otherwise people who do not like the ethical discussions they could think that ethical ideas are selfsufficient and do not make sense, but I will tell them something else....

What is ethics all about?

First of all, the systems of value and custom instantiated in the lives of particular groups of human beings are described as ethics of these groups. Philosophers may concern themselves with articulating these systems, but this is usually seen as the task of anthropology.

Second, the term is used to refer to one in particular of these systems, morality, which involves notions such as rightness and wrongness, guilt and shame, and so on. The central question here is how best to characterize this system. Is a moral system one with a certain function, such as to enable cooperation among individuals, or must it involve certain sentiments, such as those concerned with blame?

Third, ethics can, within this system of morality itself, refer to actual moral principles: Why did you return the book? It was the only ethical thing to do in that particular circumstances.

Key words:

**Ethics, Humanity,
Freedom, Objectivity,
Meaning**

Finally, ethics is that area of philosophy concerned with the study of ethics in its other senses. It is important to remember that philosophical ethics is not independent of other areas of philosophy. The answer to many ethical questions depend on answers to questions in metaphysics and other areas. Furthermore, philosophers have been concerned to establish links between the ethical sphere of life itself and other spheres. Some philosophers have, for philosophical reasons, had doubts about whether philosophy provides anyway the best approach to ethics. And even those who believe philosophy has a contribution to make may suggest that ethical justification must refer outside philosophy to common sense beliefs or real-life examples.

A central task of philosophical ethics is to articulate what constitutes ethics or morality. This „project” is that of meta-ethics. What is it that especially constitutes the moral point of view as opposed to others? Some argue that what is morally required is equivalent to what is required by reason overall, whereas others see morality as providing just one source of reasons. Yet, others have suggested that all reasons are self-interested, and that concern for others is ultimately irrational. This has not been seen to be inimical in itself to the notion of morality, however, since a moral system can be seen to benefit its participants.

The moral point of view itself is often spelled out as grounded on a conception of equal respect. But there is some debate about how impartial morality requires us to be. Another set of issues concerns what it is that gives a being moral status, either as an object of moral concern or as an actual moral agent. And how do our understandings of human nature impinge on our conception of morality and moral agency?

Once we have some grip on what ethics is, we can begin to ask questions about moral principles themselves. Moral principles have often been put in terms of what is required by duty, but there has been something of a reaction against it as a result of a masculine overemphasis on rules at the cost of empathy and care. These doubts are related to general concerns about the role principles should play in ethical thought. Situation ethicists suggest that circumstances can lead to

abandonment of any moral principle, particularists arguing that is because it cannot be assumed that a reason that applies in one case will apply in others. The casuistical tradition has employed moral principles, but in the understanding that there is no „super-principle” to decide conflicts of principles. At the other end of the spectrum, some philosophers have sought to understand morality as itself constituted by a single principle, such as that not to lie.

Duties have been seen also as constituting only a part of morality, allowing for the possibility of heroically going beyond the call of duty. This is a matter of the scope of the notion of duty within morality. There are also issues concerning the scope of moral principles more generally. Does a given moral principle apply everywhere, and at all times, or is morality somehow bounded by space or time? This question is related to that concerning what is going on when someone allows morality to guide them, or asserts a moral principle. How is the capacity of moral judgment acquired? The view that humans possess a special moral sense or capacity for intuition, often identified with conscience, is still found among contemporary intuitions. Scepticism about the claims of morality, however, remains a common view.

In recent centuries, a dichotomy has opened up between those who believe that morality is based solely on reason, and those who suggested that some nonrational component such as desire or emotion is also involved. Denial of pure rationalism need not lead to the giving up of morality. Much work in the twentieth century was devoted to the question whether moral judgments were best understood as beliefs, or as disguised expressions of emotions or commands. Can there be moral experts, or is each person entirely responsible for developing their own morality? These questions have been seen as closely tied to issues concerning moral motivation itself. Moral judgments seem to motivate people, so it is tempting to think that they crucially involve a desire.

Moral principles can be understood to rest on moral values, and debate continues about how to characterize these values and about how many evaluative assumptions are required to ground ethical claims. Against the emotivists and others,

moral realists have asserted the existence of values, some identifying moral properties with those properties postulated in a fully scientific worldview.

Presuppositions of ethical theories

The expression „ethical theory” has been used, and abused, in so many different ways. It is necessary to use it as more narrowly than many writers do – otherwise it would become a subject that could not be covered in a short paper. It is meant by it the study of the moral concepts, that is, of use of the moral words, of their meaning in a broad sense, or of what we are doing when we ask moral questions. An important part, at least, of the meaning of all words, including moral words, is determined by their logical properties. And that is why the subject has practical importance. For one of the chief things that is demanded of the moral philosopher is that he/or she should do something to help to discuss moral questions rationally; and this requires obedience to the logical rules governing the concepts. The prime task of philosophy, since Socrates started that „business”, is the study of arguments; and the prime task of moral philosophy is the study of moral arguments, to learn how to tell good from bad ones. In this task ethical theory, which reveals the logic of the moral concepts, is an essential tool.

It may help confine the subject within bounds in saying what ethical theory is not. Many writers now use the expression ‘moral theory’. Usually, it is not clear what they mean by it; it seems to cover a vast area of indeterminate size, but at least includes the views of the writers on a lot of substantial moral questions, systematized often into a number of moral principles, such as Rawls’s ‘Principle of Justice’. Thus a moral theory cannot be a purely formal discipline dealing only in logical and conceptual studies. Kant was very insistent on this distinction between formal and substantial theses. It is not possible to denying the importance of using rational arguments to decide on substantial moral principles. That is the ambition of all serious moral philosophers. But there is a prior task: that of finding the rules governing the argument. Without those rules, anything goes.

If we ask what are we doing, we shall have to do some conceptual analysis, and the result of it is likely to be that all forms of descriptivism fail to give an adequate account of the matter; there is an essential prescriptive element in the meaning of moral statements which goes beyond their descriptive meaning.

It is necessary of using the expression ‘ethical theory’, then, in the narrow sense of the theory about the meaning and logical properties of the moral words. Therefore, it is helpful to distinguish good from bad arguments about moral questions. It is even more surprising, therefore, how many moral philosophers try to persuade us that we do not need to study ethical theory. One reason why people say this may be the following. They have examined various ethical theories that have been put forward, and have (often after insufficient study) decided that these will not do. They have therefore concluded too hastily that no ethical theory is adequate. The different writers on the matter reveal different parts of the truth about morality. The moral philosopher who is less of a defeatist will go on to try to find a theory which preserves the truths in each of these theories but avoids their errors.

Ethical concepts

Some philosophical ethics is broad and general, seeking to find general principles or explanations of morality. Much, however, focuses on analysis of notions central to ethics itself. One such notion which has been the focus of much discussion in recent years is that of autonomy. The interest in self-governance sits alongside other issues concerning the self, its moral nature and its ethical relation to others; and the relations of these selves in a social context. Other topics discussed include the nature of moral ideals, and the notions of desert and moral responsibility.

The question of what makes for a human life that is good for the person living it has been at the heart of ethics since the Greek philosophers enquired into eudaimonia. Once again, a philosopher’s theory of the good will almost always be closely bound up with their views on other central matters. For example, some of those who put weight on sense experi-

ence in our understanding of the world have been tempted by the view that the good consists entirely in a particular kind of experience, pleasure. Others have claimed that there is more to life than mere pleasure, and that the good life consists in fulfilling our complex human nature. Nor have philosophers forgotten 'the bad'.

Moral philosophy, or ethics, has long been at least partly concerned with the advocacy of particular ways of living or acting. Some traditions have now declined; but there is still a large range of views on how we should live. One central modern tradition is that of consequentialism. On this view, as it is usually understood, we are required by morality to bring about the greatest good overall. The nature of any particular consequentialist view, therefore, depends on its view of the good overall. The most influential theory has been that the only good is the welfare or happiness of individual human and other animals, which, when combined with consequentialism, is utilitarianism.

It is commonly said that consequentialist views are based on the good, rather than on the right. Concepts based on the right may be described as deontological. The towering figure in the deontological tradition has been the eighteenth-century German philosopher, Immanuel Kant. Such concepts will claim, for example, that we should keep a promise even if more good overall would come from breaking it, or that there are restrictions on what we can intentionally do in pursuit of the good. In the second half of the twentieth century there was a reaction against some of the perceived excesses of consequentialist and deontological ethics, and a return to the ancient notion of the virtues. Work in this area has consisted partly in attacks on modern ethics, but also in further elaborations and analysis of the virtues and related concepts.

The role of experiences

One of the most important terms in ethics is that of experience. When we look at it carefully, we see that the meaning of any experience and the meaning of the things that enter into that experience are intrinsic to the experience itself. Not

all experiences are that full of meaning, but some are. And it is these particularly meaningful happenings that have impact on people's lives, on the way they view themselves and their relationships to one another, on the decisions they make, and therefore on the things they actually do, and eventually on the human society they build together.

Not all experiences are equally meaningful. Some psychologists and educators have drawn attention to this rather evident fact, and have pointed to the special role of 'key experiences'. These key or 'peak' happenings have more meaning, at least more meaning as average experiences. From the meaning attached to these key experiences, a person then finds meaning in the rest of life and establishes a meaning for himself or herself.

There are two kinds of key experiences: (A) There are the striking, out-of-the-ordinary, one-time occurrences – surviving a very serious auto accident, making a scientific discovery, being in a war and working with its victims – that challenge and change the meaning of everything that we thought we understood. (B) There are the more ordinary but basically important experiences that we all share – births and deaths and pain and worry and achievement and friendship – whose meaning affects the meaning of everything else.

Perhaps by looking a bit more closely at one of these latter, more universal experiences we can better appreciate their complex meaning and the impact they have on the meaning of a particular person's life. Let us look at work. Work, taken in a broad sense, is certainly one of the most common experiences in human life. Whether it is a parent caring for the home and children, or a man or woman in a factory job or an office job, or a lawyer arguing a case in court, or a research scientist in a laboratory, humans with rare exceptions are engaged in some form of work. Yet, work can mean very different things for different people.

Even if two individuals are engaged in what is externally the same kind of work – bus drivers – they can view the work in very different ways. For one person the daily routine of bus driving is a constant battle with impolite car drivers, inconsiderate and complaining passengers, unpleasant working condi-

tions, overdemanding bosses, etc. For the other person the daily routine is quite enjoyable – greeting one's regular passengers and coming to know their interests and life stories, watching the seasonal changes in the familiar but evolving territory of the bus route, being able to help strangers find their way in town.

Social analysts have pointed out the extent to which the attitude toward work is a major factor in human life today. Because of the routine and monotony that came with industrial development and increased with technology, work often gives no outlet for a woman or a man's imagination or creative skills. Often, a person is only doing what a complicated machine could do better. The only that the work has is in terms of the marketability of the product; labor is totally product-oriented; the work has no human meaning, at least as far as the worker is concerned. Such an experience of work has proved to be deeply dehumanizing for a large segment of the work force. Some persons seem able to insulate themselves from this depersonalizing effect, but even in these cases the experience of work does not contribute to their life-meaning, except insofar as it provides the financial means for then going something else more truly human. We sell our life time for earning money...

As a result of this situation, which unfortunately has applications far beyond what we ordinarily consider industrial work, many humans do not have the experience of personally achieving something by their labor. Their work experience is one of earning money. Personal pride in work well done, a sense of reasonably discharging a role for the good of their fellow humans – these are elements of a healthy discovery of self-meaning that today's work situation rather seldom provides. As a result a large portion of most people's daily experience is deprived of the human meaning it might and should have.

Ethics is... to be human

One thing that is absolutely basic for ethics to being human is our ability to be conscious, to be aware of what is go-

ing on within us and around us. This human awareness is more than a perception of what touches us from outside and inside – many levels of animal life possess this. Humans are aware that we as self-identifiable knowers have this perception of the 'world'. When we reflect on this aspect of our human existing, it is truly a mysterious and wondrous reality. Though we are confined bodily to the relatively insignificant portion of space that we occupy at any given moment, our range of conscious existing extends far beyond that. In our knowing we are able to move far beyond our immediate observation (such as the microbes we can see with a microscope or the subatomic structures of matter that we cannot directly see); we can think about things (like mathematical formulations) that our own minds have created as abstract ideas and which have no existence outside our thought. We can know about things that happened long ago, and dream about a future yet unrealized.

Because we are knowers, we can extend the range of our human existing in almost infinite fashion; without ceasing we can enrich the world of conscious existence we move in. We can quite literally bring the richness of the universe that surrounds us into ourselves; and we can even add to the wonder and beauty of that world by our own creative imagining – by our music and art and poetry.

By far the most important part of our 'going out' to the world around us is our reaching out to people, to the men and women and children who share with us this capacity for consciousness. We are not only able to know that these people are there; we are able to touch them in friendship and concern and shared interests. We are able to form human community with them. We are able, that is, to love. Self-interest we can have (and do); we can and do depend upon others to provide for our needs. But there is something else, human friendship, that has always defied clear explanation or definition. Throughout history women and men have tried, not too successfully, to grasp the essence of this experience that is such a fundamental and important and rewarding part of human life. We still do not know exactly how to explain friendship; we do know that it is precious.

Because of this capacity for affective existing, we humans are able to be for one another, to exist together, to share consciousness with and learn from one another. Paradoxically, because of the capacity to love, we can possess one another as friends without limiting anyone's freedom or personal distinctiveness. Of course, this ability can often be used in wrong ways. Many people are incapable of loving maturely; no one of us loves with complete maturity. In greater or lesser degree we try to possess others in ways that exploit them; we use them for our own selfish goals; we wish to cling to others, often with little regard for the other person's good. But when we do things like this, we recognize that this is a poor expression of our power to love; such actions do not really deserve the name "love".

In our better moments we recognize that human love and friendship are a gift and treasure without compare, that no material riches can outweigh it or compensate for it if it does not exist in our lives. With friends our lives have meaning; without some persons who truly care for us and whom we in turn love, our human existence is drab and lonely and oppressive and shallow. From a religious point of view the very essence of human sin (in the Christian sense) is the deliberate refusal of love. And it is a sin, not because there is some abstract 'law of God' that says we should love one another being an ethical person, but because denial of love destroys our own personhood and destroys the shared life of human community upon which we all depend in order to be human.

To be... is to be free

Linked to our ability to know and to love is our human freedom. Clearly, whatever freedom we have is limited by the particular situation in space and time in which we find ourselves. Yet, we do have the power in the most important matters to shape our cultural and ethical future and ourselves. We are not able to become Napoleon or Julius Caesar – or for a matter, any prominent person today – but each of us is able to establish a unique identity as the person we are; we are truly able to decide who and what we wish to be.

No one else can be the person I am; in the last analysis, no one can keep me from being me. While I cannot effectively decide to achieve things that lie beyond my abilities – for example, to become the world's leading sculptor or Olympic athlete – I can decide to be a good and loving and honest person. I decide to make life happier for those around me. I can decide to be concerned for others and to be of help to them. I can decide to live alert and interested and continually growing in my awareness of the world around me. Yes, there are obstacles to all this; sometimes there are formidable barriers that stand in the way of my becoming the person I wish to be. Ultimately, though, the human person has the ability to surmount these barriers, or perhaps it would be more accurate to say that together, helping one another, we have the capability of overcoming or even removing these barriers.

To live this way – alert, aware, concerned and loving and open to others, free and self-determining – does not come easily. It is a challenge, a task to be undertaken, a price we have to pay for being truly human. Actually, the Christian faith (the Jewish faith, the Islamic faith etc.) tells us that this goal would be beyond us. The 'contrariness' that is linked with many of the obstacles we face is part of the mystery of evil (and evil is a negative ethical idiom). There is a power, evil, that is strange but quite apparent force in our human lives. This force invades the experience of each of us in various ways; it obstructs our attempts together to shape a genuinely human society. It takes the form of dishonesty and infidelity to one another. It takes the form of injustice and exploitation and war. Its power is ultimately so great that only the countering power of divine love is able to overcome it.

Important is the 'meaning'

Each of us is exposed to an outside world that is objectively there, but no two of us perceive that world in exactly the same way; each makes a personal 'world' that bears more or less resemblance to what is actually there. In this process, one of the most important factors is the meaning we

attach to various things or to the experience as a whole. So, in preparing to understand new ethical challenges, we might profitably take a closer look at the role of meaning in our lives.

Meaning seems to have vanished from much of our life today. Any number of twentieth and twentyfirst-century thinkers have drawn attention to this threat. Perhaps it has been the experience of two world wars and the danger of a third, or the collapse of so much in human society that had seemed solid and lasting. Whatever the cause, there is little doubt that life in recent years has become more and more meaningless for millions of people. For a large portion of the human race there seems to be no permanent significance in anything they do; they seem to have no importance as people. As far as they can see, they could simply disappear from the scene and nothing would be changed; no one would miss them for more than a short time; history would record neither their life nor their death; no achievement of theirs would live in or have any effect on people. So, what sense does it make?

But the problem of finding meaning in a human experience is not all that new. Humans have always faced the need to make some sense out of the flow of happenings that made up their days and any years. To a considerable extent, this is what initiation rites of various kinds in different cultures and religions were all about. This is what took place as parents guided their children through infancy and childhood. This is, or should be, a principal aim of the formal education we provide for young people. As young persons come to awareness and move towards adult life, those who are older and, we hope, wiser guide them in discovering the meaning of the various occurrences and situations that make up their lives.

The meaning of our experiences is often ambiguous. When, for instance, a person gives a gift, does that mean that the giver is expressing friendship, or offering a bribe that will require future repayment? Or if a student is given a failing mark on an essay, does that mean that the student is slow, or that the student did not work hard enough on the essay, or that the teacher is incompetent, or that the class material is beyond the capacity of an ordinary student of that age, or

that the teacher graded the essay with a prejudiced view of the student? For the student involved, for his or her parents, for the teacher, the 'objective' fact of the failure is seen differently, and so far each of these persons the failure is, or can be, a quite different 'reality'.

Reasons for actions

In exploring the nature or the relationship between practical reason and reality, let us begin with the foundations of the analysis. Since practical reason – the reason for ethics – is the reason we use to plan action. The first step to finding reasons is to guide our actions for the person to ask, 'Why are you doing that?' and 'Why should we do that?', about all the activities in which she/he, and other members of her/his community participate. Continuing to ask these questions in response to each answer will, eventually, yield a series of reasons for acting for which a person can give no further reasons. So, for example, a person might be asked, 'Why are you going out to-night?', to which she/he might reply, 'to catch up with some friends'. To this reply, she/he could then be asked, 'Why do you want to catch up with those friends?' to which she/he might answer, 'in order to maintain my friendship with them'. Again, the question might come, the question might come, 'Why do you want to maintain your friendship with them?' to which a reply might be, 'because I value friendship'. Here 'friendship' is being offered as a practical reason that explains and justifies what the person is doing. Asking such trains of questions about a sufficient range of human activities will eventually produce a substantive list of the object(ive)s that people offer as irreducible practical reasons for doing what they do. It is critical to note, because of its importance to our ethical discussion, that practical reflection can only occur in the light of a person's theoretical knowledge about the world. We make this particularly clear when we observe, in relation to the 'knowledge' being offered as a basic justificatory reason, that the principle truth and knowledge is worth pursuing is not somehow innate, inscribed on the mind of birth. On the contrary, the value of truth be-

comes obvious only to one who has experienced the urge to question, who has grasped the connection between question and answer, who understands that knowledge is constituted by correct answers.

Finding these basic justificatory reasons for action is one of the first tasks of ethics. However, as we are careful to point out, ethics is both a practical and a theoretical pursuit. We study ethics both to make choices and to understand the nature of human choice-making. When we discover that friendship is an irreducible practical reason that justifies what we do, we discover both the practical truth, that the pursuit of friendship is a practical reason for making a choice, and that friendship is a foundational practical reason for choice in that body of theoretical knowledge we call ethics. As theoretical knowledge, it is possible to relate discoveries we make in ethics to other bodies of theoretical knowledge, such as our knowledge about human nature. In doing so, we may both enhance those other areas of knowledge and enrich our understanding of ethics. It is exactly this task that we need to pursue to understand the relationship between practical reason and reality. And here, we touch the area of 'applied ethics'.

Basic ideas on applied ethics

Philosophical ethics has always been to some degree applied to real life. Aristotle, for example, believed that there was no point in studying ethics unless it would have some beneficial effect on the way one lived one's life. But since the 1960s, there has been a renewed interest in detailed discussion of particular issues of contemporary practical concern.

One area in which ethics has always played an important role is medicine, in particular in issues involving life and death. Recently, partly as a result of advances in science and technology, new areas of enquiry have been explored. In addition, certain parts of medical practice which previously lacked their own distinctive ethics have begun to develop them.

This development is part of a wider movement involving research into the ethical requirements on those with particular occupations. Some of this research is again related to scien-

tific advance and its implications for public policy. But, again, attention has also been given to occupations not in the past subjected to much philosophical ethical analysis.

The planet, and those who live and will live on it, have in recent times become the focus of much political concern, and this has had its effect on philosophy. But just as the scope of ethical enquiry has broadened, so there has been renewed interest in the specific details of human relationships, whether personal or between society, state and individual.

Cultural challenges

Different religious and philosophical traditions have different ways of accommodating the existential pluralism that is endemic to human social experience. Those intellectual traditions are rooted in the assemblages of lived practices that we call cultures. Global migration, communication, and commerce, of course, bring about an intermingling of cultures that can confuse and torment as well as immeasurably enrich. If the circumstances under which an individual makes choices between opposing and incommensurable values can resound of the tragic, the situation seems even more intractable when it comes to the conflict between different traditions. Antigone chooses between two alternatives that are both recognizably hers. I may have to choose, as a citizen of an EU-country, between the demands of self-interest and the requirements of charity, but both of those choices are recognizable parts of a world that I recognize as my own. It is quite different matter when the choice appears to be between two systems of value, one of which is acknowledged as mine, whereas the other is – other. In this paper we focus most of our attention on this level and we call this form of pluralism, manifested at the level of tension between rather than within cultures, ethical pluralism in the global world.

Cultural ethics on our planet, in this sense, is the recognition that there are in the world different ethical traditions, that these distinguish themselves at least in name one from the other, and differ not only in matters of practical judgment on moral issues (for instance citizenship, euthanasia, relation-

ships between the sexes) but in modes of reasoning used to reach such judgments. How can such ethical and cultural traditions be brought into mutually fruitful dialogue?

The problem of objectivity

First of all, we must confront the basic epistemological issues. Is it possible to attain any objective knowledge that transcends the broad historical, cultural, political and ethical contexts within which one is embedded? Even philosophers of natural science are no longer certain that this is possible. Consider the discontinuity between Newtonian mechanics and quantum mechanics. From the framework of Newtonian mechanics, motion can be understood in deterministic terms. The relation from cause to effect is singular and in principle predictable. When, however, one looks at very small scale phenomena (the movement of electrons or protons), neither Newtonian mechanics nor, for that matter, Einsteinian relativity any longer works. Instead, depending on the measurement, protons sometimes behave like particles and sometimes like waves and the relation of 'cause' to 'effect' is one of probability rather than determination. Is the universe a discontinuous 'quantized' reality or a smoothly curved spacetime continuum? Is it lawlike or not? What you say, it might appear, depends on where you sit!

The apparent irresolvability of such issues has raised questions in other branches of science. Might not all claims about physical reality be in some sense relative to the particular frameworks within which the scientist works, a framework so general and all-encompassing that to step outside of it would be in a real sense 'revolutionary'? Thomas S. Kuhn gave the name 'paradigm' to such frameworks and claimed, or at least appeared to claim, that basic terms (such as 'length', 'time', 'velocity') had different meanings in each paradigm.

In philosophy, this situation came to be known as the 'theory-ladenness of observations', and it has been a topic of violent debate in the philosophy of science. At stake was, or seemed to be, the very possibility of objective knowledge.

Was it really true that scientific judgements were relative to the theoretical framework of the scientist? If so, it would seem that the framework itself was subject to social and historical factors. There was, to recall Hegel, to be no jumping over Rhodes, no escape from the circumstances of one's knowledge.

Similar developments can be found in the human sciences. And here the matter is much more intense than in the physical sciences, for in the humanities 'paradigms' claim more than simple epistemological actuality – they have histories, of greater or lesser length, and have, demonstrably, worked for those who have grown up 'in' each system. Hence one may understand the world as a Christian, as a proponent of natural law, as a Muslim, as a Confucian, as a Jew, and so forth: what is important is that when one does so, actually is a Christian, Muslim, and so forth. In the ethical realm one does not so much adopt a particular perspective as manifest it. Whereas in the natural sciences quantum mechanics might have a pragmatic justification (for example, it explains a lot even if not gravitation), in the ethical and moral realms, all systems not only seem to work but they rarely if ever offer themselves as choices. Generally one is born and brought up as a Muslim or a Christian or a Jew or a Buddhist, or without religious belief. Even if one changes one's beliefs, to the degree that one chooses an ethical framework that choice is less likely to be the results of pragmatic considerations than of some kind of conversion experience. Furthermore, by and large people do not live and die over the question of quantum versus relativistic physics, but various peoples have slaughtered others over differences in religious and ethical beliefs. In human relations, what appears to be at stake when one set of ethics confronts another is often personal identity.

Faced with such fundamental epistemological problems, is there any way we can transcend the differences between ethical traditions? It is important to note that in practice the encounter of different traditions has often provided the basis for a genuine mutual enrichment. There is, for instance, a line of social criticism that goes from Diderot to Margaret Mead

that looked – with greater or lesser accuracy – to the South Seas as paradigms of enlightened sexual morality when compared with straiterlaced Anglo-European practices. Here the encounter with others can serve as the foundation for a critique of practices in one's own society. But encounter can be also violent, as we have recently seen in the confrontation between Western cultural and ethical traditions and militantly fundamentalist understandings of the world-religion Islam.

Conclusion

Ethics is confronted with many different challenges nowadays. Ethical theories are questioned and forced to be effective under the new conditions of a changed world in the public and private sphere. We have on the international level the globalization where cultures, mentalities and life-styles are mixed up. In the same line more and more people ask, 'What is just in that new global situation?'. And on the private level we find a kind of flexibility and experiences which make it more difficult to settle down and start with a family. For solving so many challenges in our world we need as postmodern enlightened people the paradigms of ethical understandings and a basic ethical knowledge. Therefore, we have to look for more tolerance and ethical knowledge to creating a more just world for myself and the next generations. In that we hope finding discoveries; and ethics can be a very big contributor for this new outlines of the society and the people who look still for the happiness like Aristotle told us twentyfour centuries ago!

Ethical business institutions. How are they possible?*

Institutions are a kind of social infrastructure that facilitates – or hinders – human co-ordination and allocation of resources. Thus they function as a rationality context, which simultaneously emerges from and governs human interactions. Business institutions, as they are related to human expectations, should promote the values of their stakeholders and, consequently, they are subjects of social and ethical accounting, auditing and reporting procedures. Ethical institutions make the good of their stakeholder groups part of the institution's own good. They have a clear vision and picture of integrity throughout the institution which is owned and embodied by top management, over time. Such a practice presumes that business institutions, e.g. corporations, are social cultures with character, which can exercise good or bad influence, depending on goals, policies structures, strategies that formalize relations among the individuals who **build up** corporations. For developing an ethical culture, corporations need a large scale of instruments as codes of ethics and other kinds of support structures throughout the organization to insure their adequate communication, oversight, enforcement, adjudication, and **review**. Between all these instruments, a special role could be played by the ethics officer and the ethics committee, ethics trainings, ethics audits but also by the implementation of responsibility and participatory decision making at lower levels in the organisation.

The ethicality of business is not just an individual matter of personal integrity, but a function of many variables, generally speaking a matter of the ethical social environment of the economy. Ethics should prevail not just in the inner life of the corporation, but in its relations with other corporations, professional organisation, trade unions, consumer organisations and NGOs as well. Therefore Business leaders, trade unions and NGOs should join their forces behind a set of core values in the areas of human rights, labour standards and the environment. Corporations could evolve to be real ethical business institutions only with the help of specialized institutions for planning, monitoring and evaluation of business activity and institutional development. In many areas ethics officers, in order to strengthen their positions, choose the way of networking with each other to establish their own professional organisation which is supported by an increasing number of Centres of Business Ethics. The practice of social and ethical accounting is emerging as a key tool for companies over the last years in response to the calls for greater transparency and accountability to different stakeholders, and as a means for managing companies in increasingly complex situations, where social and environmental issues are significant in securing business success.

Imre Ungvári Zrínyi

Babes-Bolyai University, Cluj, Romania. Author of the books: *Valtozo ertelemben (In a Changig Sense) (1998)*, *Ontetelezes es erpektudat (Self-position and Conscience of Value) (2002)*, *Dialogus. Interpretacio. Interakcio. Kozelitesek a kultura kommunikativ ertelmezesehez, (Dialogue. Interpretation. Interaction. Approaches to the Communicative Interpretation of Culture) (2005)*

1. Some ethical considerations

The creating of ethical business institutions presupposes clear conceptions of ethics, business and social institutions. My paper aims to provide a view on and some justifications for the way in which their integration is realizable. Therefore, as a starting point I want to make some introductory remarks on ethics to ensure the possibility of such an undertaking. I think that the term “possibility” should be taken here in a normative sense. Thus the possibility of ethical institutions is the very possibility of righteous action at all, or, more widely, the possibility of living a good life. By adopting such a view, we meet a two-faced problem. First, the problem of whether we are able to behave morally and, second, whether the moral behaviour fits business activity. We answer in the affirmative to both questions in advance.

Our core assumption is the possibility of moral behaviour stated after Kant by Agnes Heller¹, in the following terms: “In order to have a venture of ethics you need to presuppose the existence of the decent person.”² Consequently there is no sense of morality without the presupposing of the good person. The good person is the starting point, the permanent addressee, the referential base and also the final point of ethics.

In the same conception, good persons are people who personally relate themselves to the norms and rules of morality, engaging themselves to those. In a contingent world, no other goodness is possible for man than that which can be explored on the basis of the examples and attitudes of good persons. In this sense Heller wrote: “Contingent people, who choose themselves to be good, while they become what they are, choose values, careers, professions, public appearances, private connections and in all these relations they create morality in everyday life within institutions, on the political scene and in global dimensions. They are peoples who turn toward the others, people who care about others, people who care about the World”. In Heller’s interpretation, Heidegger’s beautiful metaphor “the shepherd of Being”³³ “Man is not the lord of beings. Man is the shepherd of Being. Man loses nothing in this “less”; rather, he gains in that he attains the truth of Being.

He gains the essential poverty of the shepherd, whose dignity consists in being called by Being itself into the preservation of Being’s truth.” (Letter on Humanism, 1964)

means that people who had been born in this world, have to assume the duty to take care of it. The world is in the care of human beings. Therefore the decent person has to care of the World (the world of all beings)...”⁴ In terms of the problem we address here the presumption is posed in the following way: good people, including ethical managers, business administrators and therefore ethical business institutions do exist – how are they possible? As a result we will attempt to reflect upon the goals and principles and to identify outstanding examples of ethical management and ethical business institutions. Such examples certainly do exist.

Instead of the oversimplified and therefore mistaken consideration that business and ethics do not mix, and individual moral attitudes have no relevance for such an undertaking, we consider valid two theses of Amitai Etzioni’s socio-economic paradigm⁵. Firstly: human behaviour is irreducible to mere selfishness. Actors pursue always more than a single goal (utility), for example they seek pleasure (and hence self-interest), and seek to abide by their moral commitments. Secondly, the actors are individuals acting within collectivities, not free-standing persons. In our interpretation, this means that moral goals are always part of the actor’s pursued goals, but we must add: only the goal of those actors who are really committed to certain moral requirements, and to the extent of the requirements they are committed to. The modality or the extent of being committed varies and is influenced by the generalized moral standards of the community and, especially, by the morally accepted behaviour in a specific branch of social activity (for example, business). We consider that in spite of the various modalities of moral commitments, an ethically well-ordered moral standpoint requires that moral considerations always have precedence, or, to state it in a less authoritative manner, if moral requirements are repeatedly lost, or

conformity to them is continuously diminished, we just can't speak anymore about moral action.

The responsible attitude, whatever we think about its scarcity, as Etzioni remarks, is not the work of the isolated self. Therefore the socially accepted practices, including moral standards proposed by specialized institutions of researching, promoting and control morality of a certain branch of social activities certainly does influence people's willingness to behave according to these moral standards. That is, when having the intention to build ethical institutions for business there should be taken into account the existence, the possibility and the character of institutions in a certain branch of social activities.

2. New business environment

During the last decade corporations and business environment have been changed considerably. Firstly, corporations evolved to take tremendous proportions with discretionary power in vast areas of social life all over the world. Secondly, in the most developed democracies, as a result of people's reaction to the harmful effects of the industrial society and a narrow-minded managerial practice, the idea of social responsibility of business became accepted and in some respects enacted in law. Parallel to this process we face an emerging interest in the field of social sciences, philosophy and the new structures of civil society for the redefinition of the social role of business. This tendency, with the support and courageous venture of some new entrepreneurs, has become a dynamic segment of the economy.

a. „A critical question of size“ (Schumacher)

A. Berle and G. Means already described in 1932⁶, that corporations have transformed from legal devices through which the private business transactions of individuals may be carried on into both a method of property tenure and means

of organizing economic life. Their careful analysis has shown that corporations grown to tremendous proportion („corporate systems“) have attracted to themselves a combination of attributes and powers that transformed them into major social institutions. Some of the problems arising from these changes are critically analyzed by Fritz Schumacher in his book entitled *Small is Beautiful*, in which he attached a great value to the question of smallness. According to him, „industrial and technological advancement is obsessed with the economics of scale. As a result, huge bureaucracies, giant companies and enormous factories have come to be seen as the symbols of success. But the reality is that things are done according to the rules, and human relationships have become secondary. As giant technologies are antihuman, so are giant organizations. In big schools, pupils are reduced to numbers; in big hospitals, patients are reduced to numbers; in big factories, workers are reduced to numbers. Economics should serve the values of humanity and even the spiritual growth of human beings. In my view that cannot happen if our organizations are beyond a certain size.(...)“⁷

b. Complexity and control

Beside the idea of the economics of scale, traditional business thinking was dominated as well by the idea of *efficient performance*, linked intimately to the idea of *shareholder accountability* and the centrality of *money* (financial reporting and control) as the common denominator for expressing and compacting corporate activities.⁸ This conception of business, which still remains in charge for many companies especially in less developed economies, regards employees, suppliers, customers and local communities simply as instruments whose only function is to promote shareholder value. Managers committed to this type of business focus on short-term profits and on the ability to make quick decisions in hectic surroundings, but they are unable to solve complex corporate problems, which require more flexible organizational structures, with greater emphasis on selforganizing competence.

c. New legal environment

As a result of political and civil protests against the arbitrary use of corporation power, there were introduced mainly in the US and UK a number of laws containing checks and balances meant to ensure people that business power is not misused. All these rules had legal, political, competitive, and ethical influences on business practice. The mentioned legal influences consist of different level legislation and those agencies, institutions, organizations and processes by which these laws are upheld.⁹ Some of the more influential of these acts in the US jurisdiction are for instance: the products liability law as stated in *Greenman v. Yuba Power*; The National Labor Relations Act; The Civil Rights Act, The Clean Air and The Clean Water Act and other regulations, with the specific commissions and boards empowered to enforce them. As a result of these major changes in the legal system, which have equivalents in most democratic countries, the groups that have a stake in the firm's activity, for example customers, suppliers, employees, local communities and so on, have rights and legal means to protect themselves against the over-power and abuse of corporations.

d. Aspects of social responsibility

The debates which took place during the last twenty years on different interests and entitlements, resulted in some changes in the economic thinking: problems concerning the social responsibility of business gained ground. Against the old thesis, formulated by Milton Friedman, namely that the sole responsibility of business is to increase the stockholders' profit as much as possible, in the contemporary view it is generally admitted that corporations, as important and influential members of society, are responsible to help maintain and improve the society's overall welfare.¹⁰ In this conception, social responsibility arises from social power, and includes mainly four sorts of concerns: *concerns for consumers* (e.g. fair treatment, products safety, fair prices, fair advertising, adequate product information); *concerns for employees* (e.g. fair wages,

safe work environment, non-discrimination, fair treatment); *concerns for the environment* (e.g. preservation of natural ecosystems, protection from pollution, production of biodegradable and recyclable products, elimination or proper treatment of by-products that pose a safety hazard for the biosphere); *concerns for society in general* (e.g. supports for minority and community enterprises, supports for the education, art, health and community development programs, providing appropriate public information from the business operations of the corporations). These concerns have gradually become part of the corporations' policy, first in a more passive way, as a result of accepting the new corporate responsibility movement, and later by developing their own new view on corporate social responsibility.

e. Consumerist movements

The idea of business social responsibility was permanently evoked and strengthened by environmentalist and consumerist movements and organizations which are often interlinked resulting in a tendency called "green consumerism" or "ethical consumerism". Mobilizing consumer power, these movements, institutions and organizations pursue multiple goals, such as: promoting the consumers' rights to high quality and healthy products and services, promoting environmentalist principles, supporting progressive companies and depriving those that abuse for profit, and, finally, introducing a new sound business practice based on moral reasoning about business, humans and environment.¹¹ In performing their activity, which includes collecting, processing and spreading of information, organizing protests and boycotts against unfair company practices and products and also promotion of ethical business through advertising, the consumerist movements elaborate powerful means for the investigation of key aspects of the interface between corporate and social life. Such means are *sourcebooks* on how social concerns are expressed in the different companies' policy, or *shopping guides* with concise descriptions and clear tables of how different brands meet the major ethical requirements (e.g. their relation to environmen-

tal problems, animal testing, factory farming, oppressive regimes, workers' rights, irresponsible marketing, ethical code, armaments, genetic engineering etc.), furthermore they provide a comprehensive list of the *ethical investment trust and founts*. Through their PR activity, a large number of consumers are informed about the social implications of different company policies and many corporations become more sensitive to social and environmental issues. This twosided effect provides the opportunity for social change that consumers and company can create together.

f. The role of values

Consequently, we can state that corporations today face several challenges coming from both the inside and outside factors of their activity. All these challenges involve moral aspects to a certain degree and require a systematic treatment. The new systematic approach of business management is provided by the stakeholder theory of the modern corporation. This conception recognizes the responsibility of managers toward the individuals and groups that have a stake in (are affected by) the consequences of managerial decisions and therefore constitute the turning point on the way leading from control based management toward *value based management*. In Peter Pruzan's view: "Value based management presupposes that the organization and its stakeholders develop a shared language and tools that can help the organization to observe and reflect upon itself; to measure the extent to which it contributes to its stakeholders' value; and to make choices that promote the interests of the organization as a whole"¹² We consider that this shared language can be developed through an undistorted dialogue with multiple stakeholders (stockholders, suppliers, lenders, employees, consumers, competitors, political groups, local communities, environmentalists etc.) about how does the fundamental goal of the corporation appear in their different perspectives.

It is only an open dialogical relationship that could serve as a base for working out a properly understood and fundamentally accepted mission of the corporation. The individuals adopt a moral attitude toward the goals of the corporation

only when feeling related to such a community of core values. It is in this relation that the real and fully operational source of standards of the Corporate Moral Code lies. A good business ethics policy in which words and deeds agree is the first line of defence against unethical or illegal activities; it can prevent fraud; it can motivate employees to be responsible, creative and faithful.

g. New conceptions of business and corporation

As the stakeholder theory has basically changed the idea of management, the new value-based conception of business activity has changed the idea of business and corporation. Searching for a hierarchy of values concerning business activity, the systemic approach has revealed that business is integrated in social life and in nature's overall system. Therefore the role of the corporation should be evaluated not only according to business' own measures, but according to the measures of the more vast systems they are part of. In such an integrated view corporations are considered as basic social institutions among the others, the role of which is to help to maintain and improve society's welfare, and the healthy condition of the living environment. This new concept of business is defined by Paul Hawken¹³ in the following terms: the promise of business consists in increasing humanity's general welfare by services, creativity and moral philosophy. The accomplishment of this daring dream requires a brand-new concept of economy: *the recovering economy*. This new type of economy combines ecology and economy in a single sustainable act of production and distribution, which imitates and strengthens natural processes. If we adopt this view of economy we must also answer the question concerning what kind of institutions could promote it.

3. Institutions as frameworks of morality

The concept of business discussed above requires a reconsideration of the concept of social and business institutions in order to harmonize them with the new managerial ethos. In

this view institutions are not defined by their mere legal form, but by those communities' commitments they consist of. Therefore the new reasoning about institutions will describe institutions mainly as social, anthropological and cultural realities, and not as legal fictions submitted to rational choice theory. It is obvious that an adequate stakeholder analysis is closely connected with institutional analysis; for stakeholder groups are formal and informal organizations that constitute the major elements of institutions. Each group has norms, the formal and informal rules that define membership and regulate relationships among groups. As a result we can state that institutions are a kind of social infrastructure that facilitates – or hinders – human co-ordination and allocation of resources. Thus they function as a rationality context, which simultaneously emerges from and governs human interactions. Business institutions, as they are related to human expectations, should promote the values of their stakeholders and, consequently, they are subjects of social and ethical accounting, auditing and reporting procedures. Ethical institutions make the good of their stakeholder groups, part of the institution's own good. Therefore they must be organised according to a clear vision of integrity including the final goal of the institution that should be embraced by top management and transferred to their staff and to employees. To develop an ethical culture, corporations need a set of instruments as: organisation structures, key documents, policies and procedures, training and other kind of support structures including those for creating conditions for responsible behaviour by supporting autonomy and participation in decision making at lower levels in the organization.

The major elements of ethics management¹⁴ after the principles of Carter McNamara are the followings:

a. organization structures (roles and responsibilities)

1. fully support from the organization's *chief executive*; 2. establishing an *ethics committee* (at the board level); 3. establishing an *ethics management committee* (senior officers); 4. assigning an *ethics officer* (matters of ethics in the workplace); 5. establishing an *ombudsperson*, (responsible for resolving ethical dilemmas by interpreting policies and proce-

dures); 6. one person's responsibility for the ethics management program as a whole

b. key documents

-elaborating a *credo* (including highest values to which the company aspires to operate) -elaborating a *code of ethics* (specify the ethical principles and rules of operation)

-elaborating a *code of conduct* (specify actions in the workplace)

c. policies and procedures

- *updating of policies and procedures according to the code of ethics; management of values* through them; inclusion of them to *address ethical dilemmas*; inclusion of them to *ensure training of employees* about the ethics management program; inclusion of them to *reward ethical behaviour* and *impose consequences for unethical behaviour*; a *grievance policy* for employees to use to resolve disagreements with supervisors and staff; establishment of an *ethics "hotline"*; the review of all personnel policies and procedures once a year.

d. training

- *orientation of new employees* to the organization's ethics program; review of the ethics management program in *management training* experiences; involving staff in the review of codes as strong ethics training; *involving staff in review of policies* (ethics and personnel policies) as strong ethics training; *resolving complex ethical dilemmas* (one of the strongest forms of ethics training is practice)

Many ethicists consider that it's the developing and continuing dialogue around the code's values that is the most important. As a result of this kind of continuous dialogue a new corporate culture could be created and implemented. That is the reason why the elaboration of corporate codes should not be taken as the task of the Human Resource or Legal departments alone, as it is too often done. In this process, we should take as a model the communicative construction of an old social institution: Peter Berger and Hansfried Kellner in their fundamental work about marriage¹⁵ have shown that marriage became a communicative construction of reality through dialogue. Both persons continuously create their own conception about reality, which will be the subject of re-

peated discussions and harmonization as far as the conceptions become, without noticing it, objectified by discussion. The shared, objectified reality becomes consolidated. Similarly, the values of the code of ethics become more and more common and consolidated under the continuous dialogue.

In the process of implementation, the moral standards of corporations can evolve to be real ethical business institutions only with the help of specialists and specialized institutions for planning, monitoring and evaluating business activity and institutional development. In many areas ethics officers, in order to strengthen their positions, choose the way of networking with each other to establish their own professional organisation which is supported by an increasing number of Centres of Business Ethics. The practice of social and ethical accounting is emerging as a key tool for companies over the last years in response to the calls for greater transparency and accountability to different stakeholders, and as a means for managing companies in increasingly complex situations, where social and environmental issues are significant in securing business success.

A short search on the internet for the term „ethical institution” has highlighted a great number of specialized institutions on the problem we discuss here. The list of the names we got includes the following highly specialized institutions: *The Aspen Institute* (an international non-profit educational institution dedicated to enhancing the quality of leadership through informed dialogue); *Business Enterprise Trust* (dedicated to identifying and promoting acts of business leadership which combine sound management and social vision); *Business in the Community* (the leading authority on corporate community involvement in the UK); *Business for Social Responsibility* (a membership organization for companies of all sizes and sectors, who help its member companies to achieve long-term commercial success by implementing policies and practices that honor high ethical standards); *Council on Economic Priorities* (focuses its research on all the factors that make up the social framework of a company: the quality of management, its leadership among industry peers, its workplace climate); *Coalition for Environmentally Responsible Economies* (a non-

profit coalition of investors, public pension funds, foundations, labour unions, and environmental, religious and public interest groups, working in partnership with companies toward the common goal of corporate environmental responsibility worldwide).

All these information seem to confirm our starting thesis concerning the theoretical possibility of ethical business institutions. But the most convincing argument is the empirical evidence of the existence of such institutions.

5. An example: The Body Shop International PLC¹⁶

As a result of new, alternative ethical business conception and practice, some organizations have become widely known as operating in a highly ethical manner, e.g., Ben and Jerry's, Johnson and Johnson, Aveda, The Body Shop International, etc. Due to its strong commitment to provide high quality products for his consumers and to promote in various ways environmental and human rights issues, The Body Shop International PLC is considered one of the most well known and most famous from all of them.

The Body Shop International Plc is a cosmetic and toiletry retail company founded by Anita and Gordon Roddick in 1976. The company rapidly evolved from one small shop in Brighton (England), with only around 25 hand-mixed products on sale, to a worldwide network of shops. Today it operates in over 2000 stores across 51 countries. The company's campaigns against human rights abuses, in favour of animal and environmental protection (e.g. Save the Whales, with Greenpeace (1986); Stop The Burning' against the mass burning of the tropical rainforests in Brazil (1989); Against Animal Testing (1996);) as well its commitment to change the stereotypes of beauty perpetuated by the cosmetics industry, have won the support of consumers. The company continues to lead the fight for social and environmental change. For example, it contributes to the welfare of local, national and international communities in which it trades and supports small producer communities which supply it with accessories and

natural ingredients. By adopting a code of conduct that ensures care, honesty, fairness and respect, it organized its relation to its stakeholders on a new ethical basis. Beyond its trading activity, the corporation has established a series of institutions, such as the Environmental Projects Department, The Body Shop Foundation, The New Academy of Business, which promote their view about business, social and environmental issues¹⁷.

The Body Shop Values Mission commits the company to the pursuit of social and environmental change. Its Trading Charter defines the principles by which it will trade in order to deliver profits with principles. This includes instituting appropriate monitoring, auditing and disclosure mechanisms to ensure its accountability and demonstrate its compliance with its principles. The company believes in doing business with integrity and transparency. According to this it uses its ethical principles to inform of the way it does business, setting to itself and its business partners clear standards of practice.

On the internet site of the company we find the following statement about the company's values strategy: "Recent leadership and organizational changes have provided an opportunity to review our values strategy and clarify accountabilities across the business. It also provided the chance to improve the consistency of our management systems and the effectiveness of our social and environmental performance. Overall strategic direction of the Company's values is reviewed periodically by the Main Board in consultation with the Head of Values who sits on the Executive Committee. The Head of Values reports into the Chief Executive and has overall responsibility for directing the Company's social and environmental programme. Strategic value objectives are aligned with the business objectives and are informed by operational performance, as well as stakeholder perceptions and expectations. These objectives are fully embraced by the Executive Committee, which includes the Heads of each of the functional areas as well as Regional Directors. Specific stakeholder strategies as well as core business objectives are set out in the respective individual stakeholder accounts."

The information presented here about the company comes from the company's internet site, which also includes the reports of the ethical and environmental auditing researches about the company and indicate a continuous effort to create an ethical business institution. The company, as it is built up and promotes the principles of its founders shows that success and profit can go hand in hand with ideals and values.

Conclusions

As a result of our investigation, we can state that the creation of the ethical business institution is possible due to the outstanding moral commitment of its founders. They are those "decent people" who make every effort to use the best of their ideas and practices of alternative economics, making use of the occasion that it is supported by the layer of alternative consumers and can cooperate with other similar companies dedicated to environmental and moral principles. Creating ethical institutions for business is a vital need for the sound work of the society and the implementation of ethical principles in social relations. Creating such institutions could serve as an excellent example for societies that undergo institutional transformation and institutional building.

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Notes:

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² Agnes Heller is Hannah Arendt, Professor of Philosophy at the New School for Social Research, New York, USA, and a member of the Hungarian Academy of Science in Budapest, Hungary

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¹¹ Among the institutions and organisations involved in this type of activities we find: New Consumer, Ethical Consumer Research Association (ECRA), The Ethical Marketing Group, Fairtrade Foundation, Friends of the Earth, Naturewatch, Soil Association etc., see *The Good Shopping Guide*, Ethical Marketing Group, 2002.

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¹⁴ Carter McNamara: *Complete Guide to Ethics Management: An Ethics Toolkit for Managers*, <http://www.mapnp.org/library/ethics/ethxgde.htm> Carter McNamara, PhD, is a Twin Cities-based consultant in the areas of leadership development, board development and strategic planning. He has led development of several codes of ethics and conduct, as well.

Carter holds a BA in Social and Behavioral Sciences, BS in Computer Science, an MBA, and a PhD in Human and Organization

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¹⁶ Data concerning the Body Shop International Plc come from the internet site of the company: <http://www.thebodyshop.com>

¹⁷ In 1986 the company created an Environmental Projects Department of its own; besides this in 1990 it established The Body Shop Foundation, a charity foundation that financed human rights and environmental protection groups, as well The New Academy of Business (1995). The innovative management degree, addressing social, environmental and ethical issues, is run at The University of Bath.

Prolegomena to Digital Communication Ethics

The Internet speaks about our historical way of understanding the world. The nowadays technology is co-constitutive to society. Consequently, all communication takes the form of a technological-mediated-communication, as in the ending years of modernity all 'reality' was taking the form of a written text. For this reason, the ethics of communication has to consider its roots in order to be capable to deal with the ethical problems of computer-mediated-communication. I tried to show that digital communication is rooted in the affectedness (*Befindlichkeit*) of the human being, in his mores. That ground does not require a stable subject, but the character, the embodiment, and the historicity of the user. The ethics is thus an ethics an embodied experience, of user way of being, and of a historical involvement. I try in this paper to disclose the principles that should underlie an ethics of digital communication.

Introduction

The technology is nowadays constitutive for our being-in-the-world. The world is enframned by numerous networks: water-supply network, transport network, supermarket network, telephone network etc., and, first of all, the Internet, the network that tends to gather and to reveal all beings and all other networks as standing-reserve. The Internet digitally controls all other networks. The Internet is the Heideggerian *Gestell*.

One of the main problems that nowadays technology poses is that of communication. The humans have always communicated. The first main switch in this process was the humanistic communication, the communication by means of books. Now, we arrived at a new point of discontinuity. The process of communication became mainly a process of digital communication. What I mean by digital communication are those forms of interpersonal and interactive relatedness by technical means, like telephone- and computer-mediated-communication (CMC). The ethics of digital communication, seems to me, is at the very core of ethical discussions concerning the ethics of information technology. The importance of the Internet is not, first of all, the availability of information, but the tremendous possibilities of communication. Fidler (2004) shows that the users of the first computer-net-

Robert Arnăutu

Central European
University,
Budapest, Hungary,
Babes-Bolyai University Cluj, Romania.
Email:
rarnautu1979@yahoo.co.uk

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works were searching not for news or information but for communication with others.

Communication Ethics and Ontology

Despite the large impact of digital communication, little progress has been done concerning its ethics. The main reason is the lack of an appropriate ontology of the virtual. Therefore, many of the contemporary discussions about computer ethics are very anachronistic, in two ways: either they demand the intervention of a superpower to regularize the technological realm, to control the Net (but not too much!), or they reject the new “disorder” in the name of the bygone peaceful ages. However, these are not the proper options for the ethics of the Internet. How Jodi Dean puts it: “tech-anxieties are part of a politics that uses current uncertainties about computer-mediated interaction to reassert the need for fundamental truths at a time of widespread cultural uncertainty.” (Dean, 1999, p. 1073). To speak about the ethos of the Internet presupposes, first, to know what kind of entities, what kind of beings are there, and what kind of disclosures the Internet world exhibits. One way in considering the ethics of communication on the Internet is to account for what the basics of human interaction are. The Internet is more than an instantiation of the technology. As Heidegger puts it, the essence of technology is nothing technological. Analogous, the underlying nature of the Internet must be found not in the different ways of relating people but in what these relationships disclose in the domain of possibility. The computer-mediated communication is, first, a form of community that discloses a new way of being-together, new fundamental possibilities. These possibilities are not specific only to the Internet, but they reveal, disclose, in the sense of *aletheia*, the essential of all human communication. The present paper begins with this premise: the digital era praxis discloses new potentialities for interaction, which are consequences of contemporary way of human existence and not of technological devices. The technology is just a way in which the historical man reveals himself, in which the present man apperceives himself.

One point to be stressed is that the digital ethics, and consequently the ethics of digital communication, is not just a domain of applied ethics, or at least it should not be one. The fact that we live in a digital world, that our being is framed and constituted by means of digital relatedness, shows that the computer ethics, the ethics of information and communication technology (ICT) is itself the original ethics. The ethics of ICT reveals the ethos of man in the digital way of being. The ICT arrives at the point of transcending all other human practices and its ethics, therefore, “ponders the abode of man”. (Heidegger, 1993, p. 258). Gorniak (1996, p. 179, 187) thinks that the computer ethics, as a particular domain, will become global: “The very nature of the Computer Revolution indicates that the ethic of the future will have a global character. It will be global in a spatial sense, since it will encompass the entire Globe. It will also be global in the sense that it will address the totality of human actions and relations. ... In other words, computer ethics will become universal; it will be a global ethic.” However, this is not how the ethics of ITC have to think about the essence of man, as a particular point of view becoming global. This misses the fact that ITC has an ontological relation with the way the man lives in the world, that all praxis is digitally committed. The digital is the mood of contemporary man. Therefore, the digital ethics, the ICT ethics is the ethics itself: “I offer you a picture of computer ethics in which computer ethics as such disappears.... We will be able to say both that computer ethics has become ordinary ethics and that ordinary ethics has become computer ethics.” (Johnson, 1999, pp. 17-18).

The affectedness

What seems to be most important in questioning communication is the domain of affectedness and affects. By affectedness, I do not mean feelings or sentiment, but the Heideggerian *Befindlichkeit*, the essence of the positional fact of being in the world. The communication is not based on the theoretical grounds, on transmitting some information, but its most important characteristic is the phatic, being-together, be-

ing co-affected. The question of affects brings us to the problem of anxiety. Not only that the anxiety is the prototype of affects, but it is the prototype of the enigma of the affects. Heidegger, as well as Freud or Lacan, points that the affects are the underlying structure of being-in-the-world. The state of anxiety is, for Heidegger, the fundamental acquaintance to the world, a way of pre-understanding the world. In fact, the world is bracketed in anxiety in order to disclose the basis of being-in-the-world.

Therefore, we must begin with affectedness (*Befindlichkeit*), which is the constant mode by which the man lives his world, and consequently the way the man communicates in a digital environment, the way the man experiences a digital relation. The man lives always as an affective being; he always is in some mood (*Stimmung*). The mood is the state in which the man lives and from which he encounters the other men and the things in the world. Moods are like an atmosphere, a disposition, i.e. the particular affective position of a man from which he disposes the world, views the things and people in a certain way. The mood is socially and culturally dependent: "Shame over losing face, for example, is something one can feel only in Japan, while the exhilaration of romantic love was for a long time the exclusive property of the West." (Dreyfus, 1990, p. 172). Everyone, anytime, is in some mood. What interests us is the particular way in which a person is in that mood. Everybody can be in a joyful mood, but everyone has his particular way of being so. "So, what is the affect or the mood? In a general and scholar mode, we can define affect as an interior perception which is independent of will and which manifests itself in the same time as an agitation of soul and a certain agitation of body. That means, if we can usually determine the object or the situation that is the occasion for the affect (like in the case of fear, joy, anger, shame, etc.), we cannot determine the proper faculty of affectedness. And certainly, it is not hazardously that the language uses normally the metaphor of "heart" (in German: *Gemut*) for describe what is impossible to assign exclusively either to soul or to body." (Baas, 1992, p. 90). The affect annihilates in a certain way the difference between soul and body, questioning the very basis of this distinction. In

fact, that distinction between body and soul, as well as the distinction between subject and object, is not at all pertinent for an analysis of affectedness, as the specific way of being-in-the-world. In addition, the affects annihilate the conscious praxis and reveal the very way of being-in-the-world in its simplicity. In order to understand the affectedness of the digital, the next step will be to consider the basis of human affects in general and, after that, to relate these facts to a phenomenological analysis of the experience of digital communication.

The question of mores

What are the simplest elements on which we rely on in our praxis? What is the name of these elements? In modern languages, two terms denote the elements on which the ethics is constituted: mores and morals. They both came from the same Latin word: *mos, moris*. It means "customs" or "ways", and refers to the will of somebody. It is an unwritten law, a law that does not need any outside enforcement. It refers to tradition but in the sense that that tradition is internalized. The mores describe the natural way of being, even if it is not a natural law. Like for incest, mores break the distinction between nature and culture. It applies to strong folkways, i.e. the way one lives is pre-determined by his social environment, by the Other. Merriam-Webster's Online Dictionary defines mores as "a mode of thinking, feeling, or acting common to a given group of people". Mores is not just about the praxis but also about the fundamentals of praxis. In addition, it is about the fundamentals of human being, including theoretical and affective life. In order to understand the role of mores on how the ethical experience is constituted, we must distinguish the mores of what they are not. The mores are to be distinguished of law. The law is the code of licit and illicit. The law concerns only the behavior in the society. The mores are the evaluations that envelope the laws. The law is external, is imposed by others, while mores are something internalized. For example, the relations between wife and husband are different from the point of view of law and from the point of view of mores. In addition, the mores are to be distinguished of moral. Even they have the same etymological origin, the

moral is the domain of consciousness while the mores are pre-conscious. The moral is the moral of a conscious and active subject that have initiatives in an organized world. For the mores, the consciousness is not a condition because the mores reveal themselves despite consciousness; they question the difference active/passive; they are more closed to instinct. If someone break a moral rule, he may be considered rude. But, the transgression of mores cause disgust, it breaks off the familiarity of world. The mores exhibit the properness of the person.

The shame

The affect that reveals mores is the shame (German: *Scham*, French: *pudeur*). The shame renders manifest the mores. The shame is quite similar to anxiety because it reveals the unfamiliarity of the world. Contrary to anxiety, that dis-solute completely the world, the shame renders the world as strange. In addition, the shame is more present in everyday life. It accompanies every act of the human being: thoughts, actions, etc. The shame is the paradigm of mores. It preserves all determinations of mores: is not enunciable, is variable in respect to the content, and is socially determined but beyond all conceptual determinations. The shame is not a conventional state because it touches the very properness of man. The ultimate destruction of human dignity is not the slavery but “l’attentat a la pudeur” because the man identifies himself with his mores. In the way Kierkegaard puts it, the shame is the most profound of all pains. For Merleau-Ponty, the shame has a metaphysical significance because it reveals the ontological status of the man that find himself in the weak limit between shame and indecency. The shame, like anxiety, is an affect of nothingness, because it is in fact nothing (i.e., not a thing) that ashamed, but only the unusualness of the relation to the world. The shame is not a sentiment of guilt or embarrassment. “While guilt is a painful feeling of regret and responsibility for one’s actions, shame is a painful feeling about oneself as a person.” (Fossum, 1989). One can feel shame while he is alone; it is not the presence of the other that

ashamed. One can feel shame in a computer-mediated-communication, while nobody sees his actions because his mores are touched. Shame, in this respect, differs from embarrassment because it does not involve public humiliation.

The etymology of shame also tells about its closeness to the basis of human way of being. The shame comes probably from Proto-Indo-European **skem-*, from **kem-* “to cover”, that denote the desire for property, for selfness. The shame is thus a painful sensation excited by the consciousness of impropriety. It also denotes the parts of human body that have to be covered. It refers to the sexual shame, especially if one considers the Roman word *pudor*. It comes from *pudere*, which is also the origin of *pudenda* that means external genitalia. However, it does not restrict only to the sexual. It encompasses the private life *tout court*. The shame is expressed by blushing, an incontrollable reaction of human body that cannot be caused by physical means: “We can cause laughing by tickling the skin, weeping or frowning by a blow, trembling from the fear of pain, and so forth; but we cannot cause a blush” (Darwin, chap. XIII). It is worth mentioning that animals do not blush. Even if the blush is not a reaction to physical conditions, it is also not socially acquired: “The blind do not escape. Laura Bridgman, born in this condition, as well as completely deaf, blushes.” (Darwin, chap. XIII). That shows that the shame breaks down the difference between culture and nature, between individual and social. The shame reveals the property of man, the selfness, the ownness. The shame is not about the metaphysical subject, which is a mode of consciousness.

The shame comes before consciousness. It reveals the character of man, his proper way of being in the world. This brings us back to ethics because *ethos*, as it is used in Aristotelian Rhetoric, means the character of the speaker. The *ethos*, in the history of thinking, becomes the equivalent of man himself, because Cicero translated sometimes *ethos* as *persona*, the Latin lacking an exact synonym. Even so, in fact, *ethos* refers, here, to the position of the speaker in the given situation and the given audience. The *ethos* implies the positional way of disclosing the world. By positional, I mean,

when it comes to ethos as understood from the rhetorical point of view, that one is always indebted to his interests, to the language he speaks, to his social position, to his historicity, and to his audience. That means that *persona* is constructed in the situation. That implies also that the conscious modern subject is just a chimera. The subject is just a positional, temporary instantiation. This is the reason that one has to return to the basis of affectedness, to the mores, to the underlying structure of disclosing the world, in order to rethink the ethics, because an unhistorical ethics of the subject is impossible. *The ethics*, because is about the proper of man, about his affectedness, *is not about the norms or laws*. The ethics cannot be expressed because it questions the very ontological status of the world. As Wittgenstein puts it in his *Tractatus*, “there can be no ethical propositions. Propositions cannot express anything higher. ... It is clear that ethics cannot be expressed. Ethics is transcendental. ... But it is clear that ethics has nothing to do with punishment and reward in the ordinary sense. ... Of the will as the subject of the ethical we cannot speak.” (Wittgenstein, prop. 6.42).

Truth and identity in digital communication

“If I say: truth is relative to Dasein, this is not ontic assertion of the sort in which I say: the true is always only what the individual human beings think. Rather this statement is a metaphysical one: in general truth can only be as truth, and as truth has a sense in general if Dasein exists.” (Heidegger, 1990, p. 176). The truth means disclosing a world. Truth or *aletheia* is always both concealing and revealing. It is oft stated that in the digital communication the identities are constructed identities. Therefore, they did not tell the truth. However, all communication is interest-centered. All identity is so constructed that to reveal best the truth that the user search. The worst conceptions state that the truth on the Internet is the underlying, real life identity of the user. Internet is perceived as a copy of real world, as an extension. Its ontology is derivative from ‘real’ world ontology. I think that precisely

the reverse is true. In fact, the user dissimulates in order to reveal what is most important. If someone wants to discuss a shameful situation or want to involve in an activity that did not match with his real life status, by constructing an alternative identity he reveals, by that, his way of understanding life, his way of being in the world. Maybe at the ontic level, this represents a falsification, but at the ontological level, it is all about his way of being. Even if somebody lies, there is a sense of involvement, a way of being there for which the identities beyond the screen are irrelevant. To question these identities is like questioning the Kantian thing in itself. The discourse of the other reveals something regardless the truth. Or, better, disclosing is the truth.

Here again the mood and the affectedness play a great role. The mood determines what actions one pursues on the Internet. The mood determine what kind of trajectories I choose: communicating on a fun forum or just chatting with a closer friend. However, the affectedness is always revealed. The user has always his ethos, his way of communicating, and his character. Like the alcohol or drugs, the possibilities of digital communication annihilate the usual moral laws. One can tell things of which he is embarrassed in the face-to-face interactions. Nevertheless, he cannot say things of which he is ashamed, which disgust and contradict his sense of living. He will not involve in an interaction that contradict his being and that is not relevant for his existence.

Different user’s identities can contradict each other but the way the user involves in the communication through these identities is the same. The character of the user is like his handwriting: he can write plenty of contradictory things, in the limits of what the language he uses permits, but his style is always recognizable. The user is, as Nietzsche puts it, a multiplicity of I’s. “The assumption of one single subject is perhaps unnecessary; perhaps it is just as permissible to assume a multiplicity of subjects, whose interaction and struggle is the basis of our thought and our consciousness in general? A kind of aristocracy of “cells” in which dominion resides? To be sure, an aristocracy of equals, used to ruling jointly and understanding how to command?” (Nietzsche, §

490). Each of these I's is floating on the surface of affectedness. They are all products of the same way of experiencing the world. Internet can function in an old-fashioned subject/object mode to facilitate self-knowledge and personal growth. Nevertheless, it mainly functions as a medium of disclosing, of fluid selves that breaks the dichotomies subject/object, agent/patient, etc. Speaking of communication, it is worth mentioning that the user does not enter in the interaction with a stable self that is preserved, and maybe enriched. Beginning with the mood of involving in a certain process of communication, the user's identity is constructed and shaped in the community he partakes. If the identity is literally constructed, others construct it as well, as a text, which is never finished. The process of communication, experiencing the community, precedes the constitution of self. But why not considering these multiple identities as multiple faces of the same subject, as different text of the same book? Because that misses the individuality of each of these selves, of each of these texts. For example, in each community the user is involved, he uses a different set of moral laws that can contradict the moral he uses in a different community. The discourse of the user is always relative to the pathos of the community. Moreover, if we imagine that we can construct a super-subject from different selves we must accept that the different communities are in fact a super-community. Thus, we reduce the Internet to a thing, an object, which it precisely is not. Internet is not a community of communities. The point with the Internet is that the disclosing of the identity of user is underlied always by his mores, by a concernfull involvement. However, the unity of the subject cannot be inferred from the diversity of involvements. This never-lacking concern for his being, i.e. for his world, is the basis of truth. The concernfull involvement of each forms the community, the interaction. By performing a textual common sphere of interest with the other, the user change his self, he is involved in different interactions but with the same type of concern. The concern, the care (*Sorge*), with which one is involved in each of his interactions reveals the truth and is the basis for different selves. "As one works as an engineer or a banker,

one identifies his or her interests to a large extent with those of the group, and through habituation acquires the group ethos. Consubstantiality comes into play when the engineer, while remaining an engineer, becomes "substantially one" with a banker in creating a common sphere of interest through a business proposal." (Campbell). A community in cyberspace is about a common interest, sharing the same ethos.

The historicity and the embodied experience

Another important problem of the Internet communications is that of historicity. Despite the general position that tells us that the user leaves behind, on the Internet, all his determinations, in fact each instantiation is a result of an assumed position toward the world. Usually the user is seen just as present. His projects and his backgrounds are forgotten. Nevertheless, the user brings in the communication his histories, his embodied histories. (I use 'histories' and 'backgrounds' in plural because involvements in different communities create different fluxes of consciousness.) He brings in the communication his way of mastering language and his way of dealing with questions. As the phenomenology tells us, any action is enveloped by a horizon. The perception, the experience cannot be understood without considering its horizon. Does the computer erase our horizon? Does the screen become the only horizon in the process of digital communication? The computer is just the frame that makes more difficult to see the background, the historicity, the body of the user. We are unhistorical and disembodied beings only if we consider one process that take place at only one moment. In fact, an act of communication is always submersed in a flux of experience, is embodied in a history. There is no view from nowhere. Always the communication is a historical, situational instantiation.

The horizon is indeterminate, is not an object, the other object that must be consider when one thematize a certain object. Thus the horizon is not the context, is not another text

that must be added in order to understand the first text. The horizon is not thematizable. Taking into account the horizon already reduces it to a thing in the world, to a thing in the horizon of things. This conception about the horizon as context makes possible the idea that the situation of the user online is completely separable of his (everyday) life. Or else, it makes us considering the life online as an uninteresting prolongation of the “real” life. However, none is the case. On one hand, the involvement in the process of communication is always part of some history, some flux of experience which thematize certain backgrounds and certain projects of the user. On the other hand, the digital communication and the digital communities shape the way in which the “real” life is pre-understood and, thus, the way it is lived. The digital disclose, i.e. reveal and, in the same time, create, the contemporary way of being. If the modernity, as Husserl says in *Crisis*, disclose the world in a specific way, i.e. as measurable, the digital disclose another understanding of the world, another way of experiencing the world. That brings us to the importance that the phenomenological approach puts on the experience regardless its “reality”. The online communities are not communities of subjects but communities of users, of partially constructed identities. The online communities are communities of testimonies. Each user testifies his own way of living. In this respect would be very important to develop a phenomenology of testimony.

The communication, the disclosing of world by means of communication is thus more important than the autonomy of users. The process, the flux of experience is more important than the *nomoi* of users or of the community. The communication became thus a co-experience. Furthermore, the ethics of digital communication is an ethics of co-experiencing. Such an ethics is not about the norms someone must follow. It is all about the ethos of being-together, about what this co-experience permits to be said and to be done. But, like in the relation between the lovers, such permissions cannot be established a priori. These limits touch the limits of users’ affectedness. These limits are the limits of the users’ common world, of the particular, the positional co-understanding of be-

ing. Any online community has a code of ethics more or less explicit that is just a point of departure for communication. These are the norms that make possible the beginning of the process of communication; they are the digital components of the horizon. Yet, these norms, as being parts of a horizon, are subject to change. They are not laws, as a constitution for example, but rules of the game. Furthermore, as Wittgenstein puts it, the rules are reshaped in the process of playing.

Considering the digital communication from the point of view of co-experiencing the world, we must give an account of the way of constituting this experience of an embodied experience. The question of disembodiment is at the very core of the technological discourse. The Internet was viewed from its early ages as the fulfillment of the Cartesian dualism, the ultimate renouncement at the body. The realm of the Internet is thought to be the realm of disembodied identities. Therefore, the subsequent ethics is an ethics of a disembodied consciousness. All modern philosophy is about stating the importance of the mind in the detriment of the body, which is considered merely as an instrument. “This very attitude of inflation towards the mind and deflation towards the body has long set the stage for the ‘transcendental’ ideals in an attempt to articulate the order of ‘empirical’ world beyond its particularities and peculiarities, or to use phenomenological terms, beyond its ‘immanence’, driving the Western culture to its quest of disembodiment.” (Btihaj, 2005). In this respect, Bukatman (1996, p. 208-210) emphasize the importance of disembodiment as a supreme value of digital realm:

“Cyberspace is a celebration of spirit, as the disembodied consciousness leaps and dances with unparalleled freedom. It is a realm in which the mind is freed from bodily limitations, a place for the return of the omnipotence of thoughts ... the return of the animistic view of the universe within the scientific paradigm.” This is, unfortunately, another way of disconsidering the historicity, the horizon, the particular instantiation of the user. In fact, any experience is part of a phenomenological corporeality. Each experience is an instantiation of a specific domain of perception. Moreover, as Kant put it once, there is no categorical intuition; there is no

phenomenon without organs of perception. Therefore, each perception, each experience is referred to a form of embodiment. I use the phrase 'form of embodiment' because the perception does not refer only to the anatomical body, to the skin. The forms of embodiment are very different: from the perception of a pain in my neck to the perception of a body in a different room by means of a surveillance camera. As Merleau-Ponty puts it, the field of perception is infinitely extensible in respect to the intentions of the perceiver. "A woman may, without any calculation, keep a safe distance between the feather in her hat and things which may break it off. She feels where the feather is just as we feel where our hand is. If I am in the habit of driving a car, I enter a narrow opening and see that I can't 'get through' without comparing the width of the opening with that of the wings, just as I go through a doorway without checking the width of the doorway against that of my body. The hat and the car have ceased to be objects ... The blind man's stick has ceased to be an object for him, and is no longer perceived for itself; its point has become an area of sensitivity, extending the scope and active radius of touch, and providing a parallel to sight." (1962, p. 143). The user is, thus, at the limits of his field of experience.

This idea of the extended "body" as the locus of perception rejects the Cartesian subject. The embodiment reveals a historicity and a constitution that cannot be surpassed. The user is, thus, an entire field of experience. He is not a special object in the world, the immaterial point of thought, but the horizon of his actions. The instantiation in cyberspace is not purely mental but is a domain of proximity of feeling, hearing, seeing, and talking at a distance. In a way, the digital actions are actions at a distance, but, in fact, these are actions in proximity. The other on Internet is not defined by physical distance but by an interest-related distance. There is an infinite distance between the person who sits next to me in an Internet café and me; but I am infinitely close to my friend I am chatting with. The proximity is the measure of community we are involved in. As Levinas puts it, proximity is the face of the Other. In the Internet case, the 'face' is the self-presentation of the user. The users' commitments create com-

munity and proximity. Online communities are a matter of local, situated, embodied concern. If one of the users involved in a certain process of communication change the mood, he became distant again. The community is an ad-hoc one, not necessarily because it least only for a moment and after that it breaks off, but because a digital community is not a community of continuous involvement. The user come and goes and probably he will come again in respect with the particular mood, interest, and concern. The dialectic of proximity of the distant other makes possible a new understanding of community. Contrary to modern communities, these ad-hoc communities are never more than their instantiation. They are not beyond the exchanges between their users. They are not unified by some rituals or laws but by the ethos of users because they are communities of interest and concern. These are communities not of surviving together, because belonging is not a matter of necessity, but of being together, the character of the user being responsible for the particular affiliation.

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Social Projectionism: A Vision For New Ethics In Social Welfare

This article approaches *social projectionism* as an orientation within the new post-modern epistemologies, starting from its principles. At the same time, the author presents some phenomena generated by the post-modern perspectives opened by the new ideologies that produce new ethical orientations in social practice. These visions have made profound changes in the way the social services user is seen, the contextualisation of social practice, the volatility of social programmes and the development of the public-private partnership from the point of view of social constructionism. The marketisation of social services has conditioned the development of equality relations between the public service providers and the private providers, the adaptation of programmes to the local needs and resources and a permanent change, giving up the illusion of progress, recognising and using to their full potential the multilinear evolutions of the existing situations.

Introduction

Together with the increasingly powerful manifestation of post-modern discourses, increasingly visible modifications of ethics appear in society, as a reflection of existing ideologies. Thus, *social projectionism*, an orientation that combines the theoretical elements of several present orientations and practices from various domains, asserts itself as a conglomerate of ideas, aiming to permanently introduce social change. Social projectionism, inspired by constructionism, asserts the creation of multiple realities through their very projection, recognising the existence of these multiple realities with permanent modifications in a multilinear evolution. Social practice has shown innumerable times that change can be made in the desired directions only if there exists a crystallised definition of the future situations and a collective agreement generated by the influence had by authority. Maybe this is the reason why a social issue becomes a problem only when it is placed on the public agenda, when it is defined as such, and its resolution presupposes the mobilisation of resources. In the domain of social welfare, we see significant change in terms of the evolution lines of the various phenomena that depend on planning short-term change. The flexibility and the volatility of social programmes are generated by the requirements of adaptation to the condi-

Ștefan Cojocaru

PhD, Lecturer, Department of Sociology and Social Work, "Alexandru Ioan Cuza" University, Iasi
Author of the books:
Metode apreciative în asistența socială.
Ancheta, supervizarea și managementul de caz (2005), *Designul propunerilor de finanțare*.
Metodologie, modele de proiecte, comentarii (2004), *Elaborarea proiectelor* (2003).

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tions of permanent change, which can be controlled precisely by manipulating the conditions that generate change. In other words, *social projectionism* manages to create realities precisely by defining them, and the modifications are designed from the angle of the objectives proposed. The advent of the funding system for the nongovernmental system by using intervention projects and the development of the public-private partnership makes social welfare, and not only, become an environment of quick and controlled change, a source of inspiration for the rest of the domains.

The principles of social projectionism

Social projectionism is a new orientation both in science and in the social practice, focusing on the way realities are created through their projection. Social projectionism is underpinned by a few principles:

1. *The utilitarianist principle.* According to this principle, the social projection of an intervention at micro or macro/social level depends on the interests of the initiators. We cannot design the intervention without seeing beyond it the specific interests of those who are concerned with a certain social issue. In project practice, the aim is to dissolve the interests of the initiator in favour of the interests of the target population; maybe that is the reason why all the objectives formulated within the project make a reference directly to changing the beneficiaries' situation and not to the initiator's intentions.

2. *The teleological principle.* This principle refers to the purposes set and to the means necessary for reaching them. From the point of view of social projectionism, we see a reversed determinism, in that the objectives set, their definition, creates realities, because in this vision change presupposes the projection of desired situations and actions meant to create these realities. Clearly defining the desired future orientates the entire activity designed to change the situation of the target groups. Social projectionism manages to put in order the way objectives are developed and promotes the idea that things are a means for reaching objectives linked to the social context in which they are developed. "To the extent

to which the modern obsession with purposes and utility disappears, as well as the equally obsessive idea that all things are autotelic (that is they claim to be their own purpose and not a means for getting to something other than them), morality has the chance to finally get its own rights." (Bauman, 1995/2000: 42)

3. *The principle of multiplicity.* According to this principle, carrying out an intervention through projects depends on the way the issue it addresses is seen. Silverman (2001/2004: 19-20) warns about diagnosis and the noticing of a problem, making a clear distinction between the social problem and the research problem. Projects respond to social problems, those that are noticed and find their place on the public agenda, and it is obvious that there are multiple perspectives for approaching the situation noticed. According to the principle of multiplicity, the problem is always seen from different perspectives, and, what is more, it requires different interventions. Multiplicity refers to the multiple realities existing in the intervention environment, as well as to the multiple realities that the intervention generates in a certain environment. These realities generate multiple post-modern discourses. "These 'post' discourses are exploring a more multi-faced approach to understanding, where meaning, including the meaning of identity, can only be understood and established through the identification and recognition of competing discourses. Accepting that there are no universal truths (if there ever were any) reality is reduced (or elevated?) to a number of conceptual frameworks, a kind of literary textual realm, which can be interpreted in quite different, even contradictory, ways" (Noble, 2004: 291).

4. *The axiological principle* refers to the values that direct all the interventions, through which the realities of the intervention project are deconstructed and reconstructed. Nothing of the actions taken is isolated from the values promoted; therefore, projectionism presupposes the projection of values at institutional level and their realisation through beneficiary-oriented actions. Therefore, beyond rationality, itself constructed from the perspective of the values promoted at a certain moment, new paradigms appear. "New

epistemological paradigms such as post industrialization, post structuralism and postmodernism are assuming an importance in theoretical debate. All are, in one way or other, engaging in a general celebration of the neutralization of meaning and the possibilities of ontological redefinitions emerging from demise of rational thought as new paradigms of understanding the world” (Noble, 2004: 291).

5. *The principle of dialogue and consensus* recognises the role of discourse and negotiation in achieving change.

Therefore, according to projectionism, any modification of a situation presupposes, in the first place, the redefinition of situations and the construction of a common definition; the future situation, desired by the initiators, is achieved in a first stage in the realm of the interpretations people have about that situation. According to social projectionism, changing a situation is achieved by changing the interpretations people have about that situation, and public debates aim to create a consensus on definitions that are as close as possible. The mental map of the project can only be drafted to the extent to which it is permanently reconstructed through confrontation with the other mental maps, those of the individuals involved. “The post-modern condition calls for a break with the concepts and metaphors of the models of modernity, demanding an ontological move out of the mental frame in which there were conceived.” (Bauman, apud., Noble, 2004: 292).

6. *The principle of anticipation* says that the destiny of a collectivity is *the future positive picture* constructed through the individual creations influencing present events (Cojocaru, 2005). It can be said that *the best way to predict the future is to build it*, starting from the desired images, through the present interpretations, because *the map precedes the reality*: “It is not the territory preceding the map now, and it does not survive it, but the map preceding the territory also generating it...” (Wachowski, apud. Felluga, 2003: 84). Thomas formulates this principle, also known as “the creation self-fulfilling prophecy”: “if people define a situation as real, then this situation *is real* [author’s note] through the consequences of defining it as real” (apud. Ungureanu, 1990: 124). In order

to argument this principle, Cooperider uses the placebo effect used in medicine and the Pygmalion effect, which prove that the image of the teachers about pupils is a strong predictor of the performances of these pupils. From this perspective, the project is a mental map that becomes reality only when there is a consensus concerning its details.

The transformation of client into service beneficiary

Some authors, (Healy, 2000; Noble, 2004; Cojocaru, 2005) consider that the focus on dysfunctions or limitations of the service beneficiary leads to a persistence of problems and to their transformation into passive subjects. Maybe it is not by accident, at least until now, that the term *client* has been used for social services. *Social projectionism* proposes replacing this definition, which shows in addition the passive role of the user of the proposed service, with the term *beneficiary*. From this point of view, the argument for replacing the terminology is carried out in the realm of the impact the intervention has on the person using such services. By using the term *beneficiary*, a redefinition is reached of the gain or benefit the vulnerable and/or disadvantaged person acquires by lessening the degree of social dependence, due to the involvement and participation in developing the intervention design and, implicitly, in the design of the service. Approaching the persons using social services from the perspective of the benefit leads to a focus of the intervention on increasing awareness, on mobilisation and on using existing resources through participation and empowerment. Thus, the service provider, by way of the specialists involved, helps to provide an institutional framework in which the beneficiary can find solutions to the problems he/she faces. The activism of beneficiaries is also supported by the transformation of the relationship of power and influence established in the traditional specialist-client interaction into a partnership relation between them, each of them being on equal footing with the other. The post-modern discourse replaces the system of recommendations to the client, used by the social worker

with the one of dialogue and of negotiation aiming to redefine the situation, as well as of empowerment: “one of the key issues for empowering people is sharing knowledge and information: this requires those involved in the consultation to be provided with the results of the consultation process. To develop consultation as an empowering process requires that those who were the subjects of the consultation process requires that those who the subjects of the consultation process should become the monitors of any change, providing critique and comment on the impact of any change, both intended and unintended” (McLaughlin et al., 2004: 162); the beneficiary takes thus part, through consultation and empowerment, in the development of the service according to his/her expectations.

The constructionist theory of social vulnerability (Cojocar, 2005: xxx) describes these transformations of the subject-object relation centred through the change, within the dialogue, of the individual interpretations concerning certain particular situations. Moreover, the appreciative perspective of intervention develops a model of social change, amplifying positive individual experiences especially through collective negotiation (Cooperrider et al., apud Cojocar, 2005). In the post-modern perspective, the ambivalence of control roles and social change the social workers plays tends to sway towards the latter. Thus, social control loses ground in favour of change and even of a transformation of social control in a process of change through involvement, participation and consensus in the relationship with the beneficiary. Therefore, social practice can no longer make a reference to an ideal, due to the requirements of continued adaptation in relation to the beneficiaries, through the consensual establishment of short-term objectives. The ideal is abandoned in favour of practice principles expressed through standards, in the light of the new ideology, built through the multiplicity of particular visions. According to “the postmodernists, ‘life’ is to be embraced without ‘truth’, universal standards or generalizable ideals. Liberated from the metaphor of progress, the post-modern condition is a site of constant mobility and change with no clear direction of development. Any notion of order that can

be experienced or found is local, emergent and transitory phenomenon retaining its shape for only relatively brief of period of time...” (Noble, 2004: 292). Transforming the client into beneficiary means the deconstruction and the relativism of the social practice, forced to be flexible through its very essence. This orientation reflected in the post-modern ideologies direct the social practice towards a realm in which the idea of progress is abandoned in favour of that of multi-linear evolution. This fact leads inevitably to the marketisation of social services.

The marketisation of social services

In the domain of social services, profound general changes are caused by the erosion of the values and the legitimacy of the Welfare State, processes identified and analysed by Powell (2001) and Noble (2004). This deconstruction of the Welfare State creates the conditions for the marketisation of the services in the public domain (Noble, 2004: 294), with repercussions on the new managerialism, characterised by a reduction of the hired staff and a redefinition of the way the budget allotted to public services is structured, by using resources from the state national and local budgets. This type of management, developed in the social services is considered a practice of applying business-type management to the social domain: “Managerialism has been a term used to describe the adoption of business-like methodologies by management teams that employ strategies including tight fiscal controls, strategic planning, targeted responses to emerging opportunities, and sophisticated information systems that closely monitor organizational processes and outcomes” (Lonne et. al, 2004: 347). The study made in Australia, by Lonne, Mc Donald and Fox (2004) sought to identify precisely the effects the marketisation, contractualism and managerialism processes had on the ethics of the service providers, especially the negative ones, to identify the ethical dilemmas generated by these new visions of social service provision. From the point of view of the changes that take place in the domain of social services, we can consider that the ma-

nifestation of *social projectionism*, otherwise present in all the domains of social, economic, political life, has generated the practice of organising activities on the basis of short-term-objective focused projects, of organising the budgets of service-providing institutions in the shape of budgets directed at existing services; these services are presented as projects nested within organisational strategies. Thus, for example a certain service, such as that of monitoring and evaluating foster care placements, has a minimal budget built by the public provider, so that it can operate in order to reach objectives established annually and according to the expected results. This marks in fact the assumptions for being contracted by other service providers, especially private ones that would meet the minimum compulsory standard requirements. The performance of this exercise by the public social services providers in terms of building the budget in segments for each service separately leads to the disposal of the global intervention vision for social change. Thus, “national and state governments are no longer defining themselves as major service providers for individuals’ well-being through organized intervention” (Midgley, apud. Noble, 2004: 293). This orientation of the way the services are provided places the public, state sector in competition with the private one, in a process of promoting a social services market. A relevant indicator for this process is the one given by the procedures for *the certification of the service providers and the licensing of social services*. The procedures imposed through changes in legislation, generated by changes in ideology, place the two categories of providers, the private and the public one, on equal footing. Thus, through the development of the *social services contracting process* (seen as a process through which social services can be provided by private providers working with funds from the local or national budget) great changes will happen in the employment market in the domain of social services: a decrease of personnel in the governmental sector and an increase in the private sector, an orientation of the specialists towards strengthening their profession, which will become a liberal one, and a weakening of the attachment towards the employer, a transformation of the governmental

sector in an institution with coordination, evaluation, monitoring and local policy development roles, a dynamic development of the workforce and an increase in its mobility, the decrease in value of the traditional role of the social worker in the public sector (Noble, 2004: 294), the multilinear evolution of the social services, generated by the volatility of the social programmes etc. Some authors (Healy, 1998; Rees and Rodley, 1995) underline the fact that the marketisation of services generated by post-modern ideologies orient the social services towards the realm of commercial services, casting a shadow on the notion of citizen rights, even if in the rhetoric of discourse some boundaries are maintained between social and commercial services: “rather than living with tensions and paradoxes as likely points for development of alternative visions, what we have is a practice divorced from notion of citizen rights, and social workers offering a form of social care on a commercial basis with not-for-profit organizations to provide social services within a market context” (Noble, 2004. 301).

The volatility of social programmes

The permanent adaptation of programmes to local needs, the permanent balance between micro-practice and macro-practice in providing social services, the focus on beneficiary and the scheduling of activities depending on short-term objectives, makes social projectionism recognise the manifestation of a *volatility of social programmes*, accepted and promoted as such through the very use of the concept of *pilot projects*; these are experimentations of new social practices and services, for a well-defined category of population, which propose changes in the situation of its members in the short term. Using pilot projects ensures other advantages, as well: adaptability and flexibility in providing innovative services, the identification of population categories subject to social exclusion, the evaluation and maintenance of effective practices, modelling activities depending on the impact they have, redesigning projects depending on the results obtained in the experimental ones, saving and distributing the resources with

the purpose of an increased effectiveness. On the other hand, the volatility of pilot projects leads to some perverse effects, such as: abandoning some interventions at the end of the funding due to lack of subsequent funds, the difficulty of finding other donors for projects already implemented, a reduced number of beneficiaries impacted by the interventions proposed in the projects, a decrease in the providers' chances to strengthen a long-term strategy, an increase in dependence and in the instability of the service providers etc.

The difficulty to plan in the long term, generated by the volatility of the he programmes, is also described by Harvey, who thinks that "volatility makes engaging in long-term planning to become extremely difficult. Indeed, to learn how to use volatility appropriately is, nowadays, as important as accelerating circulation time" (1990/2002: 288). Social projectionism considers that the volatility of programmes can be thought not only in terms loaded with a deficit language, but it can be considered an opportunity for ensuring social change; therefore, the issue is not to fight against the volatility of the programmes, for example through advocacy campaigns for extending funding, but to identify various strategies for controlling it. Harvey admits that there are two strategies in working with volatility. The first is about developing a short-term planning model: "this concerns more short-time planning that long-term planning and the promotion of the art of taking advantage of the possibility of short-term gain, wherever it might appear" (1990/2002: 288). the other proactive strategy for controlling volatility "... presupposes the manipulation of taste and opinion, either by leading a fashion trend, or by saturating the market with images that would model volatility depending on precise purposes" (Harvey, 1990/2002: 288-289).

The contextualisation of social practice

This perspective focus on local level intervention, buy identifying the existing problems within the community, the mobilisation of existing resources and finding solutions within

the same logic. Concentration at local level requires a process of micro-deconstruction generated by the post-modern discourse, and social action is seen as a result of participation and involvement of the community members, becoming "a social-action process that promotes participation of people, organisations and communities towards the goal of increased individual and community control, political efficacy, improved quality of community life and social justice" (Wallerstein, apud. McLaughlin et al., 2004: 162). Even if at national level a common policy is established, each county has its own strategy that aims through its elements to contribute to its achievement; at local level, priorities, purposes and actions are adapted to the local situation, and this gives birth in different places to different strategies. Therefore, the national bodies have only coordination and methodology orientation roles, they verify the way local projects meet the needs identified at this level. If at national level the discourse focused on human rights, progress and development is maintained, at local level this provides the context for the realisation of specific intervention tools: "Linked to notions of social development through social betterment and progress, social work has historically been committed to notions of progress, social justice, human rights, equality and self-determination. The certainties of logical argument and discoverable explanations provided social work with the tools of analysis to identify and attempt to address grand and small-scale issues of discrimination, oppression, disadvantage and privilege" (Noble, 2004: 293).

Developing the public-private partnership

Partnership is a relationship established between two or more individuals, institutions, groups, which put *together* certain *resources* in order to reach a *common purpose*. At all times, it is born of the desire to solve a certain social problem by assigning tasks, obligations and rights to each partner. This presupposes the contribution of the factors involved, depending on the real possibilities of each of them. The

development of the public-private partnership has generated an *equality relation* between governmental and nongovernmental institutions, in which no subordination relation are established, because the partners assess *the extent to which the common objectives are achieved* and the way resources are managed. The development of this equality relationship generates a model of permanent communication between the two parties, becoming a process in which responsibilities are taken on by the partners for achieving the objectives of the *common programme*, each partner assuming *the risks and the failures* of the programme. In order to achieve the common project, there is an established policy for *common promotion/ common image* of the programme, in a relationship characterised by *stability*, a low risk of the partnership being dissolved before the programme is over, offering at the same time the security of a *common medium- and long-term strategy* in the moment the programme has reached its objectives. The development of this form of collaboration between the two organisation systems can lead to an increased interest and involvement of the partners in solving the problem, an increase in resources through the participation of the partners, as well as of the chances for achieving the project, an increased flexibility concerning the types of intervention, a regular evaluation required in the conditions of maintaining the partnership, an increase of the degree of social effectiveness, an increase of the chances for accessing funds, and a continued adaptation of the intervention, generated by the volatility of programmes.

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Sin And The Experience Of Finiteness

Veress Károly

Professor, Ph.D., Faculty of History and Philosophy, Babes-Bolyai University, Cluj, Romania. Author of the books: *Paradox (tudat)állapotok* (1996); *A nemzedékváltás szerepe a kultúrában* (1999); *Filozófiai szemiotika* (1999); *Kisebbségi létproblémák* (2000); *Az értelem értelméről. Hermeneutikai vizsgálódások* (2003); *Egy létparadoxon színe és visszája. Hermeneutikai kísérlet a nem lehet-probléma megnyitására* (2003); *Fiinta generationala si destinul culturii* (2003). E-mail: veressk@hotmail.com

Today's philosophical thinking mostly deals with the problem of sin from a religious, phenomenological or ethical point of view. This paper is an attempt to find hermeneutical points of view for the possibility of an interpretation of sin which can be opened by philosophical hermeneutics with reference to our historical being, the linguistic form of experience and the experience of finitude. The train of thoughts takes us from the analysis of the concept "original sin" to the disclosure of the speculative structure and existential meaning of the original sin. Throughout this examination, the essence of original sin is revealed as the medium and the universal experience-horizon of the history of human being and of meaning.

The *metaphysical tradition* coming into being in the history of European philosophy, so it seems, has placed the Christianly human and theological problem of original sin in the service of the accomplishment of his own needs of questioning and internal self-construction by centralizing and emphasizing it.¹ Therefore it is not so much the historical course of events and philosophical relevance of the Biblical story of the original sin which entered the terrain of philosophical research, but rather the problems which a metaphysical worldview noticed in it or projected into it, starting from its own prejudices and questions embedded into this tradition, and guided by the interpretive views and polemical approach of a given age. In this metaphysical horizon the problem of sin is connected to the metaphysical questions deriving from the difference and tension of good and evil, being and nothing, reason and freedom. In this respect Ricoeur's ideas about the concept and interpretive history of original sin are of utmost importance.

Key words:

metaphysical tradition,
original sin, gnosticism,
evil, experience, question,
ability to differentiate,
history of reception,
speculative structure,
unutterable

The Concept Of Original Sin

Ricoeur's starting point is the fact that there is a problem with the *concept* of original sin. This uncertain and indefinable concept mingles together and transmits in an uncritical way different kinds of false knowledge (legal, biological, theological). But in this case the false conceptual knowledge is at the same time a true *symbol* which, in its entirety, carries and mediates a comprehensive meaning, pointing beyond its conceptual content. "Original sin" in Ricoeur's understanding is the *rational symbol*² of everything which we confess most deeply in the confession of our sins". All false knowledge must be disrupted in order to be able to reach the true meaning of the problem lying within it; it is the "conceptual being of this concept" which must be ceased in order to let the "work of acquiring meaning" begin – as a positive avail of a critical approach –, in the course of which the true meaning of the original sin as revealed by the experience of a Christian can be regained.³

The concept of *original sin* is not formed in the history of the biblical sin, but much later – as a polemical concept – in the polemics of Christian theology in formation and a Gnostic way of thinking. In this process – in Ricoeur's view – the basically anti-Gnostic concept of original sin became a "quasi-Gnostic" concept in its connection with evil.⁴

Gnostics were primarily concerned with the question of *evil*. Where does the evil in the world come from? Is it originally part of the world? Or is it through man that evil is in the world? The possibilities of conceiving this problem are limited by the metaphysical view about evil, which develops the problem either in an ontological-substantial, or in an ethical-moral dimension.

From a Gnostic point of view, evil comes into man from outside, it falls onto man by the power of the world. From the moment of our birth, we find the evil in ourselves, outside ourselves, in front of ourselves. As the evil has always happened, it does not begin with me and it is started by me; the evil has its own past, it is its own tradition and prehistory. But each one of us also *comes across it*, since the evil is al-

ready present for the consciousness awakening to responsibility. The evil is thus revealed in the horizon of a universal human state of existence, which points beyond individual being. The sin confessed by man – in its relation with the evil perceived as such – manifests itself not so much as the commission of the evil, that is, not as an evil action, but it is rather the "*condition* of being-in-the-world", the "*misfortune* of mere existence", an "interiorized fate". Neither evil nor sin has anything to do with the personality and responsibility of the individual being, and nor has salvation, which the individual being acquires by magic liberation. Gnosticism, by "secularizing" the symbol of sin, emphasizes – in an ontological meaning – its likeness to reality and existence, which precedes its self-awareness, and – in an ethical meaning – its *community* dimension which cannot be divided into personal responsibilities.⁵ From a Gnostic point of view, sin is not a *deed*, but *existence*.

In opposition to this, the teaching of the Church Fathers outlines an anti-Gnostic conception of evil. According to this evil is not "something", it is not matter, it is not substance, it is not world. The evil does not exist in the world in itself, but *by us*. In this respect the Church Fathers remained strongly connected to the tradition of the Church, to that "*penitential tradition*" (in Ricoeur's words) in the sense of which the narration of the Fall and Adam's symbol within it means that the man is, if not the absolute source, but the point of origin of the evil present in the world. According to this, sin is not identical with the world as such, but it enters the world; the sin is committed by man, it enters the world because of the deed of one particular man, the first man.⁶ The tradition of the Church places thus in the forefront the action-like individuality and personal nature of sin (and the evil). In the view of the Church Fathers, sin is not *existence*, but *deed*.

However, this kind of approach is not entirely in line with the beginnings of Church tradition. The concept of sin characteristic for the beginnings of Christianity is much closer to the later Gnostic teaching than the rationalizing approach of the Church Fathers. In the view of the prophets the condition of sin is not confined to some kind of individual sinfulness. Sin

is a condition in which man is immersed, but it is power at the same time, which detains man. So we are not dealing here so much with the decline of the human condition of being, but rather with an essential human weakness, “the difference between I want and I am able”, the “misery” of sin. According to this idea, “the metaphysical unity of the human race derives from the transbiological and transhistorical solidarity of sin”, which is projected into the experience of a Christian as a sort of “consciousness of us” of the suffered sinfulness. “We too, poor sinners” – the confession states.

Similarly, in Paul the Apostle’s conceptions about Adam the first man is not the first author, the first actor of sin, but much rather its first “vehicle” or carrier. Sin is such a mythical greatness beyond individuality which exceeds the person of Adam himself, and connects all the humans, from the first to the last, by “constituting” every one of them as sinners and holding them in its power.⁷

In Christian thinking – in an anti-Gnostic spirit – it is Augustine who takes the first determined steps to define the concept of sin. Augustine’s perception of sin gradually incorporates several essential instances, crystallizing the basic components of the later metaphysical and ethical problem of sin.

The problem of sin at Augustine raises first of all in connection with the development of the purely “ethical image” of the evil. In his understanding, the man is entirely responsible for the evil, the beginning of which lies in individual actions, *declinatio*, *corruptio*, and which appears thus in the world as an accidental, purely irrational event. In order to draw up his point, Augustine “reshapes” certain ontological concepts taken from Neo-Platonism, referring them to human existence. According to these – and reminiscent of the ancient Greek idea of evil as *privatio boni*, the lack of good – human existence unfolds as a *defectus*, as a *decline* in the procession towards the *nothing*. As the actor of evil deeds, man does not proceed towards God, but away from God; he does not accept or take, but rather renounces or throws away his existence as a created being. “Nothing”⁸ “means here not the ontological anti-pole of existence, but an existential direction, the opposite of conversion”.⁹

As another component of his approach, Augustine creates the concept of “original” sin, of *naturale peccatum*. This does not signify the sins that we commit, but the condition of sin in which we find ourselves by birth. For a Christian the original sin is an *inheritance*, an inherited *vitium*. It should be noticed here that, contrary to the individual beginning of the evil, sin is about continuity and consolidation, and by the idea of *inheritance* the original sin is spread to the entire human race.¹⁰ This statement apparently contradicts the previous one, that the beginning of evil lies in individual deeds. It seems that the Augustinian problem of sin covers a paradox: man becomes sinful by individual sinning, that is, by a willful deed, while he is also sinful through his birth (from his origin). In other words: every human being is originally sinful; however, his sinfulness is not originally given by his existence in the world, but is rooted in his individually committed personal deeds.

The anti-Gnostic conception of the beginnings seems to turn later into a Gnostic way of thinking, but this concept of sin in formation still preserves strong anti-Gnostic features in its roots or foundations. The way Augustine solves this paradox by considering Adam, the “first man”, the ancestor of mankind, an individual and a historical figure, also underlines this approach: Adam commits the sin individually, but all the human beings, as they all descend from Adam, inherit it by birth, and thus are all originally sinful. “This pattern of inheritance belongs to the first man’s representation as the initiator and transmitter of evil”, and as such Adam is the “antitype of Christ”. In order to maintain this image, the Augustinian exegesis holds back everything which would delimit the literal interpretation of the first man’s role in Paul the Apostle’s thoughts about Adam. Paul did not conceive of Adam’s person as a concrete individual and a historical figure, but much rather as a carrier of a mythical meaning; for Augustine, all this is moved towards the statement of individuality and historicity. This is how Adam appears in the Christian interpretation of sin as the antitype of Christ; his fall, just like Christ’s advent, divided history.¹¹

So Augustine, by attributing the evil entirely to man, turns the purportedly anti-Gnostic concept of original sin into a quasi-Gnostic concept. Originally an aleatory deed, sin becomes human nature. The individual man is born into sin, but this has a cause which lies in Adam's personal deed. Thus divine election and rejection becomes *rationalizable* for Christian thinking: election happens through divine grace, and damnation is rightful. Augustine – as Ricoeur points out – “created the idea of sinfulness deriving from nature, inherited from the first man, and punishable as an effective criminal act, in order to justify the rightfulness of damnation”.¹² This is how in Ricoeur's understanding the concept of original sin can connect sin as the meaning of the “burden inherited by birth” and the experience of an ethically reprovable, legally punishable, personal and action-like sin.

Ricoeur continues to sustain the idea of a “rationalized myth” as opposed to the Augustinian metaphysics (of the subject) which emphasizes the sin of the human individual, opening it up to the dimensions of the ethical and the historical in an attempt to rationalize it. The problem of original sin conceived in this way has no consistency of its own, and no such rational concept of sin can be derived from it which would create a connection with the ethical, legal, or material meaning of human sin. The ultimate secret of the original sin viewed from the evil we commit only reveals itself in effect if we take into consideration that “we start the evil only because of an already existing evil”, which enters the world through us. And all this, anticipating any kind of metaphysical speculations, always reveals itself in the experience shared by every Christian who knows himself as a sinner by his very awareness of the original sin.¹³

Ricoeur considers that “it is not enough to separate myth from history, but the *non-historical* truth must also be found in it” (the author's emphasis). As for the secret of evil, it is revealed by the myth in the twofold perspective that although “every one of us is the starter and initiator of evil”, “every one of us *also finds*” evil, which “is *already present* for every consciousness becoming aware of its responsibility”. This is so because evil is also *its own* past, tradition, prehistory. Simi-

larly, in the figure of the ancestor of the human race the myth brings together all the features which universally characterize sin experienced as a basic human condition of existence: “the reality of sin, which precedes any kind of awareness, the common dimension of sin, which cannot be divided into individual responsibilities, the weakness of will, which is shown in every actual sin”.¹⁴

The Meaning Of Original Sin

A philosophical hermeneutical approach to the basic problem of original sin as revealed in the biblical story of the Fall and its reinterpretation expropriated by metaphysical tradition raises the question whether this discipline may yield new insights and horizons for discussion and interpretation, and whether the hermeneutical *rehabilitation* of the problem of sin inherent in the so-called “original sin” is possible.

A closer look at the biblical story of the Fall will reveal at once that it is not exactly about what its later theological reconstruction and metaphysical interpretation imply. Without the pretension of attempting to reveal all the layers, intricate meanings, and richness of the message of this story, let us only emphasize some of the elements which can be enlightening for the problem of the original sin.

Although – or exactly because – the story is so well known, it is still worthwhile to examine the most important instances in the plot. What is the content of the story itself? God, after having created the earthly world, the richness and variety of the inanimate and living nature, also created the man – to his own image and resemblance – in order for him to become the master of nature. The man was allowed to eat from any tree of the Garden of Eden, except for the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The man was forbidden to eat the fruit of this tree, being warned that, had he broken the interdiction, he would die. However, Eve, created by God as a partner to Adam, deceived by the artfulness of the snake, took one of the fruits of the tree, eating it together with Adam.

What were the effects and consequences of this action? The couple, awakening to human consciousness, noticed its own nakedness and hid from the face of God among the trees of the garden. Then God expelled the couple from the Garden of Eden, cursing the snake and the earth, planting enmity and suffering in the world, which He had originally created to be perfect. Thus God determined the two basic features of human condition once and for all: man became the supporter and determiner of his own existence, but at the same time he also became finite and mortal. By the fact that God secluded the tree of life from man forever, the difference between human and divine condition became irreversible.

What are the – also hermeneutically relevant – instances of this story which carry what later became the fundamental problem of original sin? The story outlines in fact a situation of experience the participants of which are the first couple. From a hermeneutical point of view, this experience is not focused on the acquiring of some kind of new material knowledge, but it is revealed as a *new experience*. The novelty of the situation lies in the fact that – as opposed to the previously repeating, closed and unproblematic nature of life in the Garden of Eden – it opens up for the condition of those who participate in it as an *event* which happens to them and is experienced by them.

One of the important instances of this situation in a hermeneutic respect is obvious even at the first approach. This instance is connected to the *linguistic* nature of the situation, that is, to the *uttering* of the divine prohibition and the *question* emerging from this prohibition. The divine prohibition, to which no explanation is added, is actually a divine word, which gains its force by the revelation itself. God does not tell something to man, but he reveals himself in the prohibition laid upon the man; this prohibition is not so much addressed to man, but it rather *utters* the difference of the divine and the humane. This is why divine prohibition carries in itself a question for the man – *Why?* –, which in the visual language of the myth is represented by the figure of the snake, and which is asked for the first time by the snake. Through this question the difference of divine and human experience, which had already been revealed in its unthinkable anticipa-

tion by the uttering of the divine prohibition, is opened up for man as well: the man is not god. This question evidently carries further questions in itself – Who is man then? How is man possible? Who am I? – along which man turns more and more towards himself, and which open up the way to the experience of his own human condition. The question which leads to man's recognition of the difference between good and evil is always rooted in the revelation of the difference between the divine and the human, and it is from here that it gains its meaning. That what is revealed by the utterance of divine prohibition opens up for man in his inquisitive concern with this prohibition as an experience. As an experience which is always rooted in divine revelation, while it carries within itself the question which opens the way to his own self. As a question to which Eve's deed is the answer, and which in its nature as question is always an answer to divine revelation.

Eve yields to the temptation of the question, as the way opened by it leads from divine revelation to human knowledge. The difference between the two also has its importance as the difference between experience and language. The one-fold and complete divine *revelation* becomes a *happening* unfolding in the medium of human experience and always passing on. What is a directly achieved *elevation* in the divine language of the divine word, becomes *knowledge* in the human language of the inquisitive human word, which can be grasped, thought, and expressed in notions. But just like the human word always carries the aura of the divine word upon it, the act of human existence and reason also unfolds its own horizon of experience in the light of revelation.

A further problem of a hermeneutic import connected to the situation of the Garden of Eden is related to the *content of the experience* of this situation. The biblical story does not explain what is good and what is evil, but it speaks about the *ability to differentiate* between good and evil, about learning this ability and becoming capable of this differentiation. That is – in the words of the snake and also according to God's later reference – it speaks about a divine ability which man can also share and shares indeed by eating from the fruit of the tree. By the human experience of the difference between good and evil it becomes possible for man to do evil. The dis-

tinct experience of good and evil – as different from each other – is also based on the experience of this differentiation. However, the experience of the finiteness of human existence, the mortality of man is also connected to the acquisition of this ability, which does not only limit the possibility that man, as the opposition of God, may spread evil over the whole world, but it also confronts man with a new possibility of existence, which becomes a part of human life exactly in the horizon of his finiteness: with freedom and the human experience of living in freedom.

The human condition outlined in this new experience is not built upon one or the other of the metaphysical instances that were later developed with various emphases, but upon the mutually amplifying relations and interconnectedness of all these instances. The ability to differentiate between good and evil, the possibility of choosing on the basis of rational precepts, the perspective of human freedom and self-definition lying within these, and the interpretive horizon of the finiteness of human existence which establishes human responsibility in relation with mortal existence and the experience of death: all these together outline the basic difference between the divine and human condition – which would later acquire such a great metaphysical productivity – and the richness of human condition as well.

However, there are still some questions unanswered. Does this new experience carry a decline, a collapse for the human condition? Seen from the perspective of divine creation, it clearly became not poorer, but richer by the human condition, because it perfected the difference between good and evil, life and death, divine and human, which was already there in divine creation. The divine ability of choosing between good and evil carries within it the possibility of the wrong choice also for God himself, but the divine nature of God is revealed exactly in the fact that he *only* chooses the good, or rather that he *does not* use this liberty, he *does not* choose. Whereas the human nature of man does not lie in his learning this divine ability, as he has always possessed that by his very nature of created being, but it is perfected by human freedom deriving from the divine ability of choosing between

good and evil, which is only made possible by the fact that the man is *not* God (and had not been God even previously to possessing this ability). The man's nature of created being valid even before the Fall is only intensified by God's *posterior judgment* which utters the mortality of man, the always prevalent historicity and temporality of the human being coming from dust and turning into dust. This twofold *not* carries the possibility of evil which has always been there in divine creation and the original and basic historicity of human condition in a way that it is always revealed as present in the creation by the new experience of eating the fruit, which by its very novelty projects back and completes its own structure of precedence. This means not the fall, but much rather the elevation, the self-affirmation of the human sphere of existence, and at the same time the intensification, the enrichment of its specific human contents.

Furthermore, there is the question of the *real* content of this experience. It is by no means confined only to the awareness of the nature of good and evil, and the metaphysical differences between them, even less to our enrichment with a metaphysical worldview deriving from the recognition of the difference between life and death, the divine and the human; but it is the experience of *the difference* as such. Its novelty is revealed by the ability to experience this difference and through it a new/different way of acquiring experience, which is achieved as an action restructuring the condition of the man acquiring this experience. In the course of this the meaning of the difference does not emerge as a conceptual knowledge realized by a consciousness reflecting upon and materializing this condition, but as the human perception of the *experienced* difference, as a *history of reception* in the course of which the meaning of this experience always shapes the life of the person who undergoes it. A history of reception in which the experience of living in difference has always *preceded* any kind of awareness or later interpretive instance of this experience. This difference, which – paraphrasing Gadamer's words – does not wish to be a real difference, passes along the entire history of creation in its manifold manifestations: in the difference between Adam and Eve, God

and man, creator and created world, divine goodness and the artfulness of the snake. It is also there in the divine creative word opening upon the world in its unity, and the plenitude of human questions, in the command of the prohibition addressed to man and the possibility to break it. By eating the fruit of the tree of knowledge all these differences become complete exactly because of human acceptance, in such a way that this completeness reveals its meaning – comprehensible exactly for man – by the very acceptance of the completeness and condition of human existence. This self-completing instance of the act of human existence and reason consummates divine creation itself, turning it indeed into “good”, in the sense God regards everything he created as “very good”.

Finally, a third question also rises: is the deed of the Fall a sin? Judged severely in an ethical context, Eve’s deed is a *crime*. That is, an action which offends a previously expressed rule, an interdiction. Adam and Eve, by eating the fruit, acquire the ability of differentiating between good and evil and incorporate it into their human lives. But the very fact that Eve picks the fruit and thus chooses between good and evil accomplishes the same thing. Thus they acquire a knowledge which is already there in the experience in which they acquire it. Eve’s deed is thus an answer to the question addressed to man in the divine command of prohibition, a response to the call expressed in this utterance as a *co-response*. This is at the same time a response to the human nature of existence revealed in this “addressedness”, as the revelation of the *interconnectedness* of intellect and freedom, and human condition defined by responsibility and mortality. This deed in its singularity stands in the always performing process of the act of human existence and reason, but at the same time it clearly outlines the horizon of the meaning of human existence, passed on continuously, emerging from the experience of its finiteness and otherness, and pointing to its own perfection.

Although from an ethical point of view Eve’s deed is a crime, in a metaphysical sense it contains nothing of the materiality of sin. What is essentially revealed by it, is in fact the

speculative structure of sin: sin as something individually personal and at the same time or also as a result humanly universal; as something which bears the concreteness of participation and sharing and the abstractness of the horizon of the world emerging from it; and as something which is achieved at the same time as the deed limited by its own finiteness and the never-ending process of the happening. On the basis of these can the original sin be understood in its widest sense, as the *medium* of the emergence of the act of human existence and reason and its universal *horizon* of experience.

The original sin condensed in the biblical story of the Fall is thus *not a sin* in the material sense of the word, that is, it is not a fact which can be empirically researched, morally judged, and legally condemned. But the comprehensive unity of the original sin is dispersed in the plenitude and variety of human sins, which gains their support and final significance from it.

The irrevocable interconnectedness of human existence and reason in the original sin keeps man in a continuous state of “addressedness”. But even before the sinfulness of man could have his word in the never ending *dialogue* carried out with itself and others, the speculative structure of the original sin presents as *revealed* and *understandable* by being revealed that what remains unuttered and *unutterable* in all the confessions of this sin: the hidden and ultimate meaning of the sin.

The *light of the sin* shines upon all existence and deed which, as the existence and the deed of man, enters the world *from it*, revealing and at the same time hiding the meaning of the sin.

Notes:

¹ The two central theses of the metaphysical tradition concerning the problem of sin can be defined as follows: “The evil is not a real being, but only the lack of the good”; “God, the eternal Creator is not responsible for the fact that sin is in the world; the reason of sin, on the contrary, is the finiteness of man”. Cf. László Tengelyi, *A bűn mint sorseseemény* (Sin as an event of fate), Budapest: Atlantisz, 1992. The first thesis derives from the Greeks, the second one was constituted in a Christian circle of ideas. The metaphysical linking of the problem of the evil and the problem of sin unites the twofold – Greek and Christian – origin of the tradition of European metaphysics, organizing it into one encompassing unit of thought.

² By “rational symbol” Ricoeur means that “concepts do not have consistency in themselves, but they derive from analogical expressions which are analogical not because of the lack of a precise phrasing, but because of their manifold meanings. Therefore it is not false clarity that should be sought in the concept of original sin, but its analogically dark richness.” Paul Ricoeur, “Az “erendendő bűn” jelentéséről” (On the meaning of the “original sin”), in *Válogatott irodalomelméleti tanulmányok* (Selected studies in literary theory), Budapest: Osiris, 1999, p. 87.

³ Op. cit., p. 74.

⁴ Op. cit., p. 75. Ricoeur starts from the working hypothesis that “Christian theology because of apologetic reasons – in order to defeat Gnosis – assimilated itself to the Gnostic way of thinking”.

⁵ Op. cit., p. 77, 89.

⁶ Op. cit., p. 77, 78.

⁷ Op. cit., p. 82, 88.

⁸ What is more, the “nothing” in this context can hardly be differentiated from the nature of man as a creation ex nihilo, which means that he has no self-sufficient existence, but finds himself in constant dependence as a created being. Op. cit., p. 80.

⁹ Op. cit., p. 78, 79.

¹⁰ Op. cit., p. 81.

¹¹ Op. cit., p. 81, 82.

¹² Op. cit., p. 85, 86.

¹³ Op. cit., p. 91-92.

¹⁴ Op. cit., p. 89.

Dangers Of Morality And The Rationality Of The Desire For Perpetual Peace

This article tries to discuss the potential dangers of proposing a world order in the form of the morally based idea of perpetual peace as it is developed by Kant and further propagated by Habermas and Derrida. Drawing on a distinction between the Kantian idea of morality (Moralität) attributed to the internality of man via its theological connection with god and an idea of ethics akin to Aristotelian and/or Hegelian notions (ethos or ethical life – Sittlichkeit), the article posits the question of the role of morality in the formation of the idea of perpetual peace. While doing this, it will also discuss some of the dangers of imposing a moral law under the pretext of moral necessity onto a humanity who may not will to adhere to the same principles. Thus, even though it does not discuss human rights directly, all the argument revolves around the question of the status of universal human rights as the law of the cosmopolitan world and the institutions imposing that law on today's nations.

What inspired this paper was the famous manifesto of Habermas, co-signed by Derrida, two of the most important thinkers of our time, declaring the characteristics of the Western identity that make the West worthy of the leadership of the world's nations and calling for a 'perpetual peace' a-la Kant. The contrast between the title of the manifesto ("Plea for a Common Foreign Policy, Beginning at the Core of Europe") and the demand it put before Europe at the end (to inspire "the Kantian hope for a global domestic policy") was striking.¹ They were proposing the establishment of a new world order that would bring people peace, security and justice under the leadership of the West. 'The West' meant in their terminology a form of 'spirit', an identity rooted in the Judeo-Christian tradition that characterized the nations of Western Europe together with the United States, Austria and Canada.² Since the publication of the article, despite her apparent hesitation Europe increased her support for the overseas operations of the United States under the pretext of protecting the human rights and democracy in some part of the world, and the so-called 'right of international intervention' began to be legitimized in a UN controlled by the West. The European objections to the Iraq war (in 2003, the same year, a few months earlier than the article was published) were lim-

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history, human rights

ited to the 'unilateral' policies of the US, largely targeting her hastiness and not taking counsel with Europe. But, when the US acted with determination, the French and German foreign ministries began to claim a share in Iraq's reaches (the British were already in Iraq together with the Americans). They learned a lesson, now preferring to act together, at least for the time being, as they act in co-ordination in Iran, Syria and some other countries. While the UN, not *reformed* yet, still cannot be totally controlled but the West, we are in a road now through which Europe and the US leading us toward perpetual peace.

Dreaming is good, day-dreaming is even better, but, alas, it shatters, at least, at those brief moments of awakenings (if one is apt to sleep too long) as soon as one takes a look at what is going on in the 'real' world among the 'real' people. More than that, it is the beautiful dream, arising from the good-will of the intellectual that serves as the ideological, legitimizing tool for the adventures of the powerful. The more we talk about peace and desire it, the more wars, violent transgressions ensue in the world. Therefore, it is necessary to wake up and see whereto that dream leads us. But doing this requires more than just political analysis that assumes a calculative rationality which would see the immanent dangers of an eventual perpetual peace. For, the roots of the idea lie in the irrational desire originating from individual's self-centered morality. To see how this self-centered morality operates and informs that irrational dream necessitates a return back to the original project as it has been formulated by Kant in his several writings.

From Universal Natural History to Universal Civil Society

Perpetual peace is a universal idea proposing to establish a universal peace that encompasses all humanity. But, as such, it cannot make itself more desirable than Hobbesian sovereign in the hearts of people, but it can only say, 'you need protection, stability, etc., and for that reason you have to obey my authority!' No, this is no longer 'marketable' and sounds like

a statement more fitting to a Mafia member. To evade this inconvenience, it is necessary to ground it on something *essential* that can be claimed to be universally found in all individual human beings: 'it lies in the *nature* of man!' But, saying, 'it is the human nature', is not saying too much it that 'nature' does not imply a *telos* as well. However, the operations of inserting an *essence* and a *telos* in *man's* existence requires a certain conception that Kant called as 'natural history' and made the basis of his *thesis* of perpetual peace.

At the beginning of his article entitled "Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Intent", written in 1784, Kant, says that the "appearances [of the freedom of the will], human actions, like all other natural events, are certainly determined [*bestimmt*] in conformity with universal natural laws".³ According to this, the universal natural laws determine the human actions which are the appearances of the freedom of the will. In the same article Kant makes it clear that what is at stake is not the will of the individuals but that of the species and adds that despite the differences between the wills of the particular individuals or societies they all "unconsciously proceed toward an unknown natural end". Thus Kant puts together the necessary pieces to form the scene of his history: an unknown natural end, particular wills of individuals that can contradict with this, and the will of the species (as different from the wills of the individuals) directed towards this natural but unknown end.

By this way Kant presents history as a process in which the individuals unconsciously strive to reach the end of their own species which is already predetermined by nature. For, according to Kant, considering the 'senselessness of the course of human affairs', "the philosopher cannot assume that in the great human drama mankind has a rational end of its own", but can only try to "discover whether there is some natural objective" overwhelming and informing (in a mysterious way) even the course of a whole species.⁴ Where the philosopher cannot suppose any rational end or plan specific for mankind alone, but only sees a definite plan or objective of nature in accordance to which all the progresses of existing species should operate, history becomes the his-

tory of that definite natural plan or objective which can be written (understood as being written down, not authored) by man but not a history of man either as individual or as a species. At this point, Kant, comparing the role of the philosopher (himself) to a Kepler subjecting “the eccentric paths of the planets to definite laws”, and a Newton “explaining these laws by means of a universal natural cause”, undertakes the task of subjecting the senseless human affairs to definite laws and explaining them according to a universal natural cause.⁵ Kant accomplishes his universal history in nine theses the first five of which deserve special attention for they are directly related with the idea of natural end and its relation to man both as individual and species.

In the first thesis Kant says “*All of a creature’s natural capacities are destined to develop completely and in conformity with their end.*”⁶ There are three points of importance in the statement. First, we understand that there is a *definite end* for each creature, and this end is *given by nature*. Second, each creature is *moving toward* that end. And third, this movement assumes the form *developing certain natural capacities* that are implied to be in conformity with that pre-given end. Thus, the thesis establishes history as a process of development, or progress with a definite end, a *telos* that *ought to be* fulfilled by each creature. The second thesis states what this end is in the special case of mankind which is assumed to be entirely and qualitatively different from the rest of creation due to man’s special capacity of having reason. Here, we learn that the natural capacities of mankind are “directed toward the use of his reason” and this capacity of using reason can only be developed “*in the species, not in the individual*”. That having the capacity of reason elevates mankind to a superior position over the rest of creation is clear enough needs no further discussion. Kant also subordinates the *telos* of inferior creation to the *telos* of mankind and adds that this *telos*, that is, bringing out the natural capacities destined to develop toward use of reason, means also a necessary distancing from man’s past (or present as well) situation mostly dominated by animal instinct. The more human beings use their reason the more they

distance themselves from their animal instincts. History now becomes the process of negating the animal in man and affirming the reason as its anti-thesis. It divides human beings into two opposing parts one of which should be suppressed and annihilated (overcome) and the other should be pursued and developed. Yet, since reason does not depend on instinct, but requires long and tedious work of trial, practice and instruction, etc., the life of one individual cannot suffice to acquire enough insight. It is only the species that, by transmitting all acquired enlightenment from generation to generation, can proceed to the stage of development that fulfils nature’s objective. This move from individual to species attaches reason to the species rather than the living individuals and qualifies it as if it is something existing in nature that transcends the limited capacities of individuals. Being far above and beyond the powers of the individual that can have only a flawed, defective and weak will, *natural* reason now becomes an attribute of the abstract entity of ‘species’.⁷ Connecting the ‘natural end of reason’ —that imposes itself as an unknowable necessity into the lives of individuals— to the species, elevates both reason and species above the daily existence and throws them into a *transcendental* existence. In other words, this constitutes a theoretical (and also magical) carrying over of reason and species from the *finitude* of individual human being to the *infinitude* of existence. Only after such a move it becomes possible for Kant to get out of the chaos-like world (‘senseless drama’) of happenings brought about by the particular wills of individuals and their eventual collusions, and enter into the wondrous world of *infinite will, freedom, reason* and *morality (moralität)* that transcends all these senselessness and has an indisputably determinative power over the wills and consciousness of the individuals.

Kant’s third thesis emphasizes this point: “*Nature has willed that man, entirely by himself, produce everything that goes beyond the mechanical organization of his animal existence and partake in no other happiness or perfection than what he himself, independently of instinct, can secure through his own reason.*”⁸ What is at stake here is hidden in the subject of the sentence performing the act of willing and the

power of the expressions like ‘man, entirely by himself’, etc., cannot save the day. It is clearly stated in the formula that the thing, the agent that wills is nature, a nature whose ends are specific to itself and cannot be known by man, and its act of willing is that which decidedly determines the proper act of man and dictates him that he should free himself from instinct, from the mechanical organization of his animal existence and direct himself toward the only happiness or perfection that ‘his own’ reason can offer.⁹ According to this, what informs history and gives it its progressive character is neither particular nor collective wills of the actual individuals, but a definite *will of nature* which is *above and beyond* the reach of individual and independent of him. Moreover, a few lines below Kant makes it clear that the nature he talks about is beyond the reach of humanity, just dictating his objectives and assessing his achievements in relation to her predetermined end for the mankind.¹⁰ It is possible that man may suffer hardships for generations, may live in subjection, etc., but as far as the ends of nature concerned neither sufferings nor achievements of this sort are important. What matters is mankind’s being worthy of it or not. Before the *court of nature* man has the burden of proof to show that he has directed himself towards *humanity*¹¹ and thus deserves to exist and is *worthy* of well-being.

In the fourth thesis, Kant carries the issue over to the social and says that man, whose directionality is already predetermined by natural reason and will, will finally constitute the ‘law-governed order in society’ through the mechanism of antagonism.¹² But, the Kantian antagonism should not be understood in the sense of a major determinant enabling the terms of conflict to involve in decisive struggles, negotiations, dealings to effect the course of events leading to a future which is not predetermined and given. In terms of the universal history of mankind, its *telos*, its end is already here, informing the presence (as well as the past and future) as it is already predetermined by nature. Antagonism is not that mechanism that may have the power to re-write that end and change the course of events, but rather it functions in the way of correcting the errors that man may have been committing in the

presence. Nature allows antagonism (‘man’s *unsocial sociability*’) in so far as it contributes (by correcting errors) to the end of establishing law-governed order in society. However, the very inclusion of the notion of antagonism as a means used by nature to (re-)turn the course of events to its ‘natural’ path, implies the high ‘possibility’ of a tendency in man to divert from the ‘natural’ path that he is compelled to follow by nature. And indeed, raising demands or developing attitudes that are contrary to the natural end are so dangerous that they may easily lead to the destruction of the natural end and take man back to the state of nature as it was told by Hobbes (chaos, anarchy). To be able to avoid this horrible error that might be committed by man despite all the reason, will and dictates of nature, as Kant clearly expressed in his sixth thesis, man needs a master who would protect mankind from the errors that would be committed due to those deviant, pathological tendencies of mankind.¹³

With the fifth thesis we arrive at our destination under Kant’s guidance. According to this, the dictate of nature on the human species as its most important problem is to “*achieve a universal **civil society** administered in accord with the right.*” This universal civil society is further described by Kant as a society in which man can approach the supreme task nature has set for the mankind in an environment of “the highest possible degree of *freedom under external laws* combined with irresistible power” which is none other than a “*perfectly rightful civil constitution*”.¹⁴ The point here is the establishment of a necessary and intrinsic connection between the universal civil society which is made possible by the enforcement of the external laws derived from a ‘perfectly rightful civil constitution’ and the requirement of a *master* who is going to enforce them with irresistible power. We are told that in such a universal civil society in which the highest possible freedom exists, the laws are perfectly rightful and in accordance with the natural end in whose determination man has no part to play. Why then should we still need a master capable of using irresistible force if nature will take us toward its own end? The mystery lies in the actuality (not possibility) of the human wills that do/can not identify themselves with

the authority of the master and feel themselves as ‘actually free’ wills (not determined by the necessity of an higher imperative dictated by a superior being or nature) expressing themselves as wills to deviate from that end of nature and transgress its laws. This is a situation which neither Kant who continues to inform us from the past nor our contemporary ‘tolerant’ (or should one say ‘hospitable’?) democrats can suffer.

Indeed, Kant’s universal civil society and perpetual peace is too much merciless against those pathological wills willing contrary to the transcendental will of nature which is not and cannot be concerned with the present *happiness* of man. As he says in his article “Theory and Practice” written in 1793, the suffering inflicted by the external punishment (presumably in the hands of a powerful master) on those who do not abide with these laws is not enough alone.¹⁵ He asks for more, and in addition to external punishment, demands crushing of such *too much free* (freer than Kant wants them to be) individual wills from inside, under the pangs of their own consciences as a consequence of their ‘individual’ (thus pathological) failures of following the dictates of the inner moral duty.¹⁶ Even this cannot satisfy Kant to show tolerance/hospitality for he wants, as he clearly declares in “Perpetual Peace”, the complete destruction of such dissident wills.¹⁷ And he does in the name of a *moral* concept of justice which finds its origin in the ‘Superior Being’¹⁸: “*Fiat justia, preat mundus* — ‘Let justice reign, even if all the rogues in the world should perish’”.¹⁹

There is no need to remind the reader that Kant does not affirm the proverb unconditionally and was aware of the potential dangers of its application. The intricate nature of Kant’s affirmation involves several limitations on the usage of such an absolute power in the name of justice: that it does not mean to press one’s own right in utmost vigor, that those in power should not oppress others’ rights, and that such a procedure can only be permissible in a rule-governed social order. But, one has to admit that the demand (the will to crush the dissident) is there without losing anything from its original power even when all the necessary conditions for keeping it in check are fulfilled. A rather pale hope for perpetual peace as it seems.

Kant’s history is indeed the history of the natural end which is indifferent to the fate of man as particular individuals. It is the history of the *extension of nature’s own freedom* rather than the freedom of men. Such a conceptualization of history leads Kant to put aside what actually happens in the history of living men and contemplate more on an imaginary (out of *Luftreise*, fanciful journey) ‘universal history’ whose content is to be filled by the stories from the *Bible* which Kant seriously takes as an ‘historical document’.²⁰ While in “Universal History” Kant assumes a more secular position (or at least, a not-so-much-markedly-Christian position), his markedly Christian position is revealed more in “Human History”²¹ and “The End of All Things”²² where he describes history as the process of the realization of the Divine Will and allows us to get a glimpse of what ‘really’ lurks behind the seemingly secular idea of ‘nature’: Surprise! It is the *Christian God* in person! By this way, the temporality of the play of the ‘universality of nature/god’ that will be enacted on the scene of a history thus speculatively conceived (that is, its reflection at the presence on here-and-now) turns out to be the history of the *enforcement of this Christian divine will/end on men*, who, as a species, are expected to realize an end other than the dictates of their here-and-now wills.

Morality, Politics, and Cosmopolitanism

Kant presents the process of ‘universal natural/divine history’ in three *metaphysical* moments determined by the self same morality. It is metaphysical and certainly *not historical* because it does not follow historical sequence of events—it is not a history of human beings— but rather an ‘abstract history of man’s (animal) becoming *human* (determined by reason and closer to ‘Superior Being’). The first moment is the ‘abstract *man*’ conceived as the internality of man in its isolation. Man is not somebody, but an eternal and universal man, being as god created it, without society. His existence has no reference to any spatio-temporal matrix. It is in this internality that ‘*Moralität*’ (in the form of an imperative) and reason (as a means given by god to understand the imperative) are in-

spired by god. Here, the major problematic revolves around the degree to which this abstract man can perfect his ‘faculty of reason’ given to him by ‘nature/god’, and understands and obeys the imperative at a certain moment of universal history. According to this degree of perfection in using reason men are divided into two major categories: men who are capable of using their reason and understand their moral duty and men who are not capable of doing so and, thus, in accordance with their own particular erroneous wills drifting contrary to the dictates of ‘natural/divine’ will. Since the idea of history has already been conceived in teleological and progressive terms, a hierarchical relationship automatically arises between these two.

In fact, in his famous article “What is Enlightenment?”²³ Kant makes this distinction between ‘mature/enlightened’ and ‘immature/unenlightened’ men and inserts in-between the category of ‘men in the process of enlightenment’ and the hierarchical posing of these three is immediately established by the hope that “man will gradually arise themselves from barbarism”.²⁴ After this Kant turns his gaze to the actual drama of human affairs, and concedes that only a few can have the courage and daring necessary for attaining enlightenment/maturity but *not the great majority*.²⁵ However, Kant proves himself so courageous and daring that he does not hesitate to present Frederick II as the sovereign of the age of enlightenment and shouts aloud this enlightened monarch’s (the master that we need to keep us in line) slogan: “*Argue as much as you want and about what you want, but obey!*”²⁶ “Talk, talk, talk, but do nothing, some day, some uncertain day, I may – perhaps – hear you and consider your demands”.

Finally, we come to realize that the freedom that Kant talks about as the necessary condition of enlightenment is not a freedom that the actual people would desire and make a motivation for their own struggle, but a tailored freedom that is ready-made by the end of nature/god, a given freedom guaranteed by an enlightened (but of course powerful) master like Frederick. As for the struggles of the masses for their own enlightenment and freedom, these can only lead to reproducing unfreedom and darkness of barbarisms about which Kant

complains from the beginning. Simply because, only new prejudices can arise out of such struggles of the masses who could not themselves attain full enlightenment.²⁷

Therefore, the answer Kant gives to the question ‘do we live in an enlightened age?’ is negative but optimistic for an undetermined future to-come (for the time being we can be content with our trust on our masters as the guardians of our own freedoms). For him, man as a species has not yet attained maturity/enlightenment, but is still in the process of enlightenment.²⁸ At the moment we realize that man is not yet mature/enlightened, but in the process of becoming so and cannot attain it as masses struggling for it as well as for their freedom but only through obeying, we also realize the importance of the nature of the master and his work associates for our lives. He has to be an enlightened one. As for his work-associates, Kant is also ready to supply us with several hints pointing to the identity of these eventual supplementary guardians working in collaboration with our master. In the ‘Secret Article for Perpetual Peace’ as the famous second supplement to “Perpetual Peace”, we catch a glimpse (after all, it is the secret article of the perpetual peace whose contents should not be publicized) of the ‘critical role’ that Kant attributes to the philosopher (such as Kant himself) and to the moral philosophy (such as his).²⁹ Owing to this privileged position³⁰, by discovering the history of reason and freedom determined by nature/god’s own end, that is, through making this history known, the philosopher can open a door from immaturity to maturity to enable mankind to pass from the first to the next –yes, a desire remains to be a desire however irrational it is and how much the desiring man claims to be rational. Once this door is set ajar and the philosopher makes the end of history known through moral philosophy, the immaturity which is conceived until now as a natural stage of human history will be transformed into a new, –no, not to an enlightened age yet, but to– self-imposed immaturity to which mankind condemns itself out of fear and for which there is no excuse. From now on, Kant can say that everybody, in conformity with the end of nature, *must necessarily* attain maturity and enlightenment. Otherwise, external law enforced by irre-

sistible power and internal moral duty based on divine imperative, united, can put all the pervert, deviant, lazy, coward and lost wills straight in line.³¹

The second moment of natural history is civil society in which, since it is still determined by the same internal morality, men are incapable of communication without domination. For the moral message and its meaning are already given, what all one can do is first to discover the message and then convey it to the others. The task of prophecy is taken over by the philosopher to reveal the masses (who cannot discover it by themselves) the truth of their being. But the masses are not only incapable of discovering their own truth, but most of the time stubbornly resistant to the message since they prefer to follow their own animal instincts. So they have to be enforced to do so by the master. The philosopher discovers the moral imperative and freedom thereof, the master enforces them, and people obey. Thus, civil society emerges as a nation, informed by philosopher, and ruled by a master. This is the place where political life of the community takes place but the politics should not be the power politics of actual life but a moral politics. It is described as a question of the well-being of nations and thought to be related to the efforts of an abstractly conceived man who is still conceived in its internality having the moral duty of establishing a civil society on the grounds of his 'nonsocial sociability'.

As in the first stage, politics, too, is seen from a progressive perspective and differentiated as being forward and backward in its nature. In "Theory and Practice", Kant identifies this forward-backward dichotomy in the categories of *imperium paternale* and *imperium non paternale, sed patrioticum*.³² Not much action takes place on this stage because the roles of the personages already been determined: the masses are obeying, the philosopher arguing, discovering and publicizing his findings, and the master guaranteeing just enough (but not too much) freedom. The only essential element in Kant's discussion on this field is the 'ought to be' necessity of adjusting politics to the requirements of moral imperative. This is the exact field of life in which Kant feels himself most uncomfortable, perhaps since this is the field of here-and-now, or, of the

living persons in contrast to the infinitude of universal natural history, and the sterility of the eternal postponement of a future-to-come. But the discussion of this field prepares the stage for a new actor in the person of nation who is to enact its role on the third moment presented as the arena of the so-called 'international community'.

The third moment is the moment of the *lawful* unity of humanity as species, it is a 'federation of nations' united according to 'cosmopolitan perspective'. Here the forward-backward dichotomy is established between what Kant describes as *universal monarchy and soulless despotism*³³ and his idea of a *federation of nations based on a cosmopolitan constitution*. The latter, being last but not least, represents the final end put forward by the nature/god before man as a species.³⁴ According to Kant, realizing perpetual peace through a cosmopolitan federation of nations, requires first men already mature, conscious of their moral duties and loyal to it, and second, nations having patriotic republican (but non-paternal) governments. At the first glance it seems as if there is no problem in Kant's way of thinking. But, in reality, the passage from politics to cosmopolitanism is full of difficulties the most insurmountable of which is the problem of the *simultaneous coexistence* of all the categories of men and societies: mature, maturing and immature ones in the actual history.

Certainly, without a moral content, the simultaneity of the events and forms is not a problem by itself. But, in the course of the performance, when not all but only a few of men attain enlightenment, and when not all but only a few of nations form patriotic republican governments we can begin to assess the real dimensions of the problem. What will happen when only Kant and his likes attain enlightenment, and when only Kant's nation (thanks to Frederick II) and similar nations achieve to form such desirable governments? Should these enlightened men and nations wait for the time of spontaneous enlightenment of other men and nations? Or should they compel the others to enlightenment under the 'convincing' power of an irresistible force? Should they prefer to establish their own 'perfect order', which is supposedly inscribed in the end of a Christian nature/god, and in which they will eas-

ily condemn the dissident and deprive them of any ‘rights’? At that moment it may be useful for everyone to remember once again the proverb that Kant used in the title of his article: “that may be true in theory, but is of no practical use”.

Kant tries to solve this difficulty of containing those immature dissidents both in society and in the commonwealth of nations—the first is connected with the passage from morality defined and revealed by the natural/divine will to sociopolitical practice of the real world filled with real individuals, and the second with the passage from politics to cosmopolitanism—by inserting the necessity of *enforcing* the laws (themselves derived from moral imperative) with irresistible power wielded by a master. We have already stated its clearest expression. To confirm that this is not just an innocent slip of tongue it suffices to look at the sixth thesis of “Universal History”. This thesis says that man is an animal that “has the need of a master”.³⁵ In “Theory and Practice”, too, obedience was shown as the appropriate lot of man even before the unjust and oppressive laws.³⁶ But, as we leave the realm of internal politics and move to the domain of a cosmopolitan world order we see that Kant, despite his desire, cannot supply us with such a master as the solution of the same problem of containing dissident nations resisting to obey the universal law. There is no power to subjugate all nations and enforce Kant’s law. The case of ‘dissident nations’ offer a special problem since they are *not* already subjected to a law and their dissidence is actually in accord with their own laws. To overcome this difficulty, Kant uses the analogy of individual reason (mature-immature) and blames the *savage* of being in a state of *mad freedom*.³⁷

Supposing that (at least in theory) neither Kant nor anyone else is suggesting the establishment of a world state governed by one dominant power—or, don’t we really imply it in the guise of ‘cosmopolitan world order/new world order’?—one may rightfully ask what law we are talking about in the international community? For, in addition to the requirement of being in conformity with the moral imperative, the existence of a valid law demands a master who is elevated above the subjects and capable of backing this law with an irresist-

ible force. In Kant’s case, in this field we certainly have the first but lack the second. In the international community—of course, apart from the universal moral imperative—there is no such law capable of regulating the conduct of nations (now considered to be real subjects of international action) that is already enforced by a master, but only supposedly voluntary conventions and agreements of states each seeking their own interests. This means that proposing a law that would be valid and enforced on the nations is directly connected with the desire to establish a superior power as the master of international community of nations. Confronted with such a desire one feels the need to ask a series of questions concerning the actual situation like ‘who is going to be the master? (Frederick? Germany? Europe?) In what capacity? (to the point of using force to enforce the other nations to enlightenment and civilization?) what form will he/it assume’ (a league of nations of course, but ruled by whom, by a monarch, a general assembly of all members with equal rights? or by a board of the representatives of some already enlightened nations).³⁸

In “Theory and Practice”, Kant, after complaining about the chaotic nature of the relations of states, comes up with his heart’s desire and recommends as “the sole possible remedy” the establishment of a law governing inter-state relations backed by a powerful authority even in the international domain. In other words, Kant makes the *thesis* reign once again over the *hypothesis*. Since without erecting such an authority his system of morality will remain to be a theory of no practical use—and since ‘the balance of power in Europe (in Kant’s time) is not enough to carry out the task of enforcing moral theory onto the social practices of peoples—any idea of perpetual peace will be “a mere figment of imagination”, and the whole edifice of moral law ensuring peace would shatter down at the first challenge.³⁹ We need something stronger than the delicate balance of power: ‘a rightful state of federation’. It should be an organization capable of enforcing the universal law which will be valid for all onto those irrational, stiff-necked dissidents. However, despite he does not mention it explicitly, what Kant seems having in his mind is a state of

nations exceeding the limitations of a mere ‘league of peace’, for he talks about it even though he does not push the idea to the point of an urgent demand. He is also careful enough to state that this organization should not assume the form of a ‘terrifying despotism’ of a ‘cosmopolitan commonwealth under a single head’.⁴⁰ So what we are talking is not a ‘state’ headed by an tyrannical master—Kant seems to prefer a *world republic* but nevertheless gives up the idea considering the force of pressing reality⁴¹—, but rather a looser organization of a federation of nations without the authority of a state, yet, with its enforcing power. This means that at least at the present state of affairs we have a serious practical (not theoretical this time) problem for what is true in *thesis* is discarded by people in *hypothesis*, and the universal law that is expected to ensure perpetual peace among nations cannot be supported by the authority of a sovereign. By what then?

Kant’s answer to this question comes in “Perpetual Peace”, with the introduction of the ‘*transcendental formula of public right*’ which says “All actions that affect the rights of other men are wrong if their maxim is not consistent with publicity.”⁴² According to this, all acts that cannot be publicized and defended in public are wrong. So far, so good. From the formula we get a hint that the actions and ideas which cannot be brought before the public and preferred to be kept hidden in secrecy are wrong. But the formula cannot guarantee by itself the truth or falsity of the actions that can be publicized and defended openly. Of course, Kant was well aware of this flaw since a few pages later he admits the relationship between being powerful and being capable of publicizing one’s acts: “For it cannot be conversely concluded that whatever maxims are compatible with publicity are also for that reason right, for *he who has decisively supreme power, has no need to keep his maxims secret.*”⁴³ Indeed, this new formulation reduces the original formula to a mere instrument that can only be used in concluding that secrets must hide things that cannot be defended before the public and therefore this something should be wrong (and even this should not necessarily be true!). Therefore, Kant modifies the original formula and asserts the *ought to be* dependency of politics (with a

propensity to err under the pressure of the powerful) on (his own ‘universal’) morality: “All maxims that *require* publicity (in order not to fail of their end) agree with both politics and morality”.⁴⁴ But foreseeing the eventual capacity of power to present to the public what must indeed be kept hidden is not enough to alert one against the traps of the contemporary social life. One has to be aware that the same power which is not ashamed of presenting what must be kept hidden and can contain public disapproval, can also have the means to make the public approve it. Perhaps this last feature is much more important and disturbing than the first one, so that publicity (based on the approval of society of individuals or nations, whose members, as Kant states, have *not* attained moral and intellectual maturity yet) can be dis-informed, manipulated, and led astray by powers ‘unashamed’ of committing acts contrary to the principles of morality. This means that, at least in our age, if might is not right, it can still determine right, in such a way that publicity or public approval cannot only state the right determined according to morality but it may go contrary to it as well. This creates a dilemma which is difficult to overcome by staying within the confines of Kantian moral philosophy. For, if what the public says does not need to be right, but should still be pursued as one may expect from a true republic, then we do not need morality, but only ethics (in the sense of knowledge of the rules of ethical life including not only the motives and rules of good conduct but bad conduct as well such as engaging struggle, waging war, etc.). Contrary wise, in case of an error supported or committed by the public itself (for public approval cannot guarantee the rightfulness of an act according to morality) should the public be subdued and enforced to follow the path of enlightened reason of the powerful—for it is only the powerful that can subdue others—in the name of a morality whose principles are not internalized yet, or even known by the people? At the first glance, it seems as if such a conclusion is not acceptable to Kant for all we are going to have then is a tyranny of that morality (of Kant) which is not well understood and followed by the majority.

Therefore it is not surprising to see that Kant feels the need to include the fifth article to his 'Preliminary Articles for Perpetual Peace among Nations', stating the right of the internal sovereignty of nations: "No nation shall forcibly interfere with the constitution and government of another".⁴⁵ But even this has its own *exception* which relates to the cases where a nation is divided into two hostile parties as a result of internal discord and each party claims the rights of a nation over the whole, such as in the cases of civil war. Since such a war will disturb the rest of the world and ultimately lead to anarchy — an intolerable state that should be avoided at all costs—, Kant concludes that "the aid of a foreign nation to one of the parties could not be regarded as interference by the other". In other words, every foreign power which is able to find collaborators in a certain country, just like what the USA did in Afghanistan and Iraq, can use the right of intervention for the purpose of 'helping' the people of that country to proceed towards that end of nature/god. This effort of pushing the people of an 'uncivilized' country toward civilization cannot be called as interference. What if there is little violence (and not only physical) involved in it?

Despite all these problems and the undeniable facticity of the hypothesis in contrast to the inapplicability of the thesis as he himself admits, Kant was not able to take himself from dreaming a cosmopolitan world order based on perpetual peace. For one thing, history, understood in such a metaphysical way, is nothing but an infinite (never-coming-to-end) process of approaching to that final end of nature/god which represents the 'perfect'.

Conclusion

We are well aware that desiring perpetual peace is not only a moral, or simply an intellectual affair. It is thorough and thorough politics, it is politics about power, about the balance of power, about domination and subordination. And the reason of our discussion of a philosopher, however profound and diligent he was, who died two centuries ago cannot be solely explained by an intellectual drive. What compels one to

think deeper about the ideas of this philosopher of perpetual peace is the force of his project affecting nearly everyone in the contemporary world. The idea of perpetual peace had not experienced such a bright success at the time of its proposal. But now, it seems as if it has taken the world in its grasp and directing the human affairs as once its philosopher hoped for. Considering the developments in the UN, in the field of international law, the unification of Europe, the emergence of human rights discourse as the sole universal (and moral) principle of humanity without any 'positive' grounding, the defense of superior powers of the right of intervention to other countries in the name of protecting these 'abstract-universal-moral' principles, their increased capacity to find support even among the populace of the countries they subordinate one gets closer to admit that perpetual peace is the all-encompassing project underlying the events of the twenty first century and making them meaningful. But is that really so? That we are really proceeding toward perpetual peace or we are just trying to erect another monument of power to the benefit of someone/something? We need to know this.

¹ Habermas, Jürgen and Jacques Derrida, “February 15, of What Binds Europeans Together: A Plea for a Common Foreign Policy, Beginning in the Core of Europe”, in *Constellations*, Vol. 10, No. 3, Blackwell, Oxford, 2003, pp. 291-297.

² *Ibid.*, p. 294. The exact wording of the definition is as follows: The Western form of spirit, rooted in the Judeo-Christian tradition, certainly has its characteristic features. But the nations of Europe also share this mental habitus, characterized by individualism, rationalism, and activism, with the United States, Canada, and Australia. The “West” encompasses more than just Europe. As we will see later this unity of Europe and the United States has a very special role to play in the foundation of a perpetual peace/order.

³ Kant, Immanuel, “Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Intent”, in Kant, Immanuel, *Perpetual Peace and Other Essays on Politics, History, and Morals*, ed. and trans. by Ted Humphrey, Hackett Publishing Co., Indianapolis, Cambridge, 1983 (1784), p. 29. (p. 17). Henceforth this article will be briefly referred as “Universal History”. Otherwise mentioned, Kant’s all articles referred in this text are taken from this source. Page numbers given in parentheses refer to the German source on which the English translations are based: Kant’s *Gesammelte Schriften*, hrsg. Königliche Preussische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Walter de Gruyter & Co., Berlin and Leipzig, 1904, Vol. 8.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 30 (18).

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 30 (18).

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 30 (18). Kant’s italics.

⁷ For Kant, individuals cannot grasp and become aware of the process of orientation of the human species emerging as an historical entity outside the consciousness. In other words, the end of nature determined by the historical progress of the human species cannot be readily grasped and known by the individual member of the human species. Therefore, the deviation of the particular wills of the individuals from the will of the species progressing toward the direction of natural reason—and, according to Kant, this is a highly frequent phenomenon in this human drama—constitutes the basic weakness, error and even—let’s push it little further—crime of the individuals against their own history and historicity.

⁸ Kant, Immanuel, “Universal History”, 1983, p. 31 (19). Kant’s italics.

⁹ The expression ‘his own’ stands problematic here, for we have seen, and will see later again reason belongs to nature, (or even to a higher, superior being) rather than being an attribute of human beings. Indeed, when something else wills what one should do and predetermines the end that one should proceed to without taking one’s counsel, it turns out to be hard to claim that one is doing all these out of one’s own reason.

¹⁰ Kant’s original formulation of the relationship of nature and man’s existence in “Universal History”, 1983, p. 31 (20) is worth to take it here to show its clarity and sharpness: It is as if she [nature] aimed more at his [man’s] rational self-esteem than at his well-being. For along this course of human affairs a whole host of hardships awaits man. But it appears that nature is utterly unconcerned that man live well, only that he bring himself to the point where his conduct makes him worthy of life and well-being.

¹¹ Here, the word ‘humanity’ has a special meaning. Kant defines the direction of man as the end determined by the natural will, thus, the journey toward that end is described as a distancing from man’s animal instincts to humanity in which reason predominates. The implication of this is the presupposed distinction between man (*Mensch*, Man) and humanity (*Menschlichkeit*) presented as the end of the first. The universal is this humanity which is the natural end, and not the particular presences of men in different epochs and societies which are intrinsically erroneous and imperfect. Since the truth of all particular presences are set by the end that will arrive at a future to come (heralding Derrida’s *à venir*) some inconveniences and suffering may be allowed (or at least, excused) in the present situation of man in the name of this natural end.

¹² Kant, Immanuel, “Universal History”, 1983, p. 31 (20).

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 33 (21).

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 33 (22).

¹⁵ Kant, Immanuel, “On the Proverb: That May be True in Theory, But is of No Practical Use”, in Kant, Immanuel, *Perpetual Peace and Other Essays on Politics, History, and Morals*, ed. and trans. by Ted Humphrey, Hackett Publishing Co., Indianapolis, Cambridge, 1983 (1793), p. 71. (p. 288). In the text this article will be referred as “Theory and Practice”.

¹⁶ Kant, Immanuel, “Theory and Practice”, 1983, p. 71 (288).

¹⁷ Kant, Immanuel, “To Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch”, in Kant, Immanuel, 1983, *Perpetual Peace and Other Essays on Politics, History, and Morals*, ed. and trans. by Ted Humphrey, Hackett Publishing Co., Indianapolis, Cambridge, 1983 (1795), pp. 107-143. (pp. 341-386). Henceforth will be referred as “Perpetual Peace”.

¹⁸ It is important to remember Hegel’s distinction between Kantian notion of morality (*Moralität*) in the sense of a divine inspiration of the idea of duty in the form of a universal moral imperative in the internality of man, and Aristotelian usage of the ancient Greek term *ethos* referring more to ‘socially formed patterns of behavior’, habits, when put together forming the ‘character’ of an individual, group or a society. Out of this distinction, Hegel developed his idea of *Sittlichkeit* corresponding to the third moment of the will which is its unity in two moments: its external existence and internal reflection onto itself. Thus, ethics or ethical life as Hegelian *Sittlichkeit* is sometimes rendered in English develops in the

unity of internality and externality of the will in contrast to the Kantian Moralität which only considers the operations of divine reason in the internal solitude of man. However, our reason for mentioning Hegel's distinction is not to pose one to the other but just to show the philosophical possibility of the difference and priority of ethics (understood here as the knowledge and or system of the rules arising from daily social contact – ethical life) in informing the actual conduct in the society. However, one should be warned that Hegelian way of thinking has also its own dangers. For Hegel's discussion of the status of Kantian morality in relation to his ethics, see Hegel, G. W. F., 1996 (1820), *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, trans. by Nisbet, H. B., Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, pp. 62-64 (§ 33).

¹⁹ Kant, Immanuel, "Perpetual Peace", 1983, p. 133 (378).

²⁰ Kant, Immanuel, "Speculative Beginning of Human History", in Kant, Immanuel, 1983, *Perpetual Peace and Other Essays on Politics, History, and Morals*, ed. and trans. by Ted Humphrey, Hackett Publishing Co., Indianapolis, Cambridge, 1983 (1786), pp. 49-60. (107-123). Henceforth will be referred as "Human History".

²¹ In "Human History", especially between pp. 49-55 (109-118), Kant bases the process of history on the Divine Will. The progress of humanity toward reason, that is, natural history is depicted as the process of the realization of the moral imperative commanded on him by God. Of course, we don't need to mention –or do we?– that what Kant presents us as universal 'human history' turns out to be the history written by Christianity as it was told by its own God in the Bible.

²² Kant, Immanuel, "The End of All Things", in Kant, Immanuel, 1983, *Perpetual Peace and Other Essays on Politics, History, and Morals*, ed. and trans. by Ted Humphrey, Hackett Publishing Co., Indianapolis, Cambridge, 1983 (1794), pp. 93-105. (325-339).

²³ Kant, Immanuel, "An Answer to the Question: What is Enlightenment", in Kant, Immanuel, 1983, *Perpetual Peace and Other Essays on Politics, History, and Morals*, ed. and trans. by Ted Humphrey, Hackett Publishing Co., Indianapolis, Cambridge, 1983 (1784), pp. 41-48. (33-42). In the text this article will be referred as "What is Enlightenment?".

²⁴ Ibid., p. 45 (41). As we will see later, this relationship between immaturity (closer to animal, maturing (present condition) and mature (closer to god) on the plane of morality is also reflected on society as savage, civilized (in the process of perfection), and perfect societies.

²⁵ Ibid., p. 41 (36).

²⁶ Ibid., p. 45 (41).

²⁷ Ibid., p. 42 (36).

²⁸ Ibid., p. 44 (40).

²⁹ Kant, Immanuel, "Perpetual Peace", 1983, p. 126 (368).

³⁰ Kant says that the nations preparing for war should silently (secretly) seek counsel with the philosophers, attributing a special status to the moral philosopher. The reason for this privilege is simply stated as the group's (philosophers') "natural incapability of seduction and of forming cliques". For this reason "it [the class of philosophers] cannot be suspected of being the formulator of propaganda". But when this privileged role attributed to the philosopher is put together with the role of the moral philosophy explained in the immediately following 'Appendix I', these two acquire another, a more significant meaning.

³¹ Kant, Immanuel, "Perpetual Peace", 'Appendix I', 1983, pp. 127-8 (371).

³² Kant, Immanuel, "Theory and Practice", 1983, p. 73 (290-91).

³³ Kant, Immanuel, "Perpetual Peace", 1983, p. 125 (367). Kant qualifies the same thing in "Theory and Practice", p. 88 (p. 311) as "the most terrifying despotism" because it is universal.

³⁴ Kant, Immanuel, "Theory and Practice", p. 87 (310).

³⁵ Kant, Immanuel, "Universal History", 1983, p. 33 (23).

³⁶ Kant, Immanuel, "Theory and Practice", 1983, p. 78 (297-8). On the issue of unjust laws and the unconditional requirement of obedience Kant says the following in the conclusion section of the article: "Thus, if a people should judge that a particular actual [piece of] legislation would in all probability cause them to forfeit their happiness, what should they do about it? Should they not resist it? There can be only one answer: nothing can be done about it, except to obey."

³⁷ Kant, Immanuel, "Perpetual Peace", 1983, p. 115 (354).

³⁸ Indeed we get the answers of all these questions in Habermas and Derrida's manifesto, in which they describe that agent as 'the West' whose major component are 'core European nations' and the United States.

³⁹ Kant, Immanuel, "Theory and Practice", 1983, p. 89 (312).

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 87-88 (310-11).

⁴¹ See Kant, Immanuel, "Perpetual Peace", 1983, p. 117 (357).

⁴² Ibid., p. 135 (381).

⁴³ Ibid., p. 138 (384-5).

⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 139 (p. 386). Note the nadve interpretation of politics as an activity whose singular task is to establish the universal public end which is happiness (of whom Kant does not state, but let's conclude, of all!).

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 109 (346).

A Clash Or Dialogue Of Civilizations? A “Medieval” Or “Modern” Mentality

Leonard Swidler

STL in Catholic Theology,
University of Tübingen and a
Ph.D. in history and philosophy,
University of Wisconsin.
Professor of Catholic Thought
and Interreligious Dialogue at
Temple University since 1966,
he is author or editor of over
65 books & 180 articles, Co-
founder (1964) with his wife
Arlene Anderson Swidler, and
Editor of the Journal of
Ecumenical Studies.

A clash of civilizations has been perennial in human history, and today it is again taking the form of a more than thousand year old clash: The West and Islam. However, I want to argue that humanity now has the tools to transform that clash to cooperation, and not just occasionally, as in a few times and places in the past, dependent on the temporary benignity of a well-placed leader.

1. The Argument

In very brief fashion, those “new” tools are 1) the crucial development of the ideal, and increasingly the reality, of the separation of religion from the power of the state; 2) the creation of the ideas, and increasingly the honoring, of human rights and democracy; and 3) the rise of the notion, and increasingly the practice, of dialogue as an essential means to gain an ever fuller grasp of reality, and especially in that most intractable area, religion. As these three key-and very “new”-

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Rights

ideas, and their subordinate implications, are put together we have a major “paradigm shift” of such a massive magnitude that we must speak of a new “mentality,” a move from a Medieval to a Modern Mentality.

A word about Post-Modernism: I was initially baffled as to what the term Post-Modernism meant, but as it gradually seemed to become clearer that it was essentially talking about the development of various “hermeneutics of suspicion” as solvents of all overarching views of reality, I became quite disappointed. Hermeneutics of suspicion were hardly new discoveries of the late 20th century; they were very much present starting already as early as Friedrich Feuerbach and then Karl Marx in the 1840s, and on through Sigmund Freud, Max Scheler, Karl Mannheim, Paul Ricoeur, Hans-Georg Gadamer, and throughout the 20th century. Further, these further insights into how we humans think, that is, our epistemology, were it seems to me not a rejection, but essentially a continuation, of the Enlightenment Project of Reason; we have been increasingly seeing dimensions of our human reason that we did not previously understand. So, not Post-Modernism, but an increasingly fuller Modernity.

It is the addition of the last of the trio, dialogue, which has begun to appear significantly in only just the last half-century, that makes the shift from a clash to a dialogue and co-operation of civilizations truly possible.¹ What I intend to do here is to look at each of the three major new tools that will enable humanity to move from clash to cooperation: Religion-State Separation, Human Rights-Democracy, Dialogue.

2. Separation Of Religion From The Power Of The State

1. Union of Religion and State All-Pervading

In all past civilizations, religion has been an integral, a constitutive element. Among other things, religion supplied the ethical basis on which the authority of the state and law was built. The religion, on the one hand, profoundly shaped the state, and on the other, reflected the values of the state. As a result, in all past civilizations there has been a very inti-

mate relationship between religion and state. Very often that relationship was so close that one could speak of the union of religion and state. In that close relationship, at times religion tended to dominate the state, and at other times the state tended to dominate religion. We have seen both in recent times and still even today. The Soviet state’s domination of Orthodox Christianity was an example of the former and the Ayatollahs’ and Mullahs’ domination of the state in Iran is an example of the latter. The relationship of the separation of religion and state is a unique phenomenon in human history, which occurred in the modern West? more about that below.

In the early centuries of Christianity in the Greco-Roman world Christian writers, as we saw, were strongly in favor of religious liberty. After the Constantinian embrace of the Christian religion in the fourth century they quickly switched to the position that the state had the responsibility of seeing that the truth was protected and favored?and of course Christianity had the truth. In theory of course no one was to be forced to accept Christianity, but not infrequently the theory was not translated into practice. With the development of medieval Christendom in the western half of the former Roman Empire, almost everyone became Christian, with the exception of the Jews, who for the most part were allowed to continue a separate existence, often in ghettos.

The history of Islam was not very different: in theory no individual or community was to be forced to embrace Islam. But in practice the *Jihad*, in the sense of a Holy War against non-Muslim states, not infrequently was in fact launched aggressively—as we saw was the case here in eighth-century Spain. Although the *millet* system allowed non-Muslims within a Muslim-conquered state to practice their religion, the non-Muslims were clearly second-class citizens?which fact doubtless encouraged conversion to Islam, and surely not the contrary.

At various times during the intertwined history of Christianity and Islam one side or the other pointed, usually with justification, an accusing finger at the other as a brutal aggressor. In fact, neither Christianity nor Islam can claim to have been predominantly the victim and the other the aggressor;

the acid of history dissolves any such claim from either side. *Jihad* and the Crusades easily match each other in gratuitous aggressiveness.

2. Development of the Separation of Religion and State

Something unique in human history, however, began to take place in “Christendom” as it slowly morphed into “Western Civilization”: the gradual, painful move toward the separation of religion and state. Some might trace its beginnings to the Gregorian Reforms when Pope Gregory VII (1021-1085 A.D.) attempted dramatically and substantially to separate the Church from the power of the Holy Roman Empire and other civil powers. Of course no one at the time promoted the notion of the separation of church and state. Rather, each side attempted to wrest power to his side; witness the thirteenth-century “imperial interregnum” manipulated by the popes (when for fifty years the popes effectively prevented the election of a Holy Roman Emperor), followed soon by the imprisonment of that most authoritarian of all popes, Boniface VIII, by the king of France, Phillip the Fair, at the beginning of the fourteenth century.

But it was precisely this mammoth power struggle that encouraged a weariness with the unquestioned assumption of the union of church and state. The Renaissance with its shifting of interest from the divine to the human provided a further basis for the gradual questioning of the wisdom of the union of church and state. This questioning manifested itself visibly in the so-called left-wing of the sixteenth-century Reformation: the Anabaptists and related sects clearly and vigorously rejected the idea of the union of church and state, for which, of course, there were viciously persecuted by Catholics and mainline Protestants.

In the end it was the pitting of Catholics and Protestants against each other that magnified the incipient weariness with the consequences of the union of church and state?induced by the earlier struggle between the pope and civil rulers?to the point of the full embrace of the principle of the separation of religion and state during the eighteenth-century Enlightenment. The 1789 U.S. Constitution gave for the first time a formal national articulation of the idea of separation of church and

state. From that time and place it spread throughout the West in various juridical expressions, and from there increasingly around the globe.

3. The Unique Quality of Western Civilization

When historians like Arnold J. Toynbee survey the total history of humankind they find that there have been a number of civilizations which have come into existence, flourished and then declined (Toynbee discerns twenty-eight civilizations in human history). Many of them achieved admirable accomplishments, the Greco-Roman civilization being the one best known to Westerners. Its achievements were indeed great, so much so that during the late Renaissance there was a lively debate about whether the Ancients (meaning the Greeks and Romans) or the then Moderns had attained greater cultural heights. But doubtless the Greco-Roman accomplishments were in many regards matched, and in some surpassed, by, e.g., the Chinese and Islamic civilizations, as well as others.

However, it is no cultural hubris to be aware that the rising arc of Western Civilization (which is largely a synthesis of [1] the Judeo-Christian tradition, [2] the Greco-Roman tradition, [3] the Germanic tradition, [4] with a significant influence of medieval Islam, and [5] modern science and thought) has reached far beyond where any of the other twenty-seven civilizations have gone, whether in culture, science, politics, economic prosperity, technology, etc. Moreover, Western Civilization is now being transformed into Global Civilization, which had never occurred before, and the process of globalization is intensifying in exponential fashion. This is not to discount Western-now-becoming-Global Civilization’s defects, blind spots, and seething problems—some of the most critical of which are largely a result of its very accomplishments, e.g., the population explosion (because of, *inter alia*, medical and agricultural advances), the ecological crisis (because of, *inter alia*, technological advances and the population explosion). But even that illustrates the main point: Western-Now Becoming-Global Civilization’s greatest problems flow not from its weaknesses, but from its even more awesome, unparalleled achievements. How to account for this unique breakthrough in human history?

4. *The Separation of Religion and State a Vital Key*

One of the *essential* elements in the advances of Western-Becoming-Global Civilization in culture, science, politics, economic prosperity, and technology, the like of which, as said—for all of its problems, which are correspondingly massive—were never before experienced in human history, is the *separation of state and religion*. And religion here includes any “ideology” that functions like a religion, as, for example, atheistic Marxism (it is clear to see today in Eastern Europe and the former USSR what disaster the union of state and the “religion” of Marxism led to).

Christendom began in the Late Middle Ages reaching the cultural level of the earlier Greek and Roman, and the then contemporary Islamic, civilizations. All historical data strongly suggest that Christendom, would have plateaued at approximately that level for a longer or shorter period of time, and then gone into decline—as *had all other civilizations before then*, and as eventually the Islamic Civilization did as well.

That did not happen, however. Why? One very fundamental reason was that—starting with the Gregorian Reforms, through the Renaissance, the Reformation, and on into the Enlightenment and beyond—religion and the state slowly and very painfully began to be separated. In fact, and somewhat amazingly, the current Pope, Benedict XVI, has found a papal source for the later separation of religion and state even as far back as the fifth century:

Pope Gelasius I (492-496) expressed his vision of the West.... This introduced a separation and distinction of powers that would be of vital importance to the later development of Europe, and laid the foundations for the distinguishing characteristics of the West.²

This separation of religion from the power of the state broke the forced quality of religion/ideology and consequently freed the human spirit and mind to pursue its limitless urge to know ever more, to solve every problem it confronts. This resulted in a series of what historians call “revolutions” in the West: the Commercial Revolution (16-17th centuries), Scientific Revolution (17th century), Industrial Revolution (18th century), Political Revolution (epitomized in the 18th-century

American and French Revolutions), and on into the 19th and 20th centuries with myriads of revolutions of all sorts occurring at geometrically increasing speed and magnitude.

With these “exponential” advances in capabilities, of course, the possibilities of destructiveness increased correspondingly—as the medieval philosophers said: The corruption of the best becomes the worst, *corruptio optimi pessima*. Nevertheless, because freedom is of the *essence* of being human, even though we may well destroy ourselves if we do not learn wisdom and live virtuously, we can never turn back to an unfree stage of human development.

Hence, those societies which try to reunite religion/ideology with the power of the state—as fundamentalist Christianity, Islam, Judaism, and Hinduism attempt to do today—are doomed to always be third-class societies. New problems and challenges will always arise in human societies. Humans, however, have a virtually limitless capability of intellect, imagination and spirit (which is another way of saying what the book of Genesis in the Bible meant by recording that God made humans in God’s image, the *imago Dei*) with which to address and overcome those problems and challenges ever anew. Unfortunately, when that innate human creative spirit is imprisoned in a doctrinal strait-jacket (“*ortho-dox*,” “straight-doctrine,” becomes in fact “strait-doctrine”) imposed from above by the power of the state, it will die from spiritual strangulation. And then that society will fall behind, and perhaps even succumb to, those societies which retain their creativity.

That is why, for example, the present attempt of Islamists to reestablish the Muslim law, the *shar’ia*, in the Muslim world will condemn those countries to *always* be behind the “West.” And, given the Islamists’ memory of the past medieval cultural glory and superiority of Islam over the West, it is precisely the present inferiority in almost every way of all Islamic countries vis-à-vis the West that infuriates them. Since 9/11/01, however, an increasing number of thoughtful Muslims are engaging in what at times is termed a struggle for the soul of Islam, meaning, the attempt to bring Islam into the modern thought world, as Islam had done so brilliantly in

the “modern” world of the ninth to the thirteenth centuries.³ These lonely modern creative “jihadists,” that is, Muslims “struggling” (as the term *jihad* means) for the modern soul of Islam, deserve our strongest support. For if they do not succeed, the Islamic world will not only destroy itself, but will at the same time inflict horrendous damage on the rest of the world.

Of course, the same disastrous consequences also result when other “fundamentalist” religious creeds gain state power, e.g., as was clear when the destructive Hindu fundamentalist BJP recently came to political power in India. As another example, North Korea will likewise always remain “backward” so long as it maintains a union of ideology and state.

Many Islamist apologists argue, however, that Islam is different from the West and its major religion, Christianity, because, unlike Christianity, Islam is a holistic religion which includes politics as well as all other aspects of life. In this, unfortunately, they are forgetting that Christendom was *exactly the same* for well over a millennium—the Constantinian Era. It is only when Christendom, the West, began to break out of that mischievous marriage of religion/ideology and state (only allegedly virtuously “holistic”) that it embarked on the path of human freedom with its limitless possibilities of creativity (and destruction).

It is interesting to note that Pope Benedict XVI recognized with approval that this principle of the separation of religion from the power of the state attained its greatest expression in the United States:

American Catholics have absorbed the free-church traditions on the relation between the Church and politics, believing that a Church that is separate from the state better guarantees the moral foundation as a whole. Hence the promotion of the democratic ideal is seen as a moral duty that is in profound compliance with the faith. In this position we can rightly see a continuation, adapted to the times, of the model of Pope Gelasius described earlier.⁴

5. The Challenge to Jews, Christians and Muslims Together

As we know, however, at its best, the separation of religion and state did not, and does not, mean hostility between religion and state. Rather, it frees each, religion and state, to fulfill its respective function untrammelled by, but closely related to, the other. For the state, that function can be briefly described as the responsibility “to organize society so as to protect the rights of all, and promote the common good,” and for religion, “to provide an explanation of the ultimate meaning of life, and how to live accordingly.”

Clearly the West does not have the perfect solution to the question of the relation between religion and the state; it has many different imperfect solutions. The quite “anaemic” condition of a Christianity not completely separated from the state in Germany, Scandinavia, England, and other European countries, vis a vis its turbulent but comparatively vital condition in the U.S. with its quite completely separate relationship of religion and state further bears out the thesis of this essay, that the separate but creative relationship of religion and state is good for both religion and state, and hence, for humankind. The current increasing “union of church and state” of the Bush administration is a sad example of the destructiveness that develops when the vital principle of the separation of religion from the power of the state is not strongly adhered to.

The “perfect” solution of the relationship of religion and state lies only in an “infinite” future, toward which humans are always striving. But also clearly, the West—and countries such as Indonesia, Japan, etc., inspired by the principles of democracy and religious liberty—has shown that separation of religion and state is *essential* to the true full functioning of both religion and state, and to human progress to “Infinity.” Said in other words: The separation of religion and the state is a *necessary*, though not *sufficient*, cause of the unending creative development of humanity.

Clearly not all Muslim thinkers and leaders are Islamists, despite the great show of force released by the radical Khomeinis of Iran, Turabis of the Sudan, and Bin Ladins of Saudi Arabia. Contemporary critical-thinking Muslim scholars and leaders like Indonesia’s former President Abdurrahman Wahid and Foreign Minister Alwi Shihab—but others as well—are fully aware of the dangers of Islamism, of the history

of the results of the union of religion and state, and of the need to move to a relationship of a creatively cooperative, pluralistic separation of religion and state.

The great challenge to Jewish and Christian thinkers and leaders is to work together with such Muslims, and men and women of other religions and ideologies, to develop jointly relationships between religion and the state which will maintain both the essential separation between the two and the needed cooperative spirit.

3. Human Rights And Democracy

Something else of vital importance grew out of the breakthrough era of 18th-century Western Europe called the Enlightenment, *die Aufklärung*. German historians call that period forward *Die Neu Zeit*, “The New Age,” because after it everything that was accomplished in the world was “new.” The critical new thing that emerged were the twin ideas of “Human Rights” and “Democracy.”

Never before did any civilization conceive of the idea of rights belonging to every human being simply because of one’s being human! True, the term “democracy” (*demos kratia*, people rule) was created in ancient Greece, but not every human being was considered a member of the *demos*. In fact, only a small percentage of Athenian society was counted among the *demos*; the vast majority were slaves. Also, the New Testament did not do away with slavery, for the deuteropauline and petrine authors of the New Testament say “slaves, be subject to your master” and the like, numerous times. However, it is very interesting to note that amidst all the scholarly challenges today to what Jesus is truly likely to have said and done,⁵ it is rock-solid that his clearly counter-cultural massive advocacy and practice of equality for women—of “human rights” for women—came from Jesus⁶ and not from the Church, Judaism, or the Roman world. The later New Testament said, for example: “Women, keep silence in the church”; “I suffer no woman to have authority over a man”; “wives, be subject to your husbands”.... It took almost two thousand years for Jesus’ “feminism” to re-surface in the

world—far back in the wake of the *Spät-Aufklärung*’s Feminist Movement.⁷

We have become very used to the idea of equality and human rights. For those of us from the West it may seem that such notions are perfectly obvious, even though they might often be grossly violated. True, these ideas are becoming in theory more and more widely accepted. It seems that today almost everyone knows about, and either has or wants, equality, human rights, democracy. But these very ideas were not even thought before the late 18th century. When they were voiced, the Catholic papacy viciously condemned them in the 19th century: first Pope Gregory XVI in his 1832 encyclical *Mirari vos* and then Pope Pius IX in his infamous 1864 *Syllabus of Errors*:

The false and absurd, or rather the mad principle [*deliramentum*] that we must secure and guarantee to each one liberty of conscience; this is one of the most contagious of errors.... To this is attached liberty of the press. the most dangerous liberty, an execrable liberty, which can never inspire sufficient horror....⁸

That erroneous opinion most pernicious to the Catholic Church, and to the salvation of souls, which was called by our predecessor Gregory XVI (lately quoted) the *insanity* (Encycl. August 13, 1832), namely, that “liberty of conscience and of worship is the right of every man; and that this right ought, in every well governed State, to be proclaimed and asserted by the law.”⁹

However, the Catholic Church totally reversed itself—though of course it never publicly admitted that it did—concerning religious liberty and freedom of conscience in the Vatican II 1965 *Declaration on Religious Liberty*:

This Vatican Synod declares that the human person has a right to religious freedom. This freedom means that all men are to be immune from coercion on the part of individuals or social groups and of any human power, in such wise that in matters religious no one is to be forced to act in a manner contrary to his own beliefs. Nor is anyone to be restrained from acting in accordance with his own beliefs, whether privately or publicly, whether alone or in association with others, within due limits.¹⁰

4. Dialogue: The Path Forward

1. *The Universe is a Cosmic Dance of Dialogue*

In a profound way Dialogue has been at the heart of the cosmos from the very beginning: Dialogue- that is, the mutually beneficial interaction of differing components-is at the very heart of the Universe, of which we humans are the highest expression: From the basic interaction of *Matter and Energy* (in Einstein's unforgettable formula: $E=mc^2$ -Energy equals mass times the square of the speed of light), to the creative interaction of *Protons and Electrons* in every atom, to the vital symbiosis of *Body and Spirit* in every human, through the creative dialogue between *Woman and Man*, to the dynamic relationship between *Individual and Society*. Thus, the very essence of our humanity is dialogical, and a fulfilled human life is the highest expression of the ***Cosmic Dance of Dialogue***.

In the early millennia of the history of humanity as we spread outward from our starting point in central Africa, the forces of **Divergence** were dominant. However, because we live on a globe, in our frenetic divergence we eventually began to encounter each other more and more frequently. Now the forces of stunning **Convergence** are becoming increasingly dominant.

In the past, during the *Age of Divergence*, we could live in isolation from each other; we could ignore each other. Now, in the *Age of Convergence*, we are forced to live in One World. We increasingly live in a Global Village. We cannot ignore the Other, the Different. Too often in the past we have tried to make over the Other into a likeness of ourselves, often by violence. But this is the very opposite of dialogue. This egocentric arrogance is in fundamental opposition to the ***Cosmic Dance of Dialogue***. It is not creative; it is destructive.

Hence, we humans today have a stark choice: Dialogue, or Death!

2. *Dialogues of the Head, Hands, and the Heart*

For us humans there are three main dimensions to dialogue-the mutually beneficial interaction among those who are different-corresponding to the structure of our humanness:

Dialogue of the Head, Dialogue of the Hands, Dialogue of Heart.

a) *The Cognitive or Intellectual: Seeking the Truth*

In the **Dialogue of the Head** we mentally reach out to the Other to learn from those who think differently from us. We try to understand how they see the world and why they act as they do. This Dialogue of the Head is vital, for how we see and understand the world and life determines how we act toward ourselves, toward other persons, and toward the world around us.

b) *The Illative or Ethical: Seeking the Good*

In the **Dialogue of the Hands** we join together with Others to work to make the world a better place in which we all must live together. Since we can no longer live separately in this One World, we must work jointly to make it not just a house, but a home for all of us to live in.

c) *The Affective or Aesthetic: Seeking the Beautiful*

In the **Dialogue of the Heart** we share in the expressions of the emotions of those different from us. Because we humans are body and spirit, or rather, body-spirit, we give bodily-spiritual expression in all the Arts to our multifarious responses to our encounters with life: Joy, sorrow, gratitude, anger.... and most of all, love. All the world delights in beauty, wherein we find the familiar that avoids sameness, diversity that avoids distastefulness.

d) *(W)Holiness: Seeking the One*

We humans cannot long live a divided life. If we are to even survive, let alone flourish, we must "get it all together." We must live a "whole" life. Indeed, this is what the religions of the Western tradition mean when they say that we humans should be "holy." Literally, to be holy means to be whole. Hence, in our human **Dance of Dialogue** we must "get it all together," we must be (W)Holy. We must dance together the **Dialogue of the Head**, the **Dialogue of the Hands**, and the **Dialogue of the Heart**. We must then all join together in the ***Cosmic Dance of Dialogue***.

5. A New Phase Of Modernity: The Age Of Global Dialogue

Christianity and Islam are the two most populous, geographically widespread, and powerful religions today (also have been for centuries and will be for the foreseeable future). They, along with Judaism, must lead the way in developing and spreading a creative relationship between religion (ideology), ethics, and the power of the state. Though small in numbers today, the significance of Judaism in the past—remember, it comprised almost a tenth of the population of the Roman Empire at the time of Jesus (8-10 out of 100 million)—was immense through its decisive influence in the shaping of Western Civilization; in an almost baffling way it has today once again become immensely significant through the tiny state of Israel, and particularly in its relationship to the West (former Christendom) and Islam. Thus Judaism, Christianity, and Islam have a special responsibility to take the lead in developing and furthering a creative relationship between religion, ethics, and the state.

No civilization or society can flourish without having a cohesive basic ethic at its foundation. As noted above, the foundation of this essential civilizational/societal ethic has in the past been provided by particular religions for each civilization/society. This was and is true for Western Civilization as well, in that at its ethical basis there lies the Judeo-Christian religious tradition, though increasingly “rationalized” and “secularized” in recent centuries. Indeed, even in the most powerful nation of Western Civilization, the United States of America, there is scholarly consensus on the existence at its core of a “civil religion,” which is precisely this “quasi-Deist” Judeo-Christian tradition. Nevertheless, expanding this “civil religion” in the U.S. is the development as the result of greatly increased religious pluralism since the transformed immigration laws in the 1960s. This is leading to the placing of “interreligious, intercultural dialogue” also at the heart of the U.S., and Western-Becoming-Global Civilization.

Each civilization/society will have to develop, maintain, and constantly update for itself such a fundamental ethos/

ethic if it is to survive and flourish, but in the new millennium it will increasingly have to do so within the context of “Modernity” with its growing focus on freedom, human rights, separation of religion and state, religious/cultural pluralism and interreligious, intercultural dialogue. Each of these foci, of course, have their necessary correlatives, i.e., freedom-responsibility, human rights-obligations, separation of-respect and cooperation between, religion and state, and pluralism-religious/cultural mutual respect and dialogue.

Underlying all of these, and other, elements of Modernity, which each civilization/society will have to come to terms with in conjunction with its own traditions and in its own creative way, is the global fact that no civilization/society can live in even relative isolation today and on into the third millennium. Ours is already “one world”: global communications, global transportation, global economics....and holding it all together will have to be a Global Ethic—with freedom/responsibility, human rights/obligations, religious pluralism/dialogue and separation/respect between religion and state. This Global Ethic must, and can, be arrived at, and constantly be extended, by consensus through unending dialogue among women and men of all religious and ethical persuasions. And those with the greatest power and influence, of course, have the greatest responsibility to lead the way in this consensus-building through dialogue, and consequent action: Jews, Christians and Muslims.

This, I believe, is how humankind will move beyond its up to now perennial clash of civilizations to a dialogue and cooperation of civilizations.

Notes:

¹See Leonard Swidler, *The Age of Global Dialogue*, trans. by Lihua Liu (Beijing, 2006).

²<http://www.firstthings.com/ftissues/ft0601/articles/benedict.html> , Pope Benedict XVI, *Without Roots* (New York: Basic Books, 2006).

³One finds an acknowledgment of the present decline of Islamic civilization, and a determination to do something positive about it, in certain leading Muslim circles, for example, in Malaysia: “None of the Muslim countries are considered to be developed or advanced, despite about ten are among the rich nations of the world.” Perceptively the author goes on to note that the Muslim countries “are so weak politically, economically, socially and even educationally Muslims have become so weak and dependent on others in almost every field” (Seyed Othman Alhabshi, *An Inspiration for the Future of Islam* (Kuala Lumpur: Institute of Islamic Understanding Malaysia, 1994), pp. 14f.), and then quotes Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad: “We Muslims are backward in many

fields.” (Speech of Prime Minister, Dato Seri Dr. Mahathir Mohamad at the Opening of the International Youth Camp, Morib, Selangor, August 10, 1981, cited in *ibid.*, p. 18.)

⁴Benedict XVI, *Without Roots*.

⁵See Robert W. Funk, and the Jesus Seminar, *The Acts of Jesus: The Search for the Authentic Deeds of Jesus* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1998).

⁶“Jesus Was a Feminist,” *Catholic World*, January, 1971, pp. 171-183.

⁷See the forthcoming book Leonard Swidler, *Jesus Was a Feminist. Why Aren’t You?!*

⁸Pope Gregory XVI, *Mirari vos*, in Leonard Swidler, *Freedom in the Church* (Dayton, OH: Pflaum Press, 1969), p. 45.

⁹Pope Pius IX, *Syllabus of Errors*, in *ibid.*, p. 47.

¹⁰Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 62.

The New Christian Right and the Death of Secularism as Neutrality in the United States

Over recent years religious conservatives in the United States have fervently contested the idea of a liberal, secular public sphere. This article urges scholars to consider that contest in light of the history of the New Christian Right (NCR) of the late 1970s and 1980s. NCR activists, intellectuals, lawyers, and government officials advanced a critique of Rawlsian political liberalism, one charging that public institutions were not the bastions of neutrality supposed by American liberals. Contrary to the U.S. Constitution's ban on an establishment of religion, this critique alleged, cultural elites and judges had lifted the "religion" of secular humanism up to a preferred status while attempting to purge the public sphere of Christianity. Focusing on a pair of federal court cases from the 1980s, this article considers one of the NCR's most fascinating strategies—defining as a "religion" the very secularism meant to contain religion to private life.

In the United States, over the past few years, activists have waged celebrated efforts to Christianize the public sphere. The chief justice of the Alabama Supreme Court hauled a huge granite monument of the Ten Commandments into the courthouse during the night and refused to remove it; Congress noisily championed the cause of parents trying to prevent the removal of a life-support system from their brain-dead adult daughter; a local school board mandated that "intelligent design" be taught alongside scientific explanations of the world's origins; a right-wing president nominated to the U.S. Supreme Court a candidate whose only apparent qualification was that she was an evangelical.¹

These pressures have been building for about thirty years. Beginning in the late 1970s, the New Christian Right (NCR) began trying to reform American political culture, which it considered to be infested with licentious art, depraved sexual expression, and decadent public education. NCR activism was motivated largely by the belief that, in trying to maintain a religiously-neutral public landscape, the American government injured Christians, who, even in public life, were obliged to act always *as Christians*. This paper looks at the NCR's critique of public-sphere secularism, which Reagan-era reli-

Robert Daniel Rubin
Instructor, Department of
History, Indiana University,
Bloomington, Indiana
Email: rorubin@indiana.edu

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gious conservatives denounced as a “religion” of sorts—one that was alien to and intolerant of biblical Christianity.²

Nothing drew the ire of American religious conservative like the U.S. Supreme Court. In the decades after WWII, for the first time, the Court had applied the U.S. Constitution’s ban on religious establishment directly to the individual states and ordered them to stop conducting religious exercises in their public schools. That directive gradually convinced the Christian Right that liberal values had displaced Christian morality in the classroom. In the 1970s and 1980s parents of public-school students tried to shield their children from the corrosive effects of “humanism” and even tried to stop local schools from promoting an allegedly anti-Christian worldview in the classroom.³ Evangelical attorneys, for the first time, pursued specifically Christian cause lawyering.⁴ Activists throughout the U.S.—but especially in the South and West—pressured textbook publishers to balance modern “humanistic” perspectives with Christian ones.⁵ And, while conservative senators attempted to strip the federal courts of jurisdiction over school prayer and abortion,⁶ the New Christian Right’s biggest hero—Ronald Reagan—vowed to win passage of a constitutional amendment legalizing school prayer.⁷

During these same years conservative writers openly complained that American society’s liberal norms had ostracized and marginalized Christians embracing traditional moral views. In *The Culture of Disbelief*, Stephen L. Carter famously charged that liberal laws and social prescriptions trivialized religion in general and treated it as something of which people ought to feel ashamed. Carter condemned liberal political and constitutional theorists for urging that religiously-justified positions be barred from public institutions. When religious citizens are prohibited from acting publicly on the basis of religious reasons, he asserted, society ceased to be inclusive. The law ceased to be fair. When government demanded that public institutions maintain religious neutrality, it not only tread over the rights of religious citizens but also deprived society of the moral multivocality to which it otherwise enjoyed access.⁸ “What is needed is not a requirement that the religiously devout choose a form of dialogue that lib-

eralism accepts, but that liberalism develop a politics that accepts whatever form of dialogue a member of the public offers. Epistemic diversity, like diversity of other kinds, should be cherished, not ignored, and certainly not abolished. What is needed, then, is a willingness to *listen*, not because the speaker has *the right voice* but because the speaker has *the right to speak* (229-30; italics in original).⁹

Writers, such as Carter, who articulated the NCR’s critique of American liberalism subtly wove together two distinct charges into a coherent critique. While accusing liberalism of trivializing and marginalizing Christians (or conservative Christians, who seemed to count most as “Christians”), those writers also condemned liberalism for its moral bankruptcy. Liberalism, it would appear, harmed “Christians” both because it imposed its own distinct moral worldview onto an entire society and because that worldview lacked moral content. NCR scholars argued that behind the liberal policies of the Supreme Court and the liberal curricula and methods of the public schools lay an ideology—a political and moral orientation toward the world so coherent that it could be accurately categorized only as a religion. Its opponents alternately referred to this religion as “humanism” and “secular humanism.” In the rhetoric of the NCR, the religion of secular humanism became the scourge of all devoted Christians who sought merely to raise children and to live lives according to their own preferred religious values. Secular humanism signified, all at once, the absence of religious value and the presence of an alien, anti-Christian religion that silenced all competitors. Its NCR critics characterized humanism as thoroughly “secular” and fundamentally “religious.”

To be sure, this conception of humanism as a secular religion had circulated since at least the 1960s. In a footnote to *Torcaso v. Watkins* (1961) the U.S. Supreme Court plainly referred to secular humanism as a religion. In his dissent in *Abington v. Schempp* (1963), Justice Potter Stewart insisted that “a refusal to permit religious exercises” in the classroom should be “seen, not as the realization of state neutrality, but rather as the establishment of a religion of secularism.”¹⁰ The influential social critic Rousas John Rushdoony complained in

the early Sixties that American public schools served as organs of an Enlightenment-based, humanistic religion incompatible with biblical Christianity. Rushdoony urged followers to reassert the dominance of Christianity over the human-centered religion that had been established by the federal government and the public schools that functioned as its church. In the early Eighties a cadre of writers published works that would develop and popularize those ideas. Especially prominent were Tim LaHaye's *Battle for the Mind*, Francis A. Schaeffer's *A Christian Manifesto*, John W. Whitehead's *The Second American Revolution*, and James Hitchcock's *What Is Secular Humanism?* With these and other works the NCR grounded, in its own indigenous literature, a concept of religion operating through a Christian/humanist dichotomy.¹¹

The emergence of this literature affected more than the world of ideas. Its impact was practical, affecting even the United States government. In 1978, Rushdoony wrote an essay charging the U.S. with violating its own ban against religious establishment by establishing the religion of secular humanism. This essay stirred Rushdoony's protégé, attorney John W. Whitehead, who would later, with Rushdoony's assistance, create the Rutherford Institute, the nation's most important provider of legal services for conservative evangelical causes. Soon after Rushdoony's piece appeared, Whitehead published a law-review article, "The Establishment of the Religion of Secular Humanism and Its First Amendment Implications." Whitehead's piece resonated widely in NCR intellectual circles, just as his legal brief submitted in *Widmar v. Vincent* (1981) helped persuade the Court to reverse thirty-five years of interpreting the First Amendment's establishment clause as demanding secularization of the public sphere through an impenetrable "wall of separation" to keep religion out of public institutions. Beginning with *Widmar*, the Court embraced an alternative interpretation of the establishment clause, one requiring that religious citizens and institutions be guaranteed "equal access" to state-run facilities and programs. That is, public institutions could no longer discriminate against religious speech or practice; to accommodate secular organizations but not religious organizations was possibly to

violate the Establishment Clause. From this time forward, the Court has balanced its earlier secularization standard with its more recent equal-access standard. The logic driving Whitehead's article and legal brief gained tremendous traction within legal, academic, and government circles.¹²

The affects of *Widmar*—and the writings of Rushdoony, Whitehead, LaHaye, and Schaeffer—can be traced throughout U.S. politics and culture during the upcoming years. Prominent right-wing organizations, such as the Moral Majority, Concerned Women for America, and the Christian Coalition, would energetically defend religious citizens' equal access to public goods and services. Likewise, they would continue to deny that secular norms secured a religiously-neutral environment. Secularism-as-neutrality, they insisted, discriminated against religious speech and exercise. Employing this rationale, the U.S. Congress passed the 1984 Equal Access Act, which required public high schools to extend to religious extracurricular groups the same access to school facilities that it granted to groups whose purpose was not explicitly religious. Six years later, in *Board v. Mergens*, the Court confirmed "that the Equal Access Act does not on its face contravene the Establishment Clause." Reiterating its *Widmar* ruling, the Court insisted that "Congress' avowed purpose—to prevent discrimination against religious and other types of speech—is undeniably secular." For a school to accommodate its "Christian Club" as completely as it accommodated all other extracurricular groups was to execute a fully proper, *secular* policy.¹³

Church-state separation would be refuted most eloquently by an upcoming generation of theorists who attacked not only the Court's secularism-as-neutrality doctrine but its underlying liberal theory as epitomized by the work of John Rawls. Since the late 1980s those scholars have reworked the NCR position, rendering it more subtle and reasonable by trying to ensure that the U.S. be, not a Christian state, but a pluralistic state accommodating its ideologically diverse citizenry. Secularism-as-neutrality continues to withstand attack as a ruse obscuring the suppression by liberals of religious citizens' constitutional rights. Christian conservatives urge government

instead to assume a “genuine” neutrality that would neither silence nor support religion, and that would no more endorse secular humanist values than theistic ones.¹⁴

As political liberalism withstands assault, the church-state separation that it supports continues to erode. This erosion can best be grasped in its historical context. The New Christian Right of the 1980s disrupted American political, cultural, and constitutional history. Prior to the NCR’s emergence secularism was widely regarded as neutral, fair, and inclusive—the only ethos wholly suitable to the public sphere. Prior to the NCR’s emergence, few Americans ever talked of “secular humanism.” Virtually no one suggested that it might constitute a religion. Today, these notions are commonplace among conservative-s-. Only by examining the religious-conservative activism of the Reagan era can we fathom the trajectory and implications of today’s “culture wars.” A brief look at one such moment is instructive.

Early in 1982, Ishmael Jaffree bristled upon discovering that his three young public-school children took part in daily recitation of prayers in their Mobile, Alabama, classrooms. This riled Jaffree, a transplant from Cleveland, Ohio. Jaffree had rejected the fervent Christianity of his upbringing and, as a college student and then law student, had embraced a free-thinking agnosticism toward religion. Learning of his children’s “indoctrination,” Jaffree repeatedly asked his children’s teachers, their principals, and the superintendent of schools to cease the prayers. Not only were his attempts to no avail; they incited staunch local resistance. The Mobile County school board elected to defend its teachers’ rights to free religious exercise against Jaffree’s lawsuit, filed in May 1982. In response Gov. Fob James won passage of a law sanctioning classroom prayer and promptly got named as a co-defendant in the suit. Public response in Mobile toward Jaffree was hostile, even from fellow African Americans. Only the federal courts might set the situation right, Jaffree and his lawyering concluded.¹⁵

Jaffree’s most noteworthy resistance came from a group of evangelicals who organized to protect the right of children and teachers to pray in the classroom. One of the group’s

two lawyers worked for the governor and was affiliated with Whitehead’s Rutherford Institute. Many of the group’s members belonged to Mobile’s enormous Cottage Hill Baptist Church, whose pastor was part of the conservative faction then asserting dominance over the Southern Baptist Convention. The group held numerous rallies, appeared on TV and in the newspapers, and successfully petitioned to intervene in the case alongside the defendants. When the trial began in November, Ishmael Jaffree and his lawyer found themselves outspent and outmaneuvered. The Court’s ban on school prayer carried little weight with Alabamians.¹⁶

The *Jaffree* trial demonstrated much that was distinctive about the NCR. Defense lawyers boldly argued that, notwithstanding forty years of U.S. case law, the First Amendment’s proscription against an establishment of religion did not apply to the individual states. The defense made this argument through an expert witness, James McClellan, an advisor to several U.S. senators and a prominent conservative constitutional scholar and legal activist. The judge, Brevard Hand of Mobile, shared McClellan’s conviction that decades of liberal judicial activism had butchered the U.S. Constitution and endangered American democracy. Hand was easily persuaded by McClellan’s arguments about the First Amendment and about the role of judges, who, McClellan insisted, were bound to uphold, not Supreme Court precedent, but only the Constitution’s precise text and the history of its adoption. Hand’s ruling brazenly announced that “this Court’s independent review of the relevant historical documents and its reading of the scholarly analysis convinces it that the United States Supreme Court has erred in its reading of history.” Basing his decision largely on McClellan’s testimony and writings, Hand determined that the actions of neither the state of Alabama nor its schools were constrained by the U.S. Bill of Rights. Accordingly, Hand dismissed Jaffree’s complaint.¹⁷

The judge promised that, in the likely event of his reversal on appeal, “this Court will look again at the record in this case and reach conclusions which it is not now forced to reach.” What “conclusions” did he foresee reaching? The arguments of the intervenors had persuaded Hand. Those argu-

ments did not play a primary role in his *Jaffree* decision: Since he ruled the Establishment Clause inapplicable to the individual states, there was no immediate need to determine whether it had been properly applied in this case—whether, as the intervenors argued, the Establishment Clause actually protected Christianity’s place in the classroom. Should he eventually be forced to render that determination, Hand warned, he would return to the intervenors’ claims, claims that he looked favorably on.¹⁸

Throughout the trial the intervenors had asserted that the real victims of religious discrimination by the Alabama public schools were not the *Jaffree* children. Christian students were the real victims, the intervenors contended. Religion did pervade the textbooks and curricula, to be sure, but it was the religion of secular humanism—and not Christianity—that was pervasive. Testifying for the intervenors was R. J. Rushdoony, who betrayed none of his theocratic extremism. On the witness stand Rushdoony spoke as a religious pluralist wishing merely to see Christianity provided equal treatment with humanism. Rushdoony spun the usual Establishment Clause argument around: The government, through its schools, had established the religion of humanism and had denied Christians their religious liberty. Controlled by humanists, the government had tread over the pluralism that once made America great. The government granted religious freedom to humanists but not to others. “If there were freedom for a variety of groups,” Rushdoony maintained, “there would be more understanding and a greater ability to live together in appreciation of what each group contributes to a pluralistic society.” In a society such as ours, schoolteachers needed to act “as fairly as possible,” to accord “respect for varying positions,” to nurture “a free market of ideas.”¹⁹

So it went with the intervenors’ several expert witnesses, including the well-known televangelist James Kennedy. Each argued that school prayer should be permitted, not because an establishment of Christianity was desirable or permissible, but because the current establishment of humanism could most easily be countered by opening the classroom up to competing religious influences.²⁰ The “free market of ideas,” the in-

tervenors hoped, might effectively disestablish humanism. These arguments impressed Judge Hand, whose opinion noted “that the curriculum in the public schools of Mobile County is rife with efforts at teaching or encouraging secular humanism—all without opposition from any other ethic—to such an extent that it becomes a brainwashing effort.” If he was prohibited from opening up the classroom to competing religious influences, then he would be forced to consider alternative means of disestablishing humanism. Hand promised that, “if this Court is compelled to purge [prayer] from the classroom, then this Court must also purge from the classroom those things that serve to teach that salvation is through one’s self rather than through a deity.” If the higher courts would not let Christianity in, then Judge Hand would see to it that humanism were forced out.²¹

The higher courts, indeed, would not let Christianity in. The Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals reversed the judge’s decision and rebuked his disregard for Supreme Court precedent. It pointed out that the Supreme Court has unambiguously determined that the Establishment Clause attaches to the states and prohibits its administrators and teachers from authorizing prayer. Although the Supreme Court may choose to revisit and even amend its own past decisions, no district court judge may challenge high Court case law. Several months later, the Supreme Court affirmed, without a hearing, most parts of the Circuit Court’s holding. It did agree to hear arguments on a single element of the case—an Alabama statute that authorized “voluntary” silent prayer—but even that did not pass constitutional muster, the Court ruled in a 6-3 decision in June 1985.²²

The intervenors, Judge Hand, and the state of Alabama could gain solace only from Justice Rehnquist’s dissent, which questioned the constitutionality of strict separation between church and state. “The Establishment Clause did not require government neutrality between religion and irreligion,” Rehnquist held, insisting that “there is simply no historical foundation for the proposition that the Framers intended to build the ‘wall of separation’ that was constitutionalized in [the] *Everson* [case of 1947].” When the case ended up back

in Hand's courtroom and the judge was forced to implement the proscriptions implied by the Establishment Clause, he had a new "Supreme Court precedent" from which to draw—one that did not construe those proscriptions as prohibitions against all religious expression in public schools.²³

In August 1985 Brevard Hand realigned the *Jaffree* parties. The erstwhile defendant-intervenors now became plaintiffs, and, like the plaintiffs in the prior case, they complained that religion had been routinely, systematically advanced in Mobile County classrooms, in violation of the Establishment Clause. Unlike Ishmael Jaffree, the new plaintiffs charged the schools with promoting the religion of secular humanism. Of the three parties named as defendants, two—the Mobile County Board of School Commissioners and the governor of Alabama—admitted to the plaintiffs' charges and agreed to cease promoting secular humanism within public schools. Only the Alabama Board of Education chose to go to trial and defend itself. Its legal expenses were paid by the American Civil Liberties Union and the People for the American Way, while most of the plaintiffs' expenses were covered by Rev. Pat Robertson's National Legal Foundation. So began the saga's second round, *Smith v. Board*, which commenced in Hand's courtroom on October 6, 1986.²⁴

Once again, the conservative evangelicals (now plaintiffs) provided most of the expert witnesses. Once again, their witnesses argued at great length that secular humanism was a religion; that its values derived from anthropocentrism and thus conflicted with Judeo-Christian values; that it permeated the textbooks and curricula employed in Mobile schools; and that its ubiquity in public education, combined with the near absence of theism, created an establishment of religion. Theologians, psychologists, sociologists, philosophers, and historians lined up to testify to what they considered a grave injustice against millions of religious Americans unable to express their religious beliefs alongside their humanist fellows. Several of these witnesses noted that they had defined "religion" functionally rather than substantively, precluding any requirements of sacredness or supernaturalism.²⁵ As sociologist James Davison Hunter explained, "the functional approach defines religion according to what it does. . . . For the individual, reli-

gion provides a sense of meaning, a sense of order, a sense of place in life and in the cosmos, a sense of direction and meaning in life. It also provides moral coordinates by which individuals can live everyday life, a means by which they can know right from wrong, correct from incorrect, appropriate from inappropriate, and so on."²⁶

The plaintiffs' expert witnesses insisted that humanism so completely encompassed its adherents that it could only be considered a religion, one whose "core notion," in the words of witness James Hitchcock, was "the central importance of man in the scheme of reality, and that man's dignity, man's self-fulfillment, and man's power are all dependent upon . . . the exclusion of meaningful belief in God." Ethicist Richard Baer reported that all of the textbooks he examined for the trial "reflect[ed] a position that value judgments are all subjective, relative, and irrational." Parents wanting their children to accept God's absolute moral law would thus be countered by textbooks and teachers preaching moral relativism. And, tragically, this moral relativism had been allowed to avoid censure as a religion and so operated with impunity in America's public schools.²⁷

Not surprisingly, Judge Hand ruled in the plaintiffs' favor. Forced now to hold the Establishment Clause against Alabama schools, he interpreted it to prohibit any single religion from dominating the classroom, to require that an even-handed, pluralistic environment be maintained. For the sake of religious neutrality, Hand claimed, he had to treat all moral ideologies equally. To privilege secularism was to condone establishment. "The promotion and advancement of a religious system occurs when one faith-theory is taught to the exclusion of others, and this is prohibited by the first amendment religion clauses. . . . For purposes of the first amendment, secular humanism is a religious belief system, entitled to the protections of, and subject to the prohibitions of, the religion clauses."²⁸

Accordingly, Hand ruled that the forty-four textbooks examined during the trial be removed from use in the Mobile school system. Strewn throughout with humanistic values, their continued use would violate the U.S. Constitution.²⁹

Once again, Hand was overturned on appeal.³⁰ His equality-between-ideologies argument stood up in the higher courts no better than had his states' rights argument. Nonetheless, Hand's *Jaffree* and *Smith* rulings, along with the testimony of several well-prepared scholars, bequeathed to religious conservatives a compelling understanding of worldview, neutrality, and religious establishment. These cases tell us much about the decline of post-WWII liberalism in the U.S. By defining "religion" functionally, Hand and the witnesses before him suggested that, in upcoming decades, the idea of religious neutrality might fall on hard times.³¹ *Jaffree* and *Smith* remind scholars from across all disciplines that the history of the New Christian Right in the U.S.—a history just now starting to be written—enriches immeasurably our understanding of current-day religious fundamentalism and its threat to Enlightenment rationalism.

These events challenge historians to adopt new analytical concepts. By claiming "worldview" as a locus of injustice, religious conservatives in the U.S. emphasized its importance as a source of identity. To understand these actors, historians of Reagan-era America will need to supplement their standard tools of analysis—race, class, gender, and sexuality—with "worldview" or "moral ideology." Historians would do well to borrow the conceptual lenses of James Davison Hunter and of linguist George Lakoff, who states plainly that "contemporary American politics is about worldview." Historians might also heed cultural theorist Timothy Brennan, who points out that "communities of political belief are themselves forms of identity" and "possess their own proper *cultures*."³² Histories of the NCR will likewise gain much from works in political theory that trace connections between citizens' comprehensive moral doctrines and the larger processes of political compromise.³³ Identity politics may dominate post-Sixties society, but identity politics undoubtedly has acquired a religious dimension—an ideological dimension. To a great extent the NCR gained for "Christianity" a political currency not unlike "color" or "queerness." This, beyond all else, is the legacy of Reagan-era religious conservatism. Only by reckoning with its proponents in their own terms—rather than dismissing their

behavior as conditioned by "mere ideology," the product of "false consciousness"—will historians produce the rich, nuanced history of the New Christian Right that surely awaits them.

Notes:

¹ Washington Post, Oct. 24, 2002, p. A3; New York Times, March 20, 2005, p. A1; New York Times, Dec. 21, 2005, p. A1; New York Times, Oct. 18, 2005, p. A26.

² Sara Diamond, *Not by Politics Alone: The Enduring Influence of the Christian Right* (New York: Guilford, 1998); Walter H. Capps, *The New Religious Right: Piety, Patriotism, and Politics* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1994); Michael Lienesch, *Redeeming America: Piety and Politics in the New Christian Right* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1993); Steve Bruce, *The Rise and Fall of the New Christian Right: Conservative Protestant Politics in America, 1978–1988* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990).

³ *Everson v. Board of Education*, 330 U.S. 1 (1947); *Engel v. Vitale*, 370 U.S. 421 (1962); *School District of Abington, Pa. v. Schempp*, 374 U.S. 203 (1963). Fritz Detweiler, *Standing on the Premises of God: The Christian Right's Fight to Redefine America's Public Schools* (New York: New York University Press, 1999), 157–84; William Martin, *With God on Our Side: The Rise of the Religious Right in America* (New York: Broadway, 1996), 77–78, 117–43, 192; Godfrey Hodgson, *The World Turned Right Side Up: A History of the Conservative Ascendancy in America* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1996), 166–75; Lienesch, *Redeeming America*, 82, 157–72; Stephen Bates, *Battleground: One Mother's Crusade, the Religious Right, and the Struggle for Our Schools* (New York: Holt, 1993), 40–57.

⁴ Kevin R. den Dulk, “In Legal Culture, but Not of It: The Role of Cause Lawyers in Evangelical Legal Mobilization,” paper delivered at conference on cause lawyers and social movements, University of California, Los Angeles, March 2005 (in Robert Daniel Rubin's possession); Stuart A. Scheingold and Austin Sarat, *Something to Believe In: Politics, Professionalism, and Cause Lawyering* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004), 112–17; Gregg Ivers, “Religious Organizations as Constitutional Litigants,” *Polity*, 25 (1992), 243–66; Karen O'Connor and Lee Epstein, “The Rise of Conservative Interest Group Litigation,” *Journal of Politics*, 45 (1983), 479–89.

⁵ Melissa M. Deckman, *School Board Battles: The Christian Right in Local Politics* (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2004); Martin, *With God on Our Side*, 117–43; Bates, *Battleground*, 25–28, 210–32; James Moffett, *Storm in the Mountains: A Case Study of Censorship, Conflict, and Consciousness* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1988); Paul C. Vitz, *Censorship: Evidence of Bias in Our Children's Textbooks* (Ann Arbor: Servant, 1986).

⁶ Bruce J. Dierenfield, “‘Somebody Is Tampering with America's Soul': Congress and the School Prayer Debate,” *Congress and the Presidency*, 24 (Autumn 1997), 184–85; Washington Post, April 6, 1979, sec. A, p. 7; New York Times, Aug. 3, 1980, sec. 4, p. 20.

⁷ Bruce J. Dierenfield, “‘A Nation under God': Ronald Reagan and the Crusade for School Prayer,” in *Ronald Reagan's America*, vol. 1, ed. Eric J. Schmertz, Natalie Datlof, and Alexej Ugrinsky (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 1997), 235–61; New York Times, May 4, 1982, sec. A, p. 1.

⁸ Stephen L. Carter, *The Culture of Disbelief: How American Law and Politics Trivialize Religious Devotion* (New York: Anchor, 1994), 10, 15, 227–32.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 229–30; emphasis in original text.

¹⁰ *Torcaso v. Watkins*, 367 U.S. 488, 495n11 (1961); *Abington v. Schempp*, 313.

¹¹ Rousas John Rushdoony, *Intellectual Schizophrenia: Culture, Crisis, and Education* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing, 1961); Rousas John Rushdoony, *The Messianic Character of American Education: Studies in the History of the Philosophy of Education* (Vallecito, Ca.: Ross House, 1963). Tim LaHaye, *The Battle for the Mind* (Old Tappan, N.J.: Revell, 1980); Francis A. Schaeffer, *A Christian Manifesto* (Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway, 1981); John W. Whitehead, *The Second American Revolution* (Westchester, Ill.: Crossway, 1982); James Hitchcock, *What Is Secular Humanism? Why Humanism Became Secular and How It Is Changing Our World* (Ann Arbor: Servant, 1982). See also Onalee McGraw, *Secular Humanism and the Schools: The Issue Whose Time Has Come* (Washington, D.C.: Heritage Foundation, 1976); Homer Duncan, *Secular Humanism: The Most Dangerous Religion in America* (Lubbock: Christian Focus on Government, 1979); Rockne McCarthy et al., *State, Society, and Schools: A Case for Structural and Confessional Pluralism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1981), 107–44; Josh McDowell and Don Stewart, *Understanding Secular Religions* (San Bernadino, Ca.: Here's Life, 1982); Franky Schaeffer, *A Time for Anger: The Myth of Neutrality* (Westchester, Ill.: Crossway, 1982); John W. Whitehead, *The Stealing of America* (Westchester, Ill.: Crossway, 1983); and Carl H. Horn, ed., *Whose Values? The Battle for Morality in Pluralistic America* (Ann Arbor: Servant, 1985).

¹² Rousas John Rushdoony, “The State as an Establishment of Religion,” in *Freedom and Education: Pierce v. Society of Sisters Reconsidered*, ed. Donald P. Kommers and Michael J. Wahoske (Notre Dame: Center for Civil Rights, 1978), 37–46. John W. Whitehead and John Conlan, “The Establishment of the Religion of Secular Humanism and Its First Amendment Implications,” *Texas Tech Law Review*, 10 (Winter 1978), 1–66. *Widmar v. Vincent* 454 U.S. 263 (1981).

¹³ Martin, *With God on Our Side*, 191–220, 299–370; Capps, *New Religious Right*, 1–57; Diamond, *Not by Politics Alone*. *Equal Access Act*, 20 U.S. Code, vol. 20, sec. 4071 (1984). *Board of Education of the Westside Community Schools v. Mergens*, 496 U.S. 226, 253, 249 (1990).

¹⁴ Theoretical works indicting secularism-as-neutrality and its underlying political liberalism include James W. Skillen, “The Theoretical Roots of Equal Treatment,” in *Equal Treatment of Religion in a Pluralistic Society*,

ed. by Stephen V. Monsma and J. Christopher Soper (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 55-74; Steven D. Smith, *Foreordained Failure: The Quest for a Constitutional Principle of Religious Freedom* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995); Frederick Mark Gedicks, *The Rhetoric of Church and State: A Critical Analysis of Religion Clause Jurisprudence* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1995); Michael W. McConnell, "'God Is Dead and We Have Killed Him!': Freedom of Religion in the Post-modern Age," *Brigham Young University Law Review* (no. 1, 1993), 163-88; Stephen V. Monsma, *Positive Neutrality: Letting Religious Freedom Ring* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 1992); and Douglas Laycock, "Formal, Substantive, and Disaggregated Neutrality toward Religion," *DePaul Law Review*, 39 (Summer 1990), 993-1018. Monsma contends that, for government to act with true neutrality, "it must sometimes take certain positive steps to recognize or accommodate religion," while Laycock's ideal of "substantive neutrality" posits that religion "should proceed as unaffected as unaffected by government as possible." Monsma, *Positive Neutrality*, 13; Laycock, "Formal, Substantive, and Disaggregated Neutrality toward Religion," 1002. Political liberalism is expressed most authoritatively in John Rawls, *Political Liberalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996). It is effectively applied to religious issues in Stephen Macedo, "Liberal Civic Education and Religious Fundamentalism: The Case of *God v. John Rawls*," *Ethics*, 105 (April 1995), 468-96.

¹⁵ Testimony of Ishmael Jaffree at *Ishmael Jaffree et al. v. Board of School Commissioners of Mobile County et al.*, Civil case no. 82-0554-H, box no. 1, accession no. 021-93-0423, location no. C0681974 SAN (Federal Records Center, East Point, Ga.), Nov. 15, 1982, pp. 144-66, 207-86; Joseph W. Newman, "Organized Prayer and Secular Humanism in Mobile, Alabama's, Public Schools," in *Curriculum as Social Psychoanalysis: The Significance of Place*, ed. Kincheloe and Pinar (Albany: SUNY Press, 1991), 45-74; "A Conversation with Ishmael Jaffree," part 1, *Azalea City News & Review*, Feb. 17, 1983, pp. 1, 4; *ibid.*, part 2, Feb. 24, 1983, pp. 1, 5. Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Commissioners of Mobile County, Alabama, Central Administrative Office of the Mobile County Public School System, Barton Academy (504 Government Street, Mobile, Ala.), July 28, 1982. *Montgomery Advertiser*, July 13, 1982, pp. 1-2. Second amended complaint, *Ishmael Jaffree et al. v. Board of School Commissioners of Mobile County et al.*, *ibid.*, June 30, 1982. Ron Williams interview by Robert Daniel Rubin, March 19, 2002, Mobile, Al.

¹⁶ Thomas Kotouc interview by Robert Daniel Rubin, Mar. 22, 2002, Montgomery, Al., 2-3, 5; Francis Wilkinson, "Judge Hand's Holy War," *American Lawyer*, 9 (May 1987), 112. Fred Wolfe interview by Robert Daniel Rubin, Dec. 4, 2000, Jackson, Miss; Burt Rieff, "Conflicting Rights and Religious Liberty: The School-Prayer Controversy in Alabama, 1962-1985," *Alabama Review*, 54 (July 2001), 163-207, 192-93; Wayne Flynt, Ala-

bama Baptists: Southern Baptists in the Heart of Dixie (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1998), 567; Wilkinson, "Judge Hand's Holy War," 113.

¹⁷ Testimony of James McClellan at *Ishmael Jaffree et al. v. Board of School Commissioners of Mobile County et al.*, Civil case no. 82-0554-H, box no. 1, accession no. 021-93-0423, location no. C0681974 SAN (Federal Records Center, East Point, Ga.), Nov. 15, 1982, pp. 519-605. Regarding the Establishment Clause and its applicability to the states, see James McClellan, "Congressional Retraction of Federal Court Jurisdiction to Protect the Reserved Powers of the States: The Helms Prayer Bill and Return to First Principles," *Villanova Law Review*, 27 (May 1982), 1019-29; and James McClellan, "The Making and Unmaking of the Establishment Clause," in *A Blueprint for Judicial Reform*, ed. by Patrick B. McGuigan and Randall R. Rader (Washington, D.C.: Free Congress Research and Education Foundation, 1981), 295-325. W. Brevard Hand interview by Robert Daniel Rubin, Dec. 5, 2000, Mobile, Al., 2-3; *ibid.*, Oct. 10, 2002, 18-19. Testimony of James McClellan at *Jaffree v. Board*, 556, 603. *Jaffree v. Board of School Commissioners of Mobile County*, 554 F.Supp. 1104, 1128, 1124, 1130 (1983).

¹⁸ *Jaffree v. Board*, 1129.

¹⁹ Testimony of Rousas John Rushdoony at *Jaffree v. Board*, Nov. 15, 1982, pp. 331, 332-33, 361.

²⁰ Testimony of James Kennedy at *Jaffree v. Board*, Nov. 15, 1982, pp. 606-40. See especially the testimony of Richard A. Baer Jr. at *Jaffree v. Board*, Nov. 15, 1982, pp. 779-815.

²¹ *Jaffree v. Board*, 1129n41.

²² *Jaffree v. Wallace*, 705 F.2d 1526 (1983); *Wallace v. Jaffree*, 472 U.S. 38 (1985).

²³ *Wallace v. Jaffree*, 106.

²⁴ Douglas T. Smith et al. v. Board of School Commissioners of Mobile County, 655 F. Supp. 939 (1987). *Ibid.*, 944. Wilkinson, "Judge Hand's Holy War," 112.

²⁵ Transcript, Douglas T. Smith et al. v. Board of School Commissioners of Mobile County, Civil case no. 82-0554-H, box nos. 4-5, accession no. 021-93-0423, location no. C0681974 SAN (Federal Records Center, East Point, Ga.), Oct. 6-22, 1986.

²⁶ Testimony of James Davison Hunter at *Smith v. Board*, Oct. 7, 2006, p. 253.

²⁷ Testimony of James Hitchcock at *Smith v. Board*, Oct. 9, 2006, p. 745. Testimony of Richard A. Baer Jr. at *Smith v. Board*, Oct. 9, 2006, p. 814.

²⁸ *Smith v. Board*, 982.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 988.

³⁰ Board of School Commissioners of Mobile County v. Smith et al., 827 F.2d 684 (1987).

³¹ In the years after the trial, witnesses Hunter and Baer would continue to develop their arguments for defining religion functionally. See James Davison Hunter, "Religious Freedom and the Challenge of Modern Pluralism," in *The Religious Liberty Clauses and the American Public Philosophy*, ed. James Davison Hunter and Os Guinness (Washington: Brookings, 1990), 54-73; and Richard A. Baer Jr., "Why a Functional Definition of Religion Is Necessary If Justice Is to Be Achieved in Public Education." In *Curriculum, Religion, and Public Education: Conversations for an Enlarging Public Square*, ed. by James T. Sears and James C. Carper (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 105-15. See also James M. Donovan, "God Is as God Does: Law, Anthropology, and the Definition of 'Religion,'" *Seton Hall Constitutional Law Journal*, 6 (Fall 1995), 25-99.

³² James Davison Hunter, *Culture Wars: The Struggle to Define America* (New York: BasicBooks, 1991); George Lakoff, *Moral Politics: How Liberals and Conservatives Think* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002). *Ibid.*, 3. Timothy Brennan, *Wars of Position: The Cultural Politics of Left and Right* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), 11; emphasis in original text.

³³ Cf., Rawls, *Political Liberalism*; William A., Galston *Liberal Pluralism: The Implications of Value Pluralism for Political Theory and Practice* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002); Rob Reich, *Bridging Liberalism and Multiculturalism in American Education* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002); Stephen Macedo, *Diversity and Distrust: Civic Education in a Multicultural Democracy* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2000); Nancy L. Rosenblum, ed. *Obligations of Citizenship and Demands of Faith: Religious Accommodation in Pluralist Democracies* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000); Eamonn Callan, *Creating Citizens: Political Education and Liberal Democracy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997); Amy Gutmann and Dennis Thompson, *Democracy and Disagreement: Why Moral Conflict Cannot Be Avoided in Politics, and What Should Be Done about It* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1996); Amy Gutmann, "Civic Education and Social Diversity," *Ethics*, 105 (April 1995), 557-79; Jurgen Habermas, "Reconciliation through the Public Use of Reason: Remarks on John Rawls's *Political Liberalism*," *Journal of Philosophy*, 92 (March 1995), 109-31.□

Efecte de limită ale ideologiei

Ștefan Afloroaei

Ph.D., Dean of The Faculty of Philosophy, A. I. Cuza University, Iasi, Romania. Author of the books: *Ipostaze ale ratiunii negative. Scenarii istorico-simbolice* (1993), *Intamplare si destin* (1993), *Lumea ca reprezentare a celui alt* (1994), *Cum este posibila filosofia in estul Europei?* (1997)

Following mainly Ricoeur's understanding of ideology and assuming as fundamental premise the idea that this phenomenon is rooted in the exact same ground as the metaphysics of everyday life, the author argues that every ideology, at a social level, has two types effects: vulgar effects (in the ordinary sense of the word) and limit effects defined as those types of effects which exceed any institutional or communitarian reason and whose distinctive mark is the excessive violence in an arbitrary or pathological form. The paper centres on this latter type and traces its history in the sphere of philosophy since Pythagoras, through Socrates Boethius, Descartes, Schelling and up to Russian or Romanian philosophy of our times.

1. Despre fenomenul numit ideologie

Câteva cuvinte, mai întâi, despre ceea ce înțeleg prin ideologie. Accept în multe privințe felul în care este delimitată semnificația acestui termen în unele scrieri de specialitate. Și ignor absența unui înțeles univoc al său, eventual al unui admis de cei mai mulți dintre analiștii fenomenului în discuție. Dincolo de acele dificultăți inevitabile pe care le ridică «cel mai derutant concept din câmpul științelor sociale» (David McLellan), unele mențiuni și distincții se pot face totuși. Este ceea ce găsește oricine, de exemplu, în *Enciclopedia Blackwell a gândirii politice*, din 1987, sau în scrierile celui invocat mai sus. Opul enciclopedic delimitează ideologia ca o configurație de idei, reprezentări și norme ce orientează faptele oamenilor și asigură un gen de interpretare a lumii prin chiar raportul lor trăit cu aceasta. Întotdeauna este în joc forța unor instituții prin care devin active anumite idei și reprezentări.

Key words:

ideology, communitarian reason, violence, censorship, philosophy, metaphysics

Doar că ideologiile sunt mereu active și la un alt nivel, informal, când ideile și reprezentările care le compun apar asemeni unor presupoziii. Abia la acest nivel se realizează în chip deplin relația trăită a omului cu lumea sa. Cât privește interpretarea pe care o realizează, aceasta se petrece mai curând în sensul nietzschean al cuvântului (*Wille zur Macht*, § 481: «Nevoile noastre sunt cele care interpretează lumea; instinctele noastre împreună cu ale lor *pentru și împotriva*»)¹. Întrucât orientează conduita oamenilor în acest fel, ideologiile operează mai curând într-un mod subliminal, preconștient. Și deopotrivă recesiv, în sensul pe care Mircea Florian l-a dat acestui termen: ideile slabe sau marginale la un moment dat, de exemplu cea a egalității dintre oameni, ajung mai târziu puternice sau chiar exclusive.

Ce aș vrea să spun de fapt? Rădăcinile cele mai adânci ale ideologiei se află exact acolo unde se originează și metafizica noastră de uz cotidian. Știm că Descartes a invocat imaginea mai veche a arborelui cunoașterii, *arbor scientiarum*, pentru a spune că rădăcinile sale sunt date de acele cunoștințe ce joacă rolul unor premise absolut elementare. Cu alte cuvinte, ele reprezintă însăși metafizica unei epoci (*Scrisoare către abatele Claude Picot*). Mai târziu, în *Personalitate și transfer*, Jung avea să reia această imagine, însă cu o altă intenție. Va spune că, din punct de vedere simbolic, rădăcinile unui arbore, cu solul în care sunt înfipite, reprezintă însuși inconștientul nostru colectiv. Acesta nu se reduce niciodată la o serie de dorințe și tendințe refulate, căci el conține deopotrivă «germenii unor conținuturi conștiente ulterioare», adică «percepții subliminale» extrem de active. Cam în același timp, Collingwood identifică un gen de «gândire inconștientă» la nivelul comunității, prezentă în acele presupoziii ce pot fi socotite absolute, primare. Tocmai acestea ar constitui adevăratul obiect de cercetare al metafizicii. Apropierea dintre ideologie – o anumită ideologie – și metafizică nu a fost deloc străină, așadar, unor interpreți moderni de la Nietzsche la Ricoeur.

Înțelegem astfel mai bine în ce sens ideologia constituie «un fenomen de nedepășit al existenței sociale»; într-adevăr, «realitatea socială are dintotdeauna o constituție simbolică și comportă o interpretare, în imagini și reprezentări, a legăturii

sociale ca atare»². Ca fenomen mental, ideologia devine evidentă mai ales în raportul unei comunități cu acele evenimente ce sunt socotite inaugurale. Ele fondează simbolic o epocă întreagă, fiindu-i apoi sursă de justificare. Tot la acest nivel survine reprezentarea de sine a comunității. Căci există o nevoie reală a oamenilor «de a-și da o imagine de sine, de a se reprezenta, în sensul teatral al cuvântului, de a juca și de-a se pune în scenă»³. Astfel, în orizontul mental al unei epoci, are loc o adevărată mutație, când un mod de gândire difuz – dat de opinii și atitudini – trece în sistem de credință (Jacques Ellul).

Câteva trăsături ale ideologiei, așa cum le descrie Ricoeur, merită să fie amintite aici. Este vorba, mai întâi, de faptul că primar este «raportul pe care îl întreține o comunitate istorică cu actul fondator care a instaurat-o: Declarația americană a drepturilor, Revoluția franceză, Revoluția din octombrie etc.». Cu aceasta, orice ideologie reușește să justifice o stare de lucruri și să anunțe un proiect social. O face ușor întrucât este simplificatoare și schematică, devenind o simplă grilă sau un cod. În această situație, ideile trec lesne în opinii; «astfel că totul poate dobândi un caracter ideologic: etică, religie, filosofie». În consecință, are loc o idealizare a imaginii de sine a unui grup; intervin deopotrivă «celebrări ale evenimentelor fondatoare», fenomene de ritualizare și stereotipie, un nou vocabular, o ordine de «denumiri corecte» și «domnia ismelor: liberalism, socialism etc.». Evident va fi și «caracterul doxic al ideologiei: nivelul epistemologic al ideologiei este cel al opiniei, al grecescului doxa»; în limbaj freudian, este vorba de «momentul raționalizării»⁴. Toate acestea asigură o serioasă inerție ideologiei, rămânerea ei în urmă față de alte fenomene sociale.

Karl Mannheim a sesizat bine că unele ideologii tind să devină totale, adică să fie proprii unor epoci întregi. Exact acestea, cu puterea lor subliminală neobișnuită, mi se par mult mai interesante pentru cercetătorul de astăzi. Mai ales că rezolvarea unor opoziții – istorice, de această dată – nu o poate face un grup social sau altul. Rezolvarea lor este fie aparentă, iluzorie, fie de tip hegelian, cu reproducerea lor ciclică și la un nou nivel, mult mai extins.

2. Efecte vulgare și efecte de limită ale ideologiei

Există multe efecte obișnuite, adică vulgare, ale ideologiei. Există deopotrivă și efecte de limită, excesive. Efectele vulgare, ce privesc viața comună a oamenilor, au fost bine descrise de unii analiști ai fenomenului, de pildă Mannheim, Ricoeur, Ellul și alții. Folosesc aici expresia «efecte vulgare» în sensul ei neutru, fără nici o conotație negativă. Știm, de altfel, că termenul *vulgaris* a însemnat pur și simplu ceva comun sau larg răspândit, propriu în chipul cel mai firesc vieții unor comunități. Ceea ce este vulgar ajunge ușor cunoscut, un fapt expus public, ceva în fond de toate zilele. Și este exprimat de regulă în limba celor mulți⁵. Când Ricoeur vorbește despre funcțiile mari ale ideologiei, de exemplu funcția de justificare sau dominație, de reprezentare și disimulare, nu face altceva decât să descrie aceste efecte comune ale ideologiei.

Efectele de limită sunt de fapt cele excesive. Ele exced orice rațiune de ordin instituțional sau comunitar, dacă există așa ceva. Semnul lor distinctiv îl reprezintă de regulă un exces: fie violența maximă, fie forma arbitrară sau maladivă pe care o iau. Ele nu rezultă cu necesitate din funcțiile mari ale ideologiei. De pildă, condamnarea celui care, din punct de vedere politic, îți apare ca străin sau primejdios, nu rezultă nicidecum din funcția de justificare a ideologiei. La fel, suferința maximă la care este supus cel văzut în felul unui adversar istoric, adică moartea prin crucificare, sfâșiere în bucăți a trupului, aruncare în groapa cu fiare sălbatice, jupuire de viu, abandonare în pustiu sau pe mare, exil, spânzurare, tăiere a limbii sau a mâinii drepte, ca să amintesc aici doar câteva din practicile mai vechi exersate însă și mai târziu, de omul modern, acest lucru nu decurge din funcțiile vulgare ale ideologiei. Nici interdicția oricărei dezbateri sau a interpretării în genere, cum s-a întâmplat de câteva ori din secolul VI înoace, nu este înscrisă în funcțiile ideologiei. Ne dăm seama că toate acestea nu au cum să apară ca firești în viața unor comunități. Deopotrivă, nu ajung ușor cunoscute, nu devin întotdeauna fapte expuse public și nu sunt exprimate, de către cei care le decid, în limba celor mulți. Așadar, nu pot fi socotite în nici un fel vulgare sau comune.

Mă voi referi în cele ce urmează doar la trei genuri de efecte excesive ale ideologiei, înrudite profund între ele, anume cenzura violentă a gândirii, exilul și moartea.

3. Cenzura ca ultimă instanță. Exercițiul ei în spațiul filosofiei

Ceea ce i s-a întâmplat uneori filosofiei, mai ales după ce are loc supunerea cetăților grecești de către romani, este greu de uitat. Nu e vorba doar de faptul că o anumită experiență filosofică dintre multe altele este subtil cenzurată, într-un fel chiar de către autorul ei, cum s-a observat în legătura cu Platon⁶. Nici de cenzura greu sesizabilă și într-un fel firească pe care orice maestru spiritual – înțelept, avvă sau duhovnic – o induce în scenariul inițierii⁷. Ci am în vedere un gest cumva de limită, anume punerea în discuție explicită și radicală a filosofiei ca atare, indiferent de coala, autor sau doctrină. Așa s-a întâmplat, de exemplu, la Crotona, pe vremea lui Pythagora, când întreaga școală filosofică a fost pusă sub urmărire și în cele din urmă desființată. Pythagora ar fi fost acolo nu doar maestru, preot și inițiat, ci și liderul unei grupări aristocratice, fapt ce explică mai bine reacția puterii față de propria sa școală.

Astfel de fapte s-au petrecut de regulă atunci când a irupt cu toată forța, prin chiar instituțiile timpului, voința adevărului exclusiv. Cum bine s-a spus, «schema de bază a oricărui act de cenzură este adevărul unic» (Adrian Marino). Cu mențiunea însă că este vorba acum de adevărul unei voințe omenești, istorice, și nicidecum un adevăr ce ar veni să asigure însăși libertatea spiritului («Și veți cunoaște adevărul, iar adevărul vă va face liberi», se spune în *Ioan*, VIII, 32)⁸. Voi pune în legătură voința adevărului exclusiv cu ideologia dominantă a unui timp, indiferent de ce natură este această ideologie. Noi reușim acum să spunem cu privire la ideologie – după ce am avut mult timp în față doar expresia ei barbară, negativă – că nu apare întotdeauna ca terifiantă. Cu alte cuvinte, putem accepta ideea unui sens oarecum neutru al ideologiei, ca și cum ea s-ar plasa dincoace de morală. Doar că atunci când o ideologie domină în chip singular spațiul vieții noastre publice,

ea generează o cenzură excesivă, adică instituie forme ale interdicției ce nu cunosc justificare.

Câteva exemple în aceasta privință sunt absolut necesare.

Cazul lui Pythagora, amintit mai sus, este deja cunoscut, la fel și cel al lui Platon, despre care s-a scris destul de mult. Doar că acestea nu sunt singulare. Protagoras, acuzat de aceleași fapte ca și Socrate mai târziu, a fost nevoit să plece definitiv în exil, după ce Pericle îl salvează de la moarte. Acuzației de impietate religioasă, pentru felul în care explica fenomenele naturii, i se adaugă cea de medism, anume că ar fi favorizat interesele regelui mezilor și nu cele ale patriei sale. La fel și Zenon din Elea, condamnat la moarte pentru că a urzit un complot împotriva tiranului străin Nearchos; din spusele lui Plutarh, se știe că nu și-a denunțat nici în fața morții prietenii, dimpotrivă, va acuza exact pe cei din apropierea tiranului și pe acesta din urmă, după care și-a tăiat limba cu dinții, scuipând-o în fața lui Nearchos. Anaxarchos din Abdera, un susținător al filosofiei lui Democrit, devine victima tiranului Nicocreon din Cipru. Aristotel însuși, suspectat de către Demostene și partizanii acestuia ca ar fi un pro-macedonean periculos, se va autoexila la Megara. În definitiv, cum vom vedea, lista Marelui Censor nu cunoaște început și sfârșit.

Diogenes Laertios ne asigură că Theofrast, cel care a fost lăsat de Aristotel scolarh, a sporit mult prestigiul Lyceului. A ajuns chiar să se bucure de simpatia tuturor, având pe atunci «cam două mii de elevi /care/ frecventau cursurile lui». Devenise așadar destul de influent și popular, adică un adevărat concurent pentru liderii cetății. Prin urmare, a fost nevoit «să părăsească Atena pentru câțva timp, atunci când Sophokles, fiul lui Amphiklides, introdusese o lege care interzicea oricărui filosof, sub pedeapsa cu moartea, să conducă o școală fără acordul Consiliului și al poporului. Dar în anul următor, după ce Philon l-a dat în judecată pe Sophokles pentru ilegalitate, filosofii s-au întors /din exil/» (IV, 37. 38). Istoria se petrece, cum știm, la crucea secolelor IV-III înainte de Hristos.

Într-un alt loc al lumii vechi, după aproximativ două secole, Cicero a sesizat bine că Roma imperială nu mai pune

mare pret pe literatură sau pe filosofie, deosebindu-se cu aceasta de vechea Atena. Adevăratul centru al lumii de atunci se voia recunoscut mai curând prin amploarea discuțiilor juridice, puse în slujba puterii sau a imperiului. De fapt, disprețul sau – mai exact – teama fața de o anumită filosofie sunt aici mai vechi: Cato cel Batrân, cu un secol mai devreme, în 156 î.H., după ce asista la o demonstrație dialectică a scepticului Carneades din Cyrene și a înșotitorilor sai, se arata cu totul îngrozit. Grecul venise la Roma ca solie ateniană, în speranța că va obține scutirea cetății Atena de o amendă foarte mare. Conducea pe atunci școala platonician din Atena, aflată în faza ei sceptică. El vine alături de Critolaos din Phaselis, seful școlii aristotelice, și Diogenes din Babilon, seful școlii stoice. Cuvântul lui Critolaos îi lăsa oarecum indiferenți. Cel al lui Diogenes stoicul a fost în parte acceptat, fapt ce anunța începutul influenței stoice asupra romanilor⁹. Singur Carneades își înfricoșează auditoriul prin scepticismul sau nelimitat. Le spune, printre altele, ca noi, oamenii, nu avem nici o posibilitate de a ști dacă afirmațiile noastre sunt realmente adevărate sau false. Nu știm nici măcar dacă valorile pe care le urmăm sunt într-adevăr cele juste. Acest lucru are urmări grave în ceea ce privește relația noastră cu semenii, cu instituțiile timpului pe care ar trebui să le respectăm și chiar cu zeii pe care-i slujim. Nu putem cunoaște adevărul ca atare, dar ne vom conduce în viața practică după acele opinii ce comportă un grad de probabilitate mai mare decât altele. Auzind toate acestea, Cato cel Batrân va înțelege faptul că însuși imperiul sau ar putea sta sub semnul probabilității. El simte imediat pericolul, anume că prezenta filosofilor greci este nocivă pentru cei tineri și pentru gloria imperiului. De aceea, va face tot posibilul ca solii atenieni să parasească Roma cât mai repede. Faptul are destulă importanță, întrucât împăratul era totuși un om cultivat, încheiase în anul 184 scrierea *Origines*, adică prima operă istoriografică în limba latină.

Comentariul lui Cioran la acest episod merita să fie amintit aici. «Imperiile nascându-se tem mai mult ca orice de contaminarea intelectuală, ce vine aproape totdeauna de la popoarele btrâne»¹⁰.

Cam în același timp, în cealaltă parte a lumii, împăratul chinez Shih Huang Ti, a poruncit să fie construit celebrul și înfricoșătorul zid. El s-a autointitulat Prim Împărat și – lucru deosebit de important – a decis să fie arse toate cărțile de înaintea domniei lui. Lumea începea astfel cu sine, urmând să continue la nesfârșit astfel. Scribe despre toate acestea pagini admirabile Jorge Luis Borges, în povestirea *Zidul și cărțile* (cuprinsă în volumul *Alte investigații*, 1952).

Asadar, în forme aparent subtile, interdictul funcționează. Cu puțin timp înainte, de altfel, cultul lui Dionysos fusese interzis la Roma și în întregul spațiu italic. Templele sau zeii apar și dispar de acum după voia stăpânilor acestei lumi. Tot ce nu convine vointei imperiale va fi împins în zona de umbră a istoriei sau desființat pur și simplu. Ar trebui să ne aducem mai des aminte că, în anul 65 d.H., Nero, în urma dejucării unui complot, îl invită pe Seneca, educatorul și ministrul său, să-și taie venele. Faptul că a acceptat moartea cu o seninătate de-a dreptul neomenească nu avea să schimbe nimic din mersul lucrurilor. Probabil că a înțeles din timp acest lucru: în *De tranquillitate animi*, descrie împrejurările în care a murit un filosof contemporan, Canius Iulius, importanță având doar curajul neobișnuit cu care și-a asumat moartea. Tot atunci Nero va decide exilarea unor filosofi stoici sau cinici: Musonius Rufus, care pleacă în insula Gyaros, și Demetrius. Iar în anul 71 d.H., împăratul Flavius Vespasianus îi alungă pe filosofi din Roma, printr-un simplu decret, la propunerea consilierului sau Mucianus; printre cei incluși pe lista condamnaților la exil se află Demetrius, Euphrates și alții. Musonius este protejat de Titus și astfel scos de sub incidența acelui decret¹¹. La fel va proceda, în anul 94, împăratul Domitianus, când o dată cu ceilalți filosofi pleacă din Roma și Epictet, refugiindu-se la Nicopolis în Epir, unde va întemeia o adevărată școală. Nu s-a mai ținut cont nici măcar de faptul că dintre filosofi cei mai mulți erau stoici, tolerați sau chiar necesari pe atunci puterii imperiale. Cel care va sesiza starea precară, de limita, în care a fost adusă filosofia va fi Marcus Aurelius, un adept sincer al gândirii stoice. În anul 176 d.H., el reînființează la Atena patru școli sau catedre: Academia, de tradiție platoniciană, Lyceum, de tradiție aristotelică, Porticul

stoicilor și Gradina epicuriană, ale căror cheltuieli au fost suportate din fondurile imperiale. Doar că gestul restaurator al lui Marcus Aurelius va fi probabil ultimul de acest fel în vechea istorie greco-romană.

Situația perfect ambiguă a filosofului se repetă într-o privință peste secole, o dată cu Boethius. La numai 30 de ani, acesta era recunoscut în întreg imperiul pentru cultura sa științifică și filosofică. Se căsătorește cu Rusticiana, fiica lui Symmachus, om politic avut și influent. Regele got Teodoric, stăpânul de atunci al Imperiului de Apus, îi elogiază cultura și profunzimea minții, reușind astfel să-l atragă de partea sa. În anul 522, în calitate de consul, Boethius va elogia la rândul său, într-un discurs public, personalitatea regelui Teodoric. Peste numai doi ani, același rege, influențat de câțiva supuși interesați, îl va suspecta de înaltă trădare și va decide condamnarea sa la moarte. După ce este închis pentru aproape o jumătate de an, timp în care scrie *De consolazione philosophiae*, Boethius va fi executat asemeni oricărui adversar comun al puterii. Ca și Seneca altădată, Boethius știa bine ce i se poate întâmpla filosofului nesupus. Amintește în acest sens numele celor care au avut mult de suferit, precum Anaxagoras, Socrate și Zenon, dintre greci, iar dintre romani, Canius, Seneca, Paetus Therasia și Soranus – o altă victimă a lui Nero (*De consolazione philosophiae*, cartea I, proza III). «Pe aceștia i-a dus la ruină numai faptul de a fi fost formați în disciplina mea /spune Philosophia, în dialogul ei cu filosoful exilat/ și de a fi avut dorințe cu totul deosebite de ale celor necinstiți» (traducere de David Popescu, 1943). Boethius acuză «rătăcirea mulțimii profane» și răutatea celor aflați în umbra puterii. De fapt, acuza privește în ultimă instanță absența filosofiei sau proasta ei practicare.

Cum stim, Iustinian, ciudatul stăpân al Imperiului Roman de Rasarit, a decis, în anul 529, închiderea definitivă a ultimelor școli filosofice grecești, începând cu cea neoplatoniciană din Atena. Mulți învățați greci pleacă definitiv în exil, unii dintre ei, precum Damascius, Simplicius și Priscian, ajungând până în spațiile stăpânite de regii perși, spre a-și afla abia acolo posibilitatea vorbirii libere. Pentru noul suveran, filosofia greacă era prin excelență simbolul unei lumi

și a unei spiritualități «pagâne», adică disolutive, apte să erodeze noul discurs al puterii. În parte, cel puțin, are oarecare dreptate: neoplatonismul s-a voit un timp locul spiritual de rezistență față de creștinism. Astfel că în anul 303, la Nicomedia, are loc un *Consilium principis*, la care participă mulți dintre intelectualii «păgâni» ai timpului, unii dintre ei destul de influenți, cu intenția de a da un răspuns clar învățăturii creștine. Printre ei se află și Porphir, cunoscutul biograf al lui Plotin și autorul celebrei scrieri *Isagoga*. Ca urmare a întâlnirii de la Nicomedia, împăratul Dioclețian declanșează o prigoană împotriva creștinilor. Disputa se intensifică după 313, când împăratul Constantin se convertește la creștinism și când Iamblichos, un important neoplatonician, întemeiază o școală filosofică în Siria, la Apameea. Împăratul Iulian (361-363), filosof de orientare neoplatoniciană, discipolul lui Maxim din Efes (aflat el însuși în tradiția lui Iamblichos), încurajează și el o serioasă reacție împotriva creștinismului. Efectele acestei reacții se pot vedea până târziu, după anul 400, când înfloresc școlile neoplatoniciene private din Atena și Alexandria (Sirianus, Proclus, Damascius, Hierocles, Hermias, Ammonius, Simplicius, Olympiodor, Philopon și alții). Însă cu decizia fermă a lui Iustinian, se anunța un mare sfârșit, granița dintre două istorii ale aceluiași continent. De fapt, el a interzis celor care nu erau creștini – fie și formal – să mai predea filosofie. Ca urmare, unii filosofi se convertesc formal la creștinism, de exemplu, Ioan Philopon, obținând astfel dreptul de a preda filosofie. Tot Iustinian va fi cel care, printr-un alt decret, interzice faptul că atare al interpretării. Interdicția privește înainte de toate interpretarea textelor juridice și istorice. O asemenea întâmplare, cât se poate de stranie, încă nu mai cunoscuse istoria Europei până atunci.

Exemplul lui Iustinian a fost reluat de către împăratul Constantin al III-lea care, în 648, pentru a liniști spiritele unor iubitori de controverse, dă un decret prin care interzice orice discuție cu privire la faptul dacă în Hristos există una sau două energii, una sau două voințe. Puțin mai înainte, împăratul Heraclius (610-641), ca să rezolve aceeași chestiune, impune o singură interpretare din câte erau în discuție atunci,

anume monotelismul (după care în Hristos s-ar afla o singură voință). Caută să-i atragă și pe alții către monotelism. Or, ceea ce a impus împăratul nu mai putea fi combătut decât cu riscuri totale. Un astfel de risc și-a asumat atunci Maxim Mărturisitorul. El are curajul să combată monotelismul ca erezie, spunând că deși este vorba în Hristos de o singură persoană, există în fapt două naturi, divină și umană, și în consecință două voințe și energii. Pentru această îndrăzneală a sa, Maxim Mărturisitorul este arestat, i se taie limba și mâna dreaptă, ca să nu mai vorbească și să nu mai scrie împotriva celor decise de instanța imperială. Și, să nu uităm, este vorba de unul din cei mai importanți scriitori din întreaga istorie spirituală a Europei; cu scrierile și interpretările sale (*Centurii despre dragoste, Ambigua, Răspunsuri către Talasie* și altele), a exercitat o mare influență în lumea gândirii teologice și filosofice până astăzi.

Nu este greu de sesizat în șirul exemplelor de mai sus că, de la Pythagora la Ioan Philopon, școli întregi de filosofie suportă excesele unor ideologii dominante. Este vorba de condamnarea la tăcere, la exil sau la moarte.

4. Cenzura ca instanță modernă

În secolele ce au urmat lui Iustinian, condiția filosofiei este adesea destul de ambiguă. Învățătura creștină este considerată la un moment dat singura și adevărata filosofie (lucru menționat cu claritate de Clement din Alexandria). Ea numește acum un nou mod de viață, cel prin care se exprimă nevoia de perfecțiune a sufletului creștin.

Situația vechii filosofii se schimbă mult, uneori din cauza unor simple neînțelegeri. Un fapt important însă îl reprezintă despărțirea ei treptată, ca reflecție, de modul de viață în care s-a exprimat altădată, fie acesta epicureic, platonician sau stoic. «Anumite moduri de viață filosofice, proprii diferitelor școli ale Antichității, au dispărut definitiv, de exemplu, epicureismul; altele, ca stoicismul sau platonismul, au fost asimilate de modul de viață creștin. Dacă este adevărat că, până la un punct, modul de viață monastic s-a numit «filosofic» în Evul Mediu, nu putem totuși nega faptul că

acest mod de viață, deși cuprindea exercițiile spirituale proprii filosofiilor antice, a fost separat de discursul filosofic de care fusese legat mai înainte. Au supraviețuit deci doar discursurile filosofice ale anumitor școli antice, preponderent cele ale platonismului și aristotelismului; dar, separate de modurile de viață ce le-a inspirat, au ajuns la rangul unui simplu material conceptual utilizabil în controversele teologice. „Filosofia”, pusă astfel în serviciul teologiei, nu avea să mai fie de aici înainte decât un discurs teoretic și, după ce filosofia modernă își va cuceri autonomia, în secolul XVII și mai ales în secolul XVIII, ea va avea mereu tendința să se limiteze la acest punct de vedere¹². Fenomenul, mult mai complicat decât credem, trebuie pus în legătură așadar cu evoluția creștinismului în lumea occidentală: instituționalizare excesivă, prezența sa în sfera puterii și în universitățile timpului. Francesco Suarez va vorbi târziu despre filosofie ca «servă a divinei teologii» (*Disputationes Metaphysicae*, 1695). El are în vedere filosofia aristotelică, adaptată deja controverselor creștine o dată cu scolastica secolului XIII. Doar că sintagma ca atare, *philosophia sive ancilla theologiae*, are în spate o lungă istorie a relației celor două experiențe spirituale. Cu mult timp în urmă, Philon din Alexandria considerase științele timpului său în felul unei slave a filosofiei («identifică aceste științe cu Agar, sclava egipteană cu care Avraam trebuie să se unească înainte de a accede la unirea cu Sara, soția sa»); iar filosofia, la rândul ei, «o sclavă a înțelepciunii, înțelepciunea sau adevărata filosofie fiind, pentru Philon, Cuvântul lui Dumnezeu revelat prin Moise». Ideea va fi reluată de către Clement din Alexandria, Origen și alții¹³. Cu anumite modificări, revine până la începutul secolului XVII, la Suarez și epigonii săi.

Așadar, cenzura filosofiei va cunoaște câteva mari forme: despărțirea discursului filosofic de modul de viață pe care l-a justificat inițial; instrumentalizarea acestui discurs (fiind selectate și folosite, la nevoie, doar acele părți ale sale care se dovedeau utile disputelor teologice); și indexarea operelor filosofice socotite periculoase. Această din urmă formă va deveni o adevărată instituție în vremea de glorie a iezuiților. Iar filosofia indexată ajunge echivalentă unei erezii. Efectele

târzii ale acestei situații sunt destul de ciudate: filosofia modernă se transformă în discurs teoretic (și rămâne astfel chiar și după ce, în secolele XVII-XVIII, redevine autonomă); se nasc două specii noi, anume filosofia eretică, pe de o parte, și cenzura ca gen literar, pe de altă parte. Această din urmă specie, cu intenție pedagogică, are un reprezentant notoriu în episcopul Pierre-Daniel Huet, cel care, în 1689, publică lucrarea *Censura philosophiae cartesianae*.

Să fac o mențiune în acest loc, deși nu e singura ce ar trebui făcută. Echivalarea adevăratei cunoașteri, *sapientia*, cu teologia revelată va conduce, în mintea unora, la ideea inutilității filosofiei de tip socratic sau aporetic. Aproape totul se datorează însă unei neînțelegeri. Se deschide astfel seria unor lungi discuții cu privire la cel mai bun regim ancilar al filosofiei, ca și cum aceasta ar trebui să urmeze fatalmente modele străine felului ei propriu de argumentare. Cei care au dedus de aici că filosofia ar fi fost obligată atunci doar la condiția simplei servituți uită pur și simplu ca scriitorul creștin nu acorda termenului *ancilla* un sens comun, negativ, care să afecteze neapărat demnitatea celui care slujește și deopotrivă iubirea celui slujit.

Dincolo însă de această neînțelegere, multe scrieri filosofice vor fi trecute în Index-ul cărților interzise, întocmit în 1559, sub pontificatul lui Paul IV, cel care a reorganizat Inchiziția în lumea occidentală. Ceea ce înseamnă că istoria ereziei privește și alte forme de expresie spirituală decât cea propriu zis religioasă. Ca să dau un singur exemplu, în 1663, scrierile lui Descartes sunt trecute în teribilul Index; în 1667, predarea filosofiei cartesiene este interzisă în Franța, decizia fiind luată în ultimă instanță chiar de Louis XIV; în 1687, Bossuet, într-o epistolă către D'Allemands, discipolul lui Malebranche, descrie pericolul uriaș pe care filosofia lui Descartes îl prezintă pentru învățătura Bisericii. Reacții asemănătoare au, în aceeași epocă, Voetius, Le Maistre de Sacy și Du Vancel. După cum consemnează Baillet, biograful lui Descartes, Voetius este foarte riguros și exact în ceea ce susține, numind în șapte puncte importante dezacordul prăpăstios dintre cartesianism și credința creștină («Această filosofie este periculoasă, favorabilă scepticismului, aptă să distrugă credința

noastră în sufletul rațional, misterul Sfintei Treimi, întruparea lui Iisus Hristos, păcatul originar, miracolele și profețiile»). Chiar dacă ar fi avut dreptate sub aspect istoric sau dogmatic, lucru posibil de altfel, Voetius ar fi trebuit să urmeze totuși, în reacția sa, îndemnul celui care a lăsat spre meditație, printre altele, pilda samariteanului milostiv. Doar că istoria înaintea pe alte căi decât cele pe care le dorim sau le așteptăm noi.

Cazul Descartes este elocvent și sub alt aspect, anume complicitatea modernă între ideologii aparent cu totul străine una de alta, religioasă, științifică și politică. Cum am văzut, episcopul de Avranches, Pierre-Daniel Huet, va publica, în 1689, o scriere intitulată *Censura philosophiae cartesianae*; Voltaire, în *Scrisori filosofice* (1734), invocând filosofia politică engleză, va vorbi despre caracterul speculativ și inutil al tradiției cartesiene (imaginație excesivă, voință de sistem ce conduce către «un roman ingenios, cel mult verosimil, pentru filosofii ignoranți din acea vreme», va spune în *Scrisoarea XIV*); iar D'Alembert, în *Discurs preliminar* (la *Tratatul de dinamică*, 1743), pune în discuție fizica lui Descartes raportând-o la cea newtoniană. Va reuși astfel să o discrediteze, chiar dacă mai târziu se va dovedi că argumentele sale nu au valabilitate științifică.

Așa cum vedem, ideologii radical diferite reușesc în scurt timp să ducă la unul și același efect, adică să-l cenzureze complet pe Descartes. Filosoful nu s-a gândit, cred, niciodată la o astfel de posteritate ciudată și severă. În scrisorile către părintele Mersenne sau către prințesa Elisabeth, în câteva locuri din *Discurs*, VI, unde își explicitează intențiile cercetărilor sale, dar și în sugestiile de lectură pe care le face – cu o bună dispoziție – cititorului (a se vedea *Scrisoarea către abatele Picot*, ce însoțește versiunea în franceză a tratatului *Principia philosophiae*), el nu bănuiește nimic în legătură cu forța devastatoare ce o va avea mai târziu lectura ideologică a paginilor sale. Deși, cel puțin în două locuri din *Discurs*, VI, pare să presimtă totuși ceva în acest sens. Știe că deja câțiva dintre oamenii citați și cu autoritate «au dezaprobat o opinie din fizică, publicată cu puțin timp înainte de altcineva». Și adaugă imediat: «nu aș vrea să spun că mă atașasem de ea, dar nici nu observasem înaintea aprecierii critice a acelor

ceva care să poată da de bănuț sau să fie dăunător religiei sau statului și de aici că m-ar fi împiedicat să o cercetez, dacă rațiunea m-ar fi convins că este adevărată; acest lucru m-a făcut să mă tem ca nu cumva printre ideile mele să fie descoperită vreuna prin care eu într-adevăr să fi greșit». După câteva pagini vorbește cu destulă simplitate despre cenzură. «Dar, arareori s-a întâmplat să mi se obiecteze ceva care să nu fi prevăzut eu în nici un fel, exceptând ceva ce ar fi fost foarte îndepărtat de argumentul meu; astfel încât nu am dat peste nici un cenzor al opiniilor mele care să nu mi se pară fie mai puțin riguros, fie mai puțin echitabil decât mine însumi». Din nefericire, ceva destul de îndepărtat de argumentul său, cum singur spune, vor găsi cenzorii săi puțin mai târziu și îl vor judeca pe Descartes așa cum acesta nu-și putea imagina atunci singur.

Omul modern, sub fascinatia matematicii și a științelor naturii, îi cere filosofiei să egaleze aceste științe în privința rigorii logice. Fapt pe care ea, în imensul ei orgoliu, îl încearcă de câteva ori. Să ne gândim în acest sens doar la cei care, asemeni lui Descartes și Leibniz, au trait toată viața cu ideea unei posibile *mathesis universalis*. Afli vorbindu-se astfel despre filosofie ca «știința adevărată», «știința a principiilor întregii cunoașteri», «fundament al oricărei științe» sau, în cele din urmă, «știința a științelor». Nici macar romanticii nu au putut evita aceasta obsesie a lumii moderne. Schelling, de pildă, dezvoltă multe argumente spre a sustine că filosofia este o adevărată știință, mai exact știința suprema, întrucât are ca obiect de cercetare absolutul înșusi. Ea ar tinde să descopere absolutul exact în felul în care acesta se descopera pe sine în istorie. Dar nu va încerca oare până și poezia nouă, cu Mallarmé de pildă, să devină o stranie știință? Doar că timpul marilor ideologii îi va cere filosofiei să se legitimeze în orice privință, ca meditație în proximitatea teologiei, ca știință și ca etică istorică a unei comunități.

Adevăratul dezastru avea să vină însă mai târziu, în posteritatea de stânga a lui Hegel. Filosofia intra în jocul unor ideologii de o violență cum nu a mai cunoscut continentul european până atunci. În unele versiuni ale ei ea ajunge pur și simplu o *ancilla ideologiae*, fenomen de care cu greu se mai

poate elibera. Este cel de-al treilea și ultimul ei regim ancilar, după cel scolastic (*ancilla theologiae*) și cel modern timpuriu (*ancilla scientiae*). Situația din urmă pare să fie cea mai gravă; ea s-a prelungit până astăzi, numind unul din marile excese ale secolului XX. În definitiv, este vorba de un fapt ce a reușit să atingă în timp delirul ca atare.

5. Timpul penitenței abnorme

Din câte știu, ideologia marxista, cu ceea ce s-a numit «dictatura a proletariatului», este prima ideologie din istoria recentă ce pune sub semnul întrebării orice formă liberă de gândire. Întreaga istorie a gândirii europene avea să fie citită ca preistorie infantilă sau ezitantă a marxismului, lectura începută deja în două scrieri mai vechi, *Ideologia germană* (1846) și *Manifestul partidului comunist* (1848). Exact aici aflăm modelul cenzurii ca *Diktat*, un dispozitiv în mare măsură arbitrar, inițial în serviciul dictaturii de clasă, apoi al dictaturii rasiale sau etnice. Cum știm, acest fenomen încă nu a luat sfârșit.

În noua ordine a discursului, vor fi socotite ca juste doar acele argumente care legitimează o anumită putere politică. Așa s-a întâmplat, cum știm, în Rusia sovietică, chiar de la bun început. Un analist al acestui fenomen, Vladimir Malahov, redă succint episodul final¹⁴. «Spre deosebire de literatură, filosofia nu a beneficiat /în Rusia sovietică/ de un spațiu unitar. În Rusia sovietică nu se practica «filosofia rusă». Filosofia rusă, adică tradiția filosofică de la Soloviev la așa numita renaștere filosofico-religioasă de la granița dintre secole, a fost evacuată din țară pe două vapoare. Am în vedere expulzarea, în 1922, a aproximativ 150 de intelectuali remarcabili. În această perioadă, a părăsit țara marea majoritate a gânditorilor de valoare. Aproape toți dintre ei au reușit, într-o măsură mai mare sau mai mică, să se integreze în viața culturală a țărilor în care s-au stabilit, mai ales în Germania și Franța /Nicolai Losski, Semen Frank, Ivan Iliin, Nicolai Berdiaev, Lev Șestov, Serghei Bulgakov, Feodor Stepun ș.a./... Dintre marii filosofi, în Rusia au rămas Pavel Florenski și Gustav Spet. Amândoi au fost nevoiți să renunțe la

activitatea filosofică încă din anii 20. Amândoi au fost împușcați».

Distanța sau rezistența față de această ideologie era rezolvată cel mai adesea prin detenție, închisoarea devenind noul loc istoric de penitență. La noi, au fost nevoiți să suporte această decizie numeroși intelectuali, mai cunoscuți fiind Mircea Vulcanescu, Constantin Noica, Nichifor Crainic, Sandu Tudor (între 1950-1952, apoi condamnat la 25 de ani de închisoare, sfârșindu-și zilele la Aiud), Dumitru Stăniloae, Ion Petrovici, Sergiu Al-Gheorghe, Nicolae Steinhardt, Petre Țuțea, Radu Enescu, Vasile Netea, Traian Brăileanu, Horia Cosmovici, Constantin Voicescu, Petru Caraman, Valeriu Streinu, Virgil Stancovici, Teodor Enescu, Ovid Densusianu, Remus Niculescu, Gheorghe Calciu (a doua detenție între 1979 și 1984), Ion D. Sârbu, Traian Herseni, Nicolae Margineanu, Nicolae Petrescu, Petre Botezatu, Anton Dumitriu, Ștefan Augustin Doinaș, Alexandru Paleologu, Traian Gheorghiu, Alexandru Claudian, Petre Pandrea, Virgil Bogdan, Victor Isac, Titus Mocanu, Nicolae Balota, Adrian Marino, Alexandru Zub, Mihai Ursachi, Paul Caravia și mulți alții. Firesc ar fi să ne amintim mai des de tot ce li s-a întâmplat acestor oameni atât în anii de până la încheierea păcii, cât și după aceea, în deceniile terorii. Deși acuzațiile care li s-au adus erau de regulă aceleași, situația fiecăruia este totuși distinctă, făcând necesară o judecată sau o înțelegere diferită de la un caz la altul¹⁵. Unii dintre ei au plătit cu propria viață curajul de a gândi în chip liber. Același curaj le-a adus altora, după 1946, un gen de exil interior sau obligația tacerii: Constantin Radulescu-Motru, Lucian Blaga, Vasile Bancila, Vasile Lovinescu, Petru Comarnescu, Eugeniu Sperantia, Theofil Simenschi, Radu Stoichita, Nicolae Bagdasar, Andrei Scrima, Alexandru Dragomir, Nicolae Calota, Ernest Stere sau Liviu Rusu. Destinul lor nu a mai putut fi cel pe care si l-au dorit sau pentru care au urmat o formă clasică de inițiere culturală. Câțiva s-au salvat, dacă despre salvare poate fi vorba, prin exil voluntar în Occident sau aiurea.

Așadar, obligația tacerii pentru cel care a dorit să vorbească liber putea fi dusă ușor la limită sau extrema, limită

ce a coincis cu moartea însăși. La noi acest destin l-au cunoscut mulți intelectuali, unul din ei fiind Mircea Vulcanescu. Totul s-a întâmplat în anul 1952. Împlinise 48 de ani când, la 25 octombrie, la Aiud, a părăsit cu o nefirească seninătate această lume. Cum tradusesse cu pasiune din Rilke, mereu i-a fost gândul la un vers pe care, în anii detenției, l-a rescris de nenumărate ori: «Dă fiecăruia, Doamne, moartea lui!». Nu știm dacă Mircea Vulcănescu a avut într-adevăr parte de moartea care i se cuvenea, știm însă că a făcut dovada unei vieți de o demnitate rar întâlnită la noi.

O data cu aceasta teribila forma de penitenta, institutiile academice au fost supuse unei corectii radicale. Noul gest îl egaleaza într-o privinta pe cel al împaratului Iustinian: învățământul filosofic a fost interzis fără nici o justificare sau pervertit pâna în radacini. De exemplu, la Iasi si la Cluj el a fost suspendat pentru aproape zece ani, din 1948 pâna în 1957. Iar la Bucuresti, a fost transformat în simpla initiere ideologica, sub motive lesne de înțeles. Așadar, timp de aproape 170 de ani de învățământ filosofic academic (început, cum știm, la Academia Mihăileană din Iași), acesta a fost întrerupt o singură dată, în 1948, și atunci din motive doar politice. Marturiile, în acest sens, cu privire atât la masinaria perfida a cenzurii cât si la violenta institutionala fata de actul cultural, dupa 1945, devin tot mai numeroase¹⁶. Ele ne aduc în fata fenomene care, pur si simplu, tind sa scape oricarei înțelegeri omenesti.

Greu se vor stinge în viata noastra efectele ascunse ale unor astfel de întâmplari. Din pacate, ele au durat decenii de-a rândul, adica suficient de mult ca sa mai poată fi ușor uitate. Si atâta vreme cât nu pot fi uitate, ceea ce au atins profund în timp nu cunoaste o deplină vindecare.

Daca ma gândesc bine, e absolut riscant sa apropii ideologia Diktat-ului, cu forta ei neobisnuita de cenzura, de alte ideologii moderne. Spun aceasta întrucât unul din analistii fenomenului, anume Eric Voegelin, situeaza marxismul în proximitatea unor orientari moderne care ar fi atinse de spiritul vechilor gnoze¹⁷. Doar ca spre deosebire de doctrinele gnostice, marxismul respinge în maniera frusta si violenta orice mod de perceptie a transcendentei. Iar fata de unele

ideologii moderne, cum ar fi cea proprie miscarii luministe, el subordoneaza argumentul rational vointei primitive de putere. La fel se va întâmpla și cu alte ideologii totalitare. De altfel, Voegelin sesizeaza bine ca «socialismul stiintific» s-a voit înainte de toate o *Weltmacht*, o putere cu pretentii nelimitate asupra vietii istorice. Este vorba pentru început de un nihilism practicat – sub aspect social – de grupuri pentru care teroarea reprezintă un instrument cotidian de acțiune. Textul cel mai elocvent si mai terifiant în aceasta privinta ramâne, cum am spus, *Manifestul partidului comunist*, din 1848, chiar daca unii exegeti de astazi îl trec intentionat sub tacere. El descrie pur si simplu o forma a terorismului de stat, justificând în istorie lupta pe viaa si pe moarte, crima ca atare. Cel care o practica nu mai recunoaste nimic în afara credintei sau a vointei sale. Nu mai accepta ca valabil aproape nimic din lunga traditie culturala si civica a omului european. Ceea ce a justificat în timp avea să fie egalat, în secolul XX, doar de acele ideologii care, fixate pe elementul rasial, dețin ca ultimă soluție, în ceea ce privește eficiența lor, însăși dispariția celuiilalt.

¹ Cf. Voința de putere. Încercare de transmutare a tuturor valorilor (Fragmente postume), traducere de Claudiu Băciu, 1999, p. 317. În același loc, Nietzsche adaugă: «Fiecare instinct este o formă a setei de a domina. Fiecare își are perspectiva proprie pe care urmărește s-o impună ca normă tuturor celorlalte».

² Eseuri de hermeneutică (1986), traducere de Vasile Tonoiu, 1995, p. 214.

³ Ibidem, p. 207. Ricoeur ne face atenți la câteva mari capcane în discutarea fenomenului ideologic: credința că ideologia este doar o funcție a dominației, adică doar un fenomen negativ; credința că există o singură funcție a ideologiei (cum ar fi cea de dominație, sau de justificare și disimulare a apartenenței la un grup etc.); nu mai puțin, credința că «ideologia este gândirea adversarului meu, gândirea celui alt; el n-o știe, eu însă o știu; or, problema este dacă există un punct de vedere asupra acțiunii care să fie capabil să se sustragă condiției ideologice a cunoașterii angajate în praxis» (pp. 205-206).

⁴ Ibidem, pp. 207-210.

⁵ Cicero folosește des expresia vulgo ostendere, cu înțelesul de «a se arăta în public»; sau disciplinam in vulgum efferre, «a răspândi învățătura în popor». Celsus, Hieronymus și alții vorbesc în același sens despre o editio vulgata. O expresie des folosită a fost vulgo audio, «aud, de regulă, zicându-se».

⁶ Cf. în acest sens Andrei Cornea, Platon. Filosofie și cenzura, Humanitas, 1995, având ca repere, printre altele, Leo Strauss, Persecution and the Art of Writing, 1952; The City and Man, 1964; Karl Popper, The Open Society and Its Enemies, 1957.

⁷ Se referă la acest gen de cenzură, socotind-o extrem de violentă, capabilă – atunci când devine autocenzură – de scindarea totală a subiectului, Michel Foucault, în Les techniques de soi, text cuprins în Dits et écrits, Gallimard, 1994. Există aici câteva referiri speciale la practica mărturisirii, exagoreusis, în mediile monastice din primele secole creștine.

⁸ Ar fi cât se poate de firesc acum să luăm din nou în seamă faptul că Iisus, cum ni se spune în locul mai sus invocat, nu se vede pe sine niciodată singur. Mărturia sa nu este singulară și nici doar istorică, parțială. La fel și judecata pe care o face («Și chiar dacă Eu judec, judecata Mea este adevărată, pentru că nu sunt singur, ci Eu și Cel care M-a trimis pe Mine»; VIII. 16). Adevărul ca atare nu poate să aparțină unei voințe singulare sau unei singure lumi (VIII. 23, 28-29). Din aceste motive voi crede că schema de bază a cenzurii nu este neapărat o schemă de tip religios: puterea temporală sau istorică are suficiente resurse ideologice pentru a genera o astfel de schemă în orice epocă și în orice loc.

⁹ Relația dintre filosofia stoică și puterea imperială romană este profundă, complicată și de durată: stoicul Panetius (aproximativ 144 î. H.) va fi

admis în cercul familiei Scipio; stoicul Blossius inspiră reformele sociale ale lui Tiberius Gracchus, cam în aceeași perioadă; Quintus Mucius Scaevola și Rutilius Rufus sunt importanți oameni de stat ce adoptă învățătura stoică, în jurul anului 100 î. H., la fel și Canton din Utica, recunoscut mai târziu ca filosof. Și, evident, mulți alții.

¹⁰ Caiete, III (1967-1972), traducere din franceză de Emanoil Marcu și Vlad Russo, 1999, p. 98.

¹¹ Faptul ca atare este invocat de Michel Foucault, în Hermeneutica subiectului. Cursuri la Collège de France (1981-1982), traducere de Bogdan Ghiu, Iași, 2004, pp. 405-406 și 413-414, cu comentarea unor practici ascetice descrise într-un fragment rămas de la Musonius Rufus. Nu cumva regimurile politice arbitrare și severe, de felul celor din vremea lui Seneca, au constituit un motiv în plus în extinderea atitudinii stoice printre intelectualii de atunci? Ar trebui probabil revăzută situația figurii stoice în lumea modernă și, mai cu seamă, în secolul XX, cu precădere în estul Europei.

¹² Cf. Pierre Hadot, Ce este filosofia antică?, traducere de George Bondor și Claudiu Tipuriță, prefată de Cristian Bădiliță, Iași, Polirom, 1997, pp. 275-276.

¹³ Ibidem, p. 277. «Conform lui Philon și Origen, artele liberale erau o propedeutică la filosofia greacă, iar filosofia greacă, o propedeutică la filosofia revelată. Dar încetul cu încetul, etapele de pregătire au avut tendința să se schimbe. De exemplu, atunci când Augustin din Hippona, în a sa De doctrina christiana, enumeră cunoștințele profane necesare exegetului creștin, el pune practic pe același plan artele liberale, ca matematicile sau dialectica, și filosofia. Regăsim această uniformizare la începutul Evului Mediu, în epoca carolingiană, la Alcuin. Din secolul IX până în secolul XII, filosofia greacă, grație unor opere ale lui Platon, Aristotel și Porfir, cunoscute prin intermediul unor traduceri și comentarii realizate la sfârșitul Antichității de Boetius, Macrobius și Martianus Capella, va continua să fie utilizată, ca în timpul Părinților Bisericii, în dezbaterile teologice, ce servesc și la elaborarea unei reprezentări a lumii» (pp. 278-279).

¹⁴ Cf. articolul Este posibilă filosofia în rusă?, traducere în română de Lia Tociu, în Timpul, nr. 3, 1998, Iași; o primă versiune apare în limba rusă, în 1922, apoi o alta în Deutsche Zeitschrift für Philosophie, în 1994.

¹⁵ Paginile cu caracter documentar semnate de Ion Bălan (Regimul concentraționar din România. 1945-1964, în colecția Biblioteca Sighet, Editura Fundației Academia Civică, 2000), Andrei Scrima (Timpul rugului aprins. Maestrul spiritual în tradiția răsăriteană, Humanitas, 2000, îndeosebi pp. 101-163), Ioan Opriș (Cercuri culturale disidente, Editura Univers Enciclopedic, 2001) sau Paul Caravia (Gândirea interzisă. Scrieri cenzurate - România: 1945-1989, volum prefătat de Virgil Cândea, 2000; Biserica întemnitată. România: 1944-1989, volum realizat împreună cu

Virgil Constantinescu și Florin Stănescu, 1998) și alții oferă multe date în acest sens.

¹⁶ Cf. ultimele scrieri ale lui Adrian Marino, *Îndeosebi Cenzura în România. Schiță istorică introductivă*, Editura AIUS, Craiova, 2000, ca și cele semnate de Al. Zub (*Orizont închis. Istoriografia româna sub dictatura*, Iași, Institutul European, 2000), Lidia Vianu (*Censorship in Romania*, Budapeșta, Central European University Press, 1998), Marian Petcu (*Puterea și cultura. O istorie a cenzurii*, Iași, Polirom, 1998), Vasile Manea (*Preoți ortodocși în închisorile comuniste*, 2000), Ruxandra Cesereanu (*Panopticum. Tortura politică în secolul XX*, Institutul European, Iași, 2001) și altele. Revista *Contrast*, nr. 10-11-12, 2002, este dedicată în întregime acestui fenomen, alăturându-se astfel acelor publicații care au socotit că instituția cenzurii privește în chip esențial această istorie în care ne situăm și că ea necesită o discuție mai extinsă.

¹⁷ *The New Science of Politics. An Introduction*, 1952; *Wissenschaft, Politik und Gnosis*, 1959. Idei asemănătoare susține Ernst Topitsch în *Sozialphilosophie zwischen Ideologie und Wissenschaft*, 1961. Asimilarea ideologiei marxiste cu o gnoză s-ar justifica, în cazul lui Eric Voegelin, prin accepțiunea radical negativă pe care o acordă gnozelor. Ioan Petru Culianu

a sesizat bine acest lucru în *Gnozele dualiste ale Occidentului* (XII. 6, «Gnosticismul ca model analog»), de unde voi relua un singur fragment. «Geniul camuflajului scriptural este însă Calvin: opera lui “poate fi considerată primul Coran gnostic pus la punct în mod deliberat” (prin Coran, Voegelin înțelege un digest care face inutil recursul la vreo cunoaștere anterioară). Calvin desăvârșește ruptura în interiorul tradiției intelectuale occidentale. Alte rupturi, alte Coranuri: Enciclopedia lui Diderot și D’Alembert, operele lui Auguste Comte și Marx, “literatura patristică a leninism-stalinismului”. Caracterul coranic al tuturor acestor lucrări implică excluderea activă a tot ce ele își propun să înlocuiască. Deja nici Reforma nu funcționase după legea argumentului și persuasiunii. Adevărul ei era imuabil și indiscutabil – ea este o societate totalitară. Totalitarismul înseamnă într-adevăr împlinirea căutării gnostice a unei teologii civile. Astăzi, gnosticismul, imanentizare a eschatonului creștin, se manifestă în două forme distincte: marxismul, cea mai explicită și mai grosolană, și “occidentalizarea”, ce implică nimicirea “adevărului sufleteș” și disprețul pentru problema existenței» (referințele sunt la scrierea lui Voegelin, *The New Science of Politics. An Introduction*, ediția 1974, pp. 111-178).

Does a system of ideologies really exist ? A comparative approach to five ideological ideal-types*

Dan Andrei Ilas

Faculty of Philosophy, A. I. Cuza University, Iasi, Romania
Email: andan_i@yahoo.com

This article intends to show that ideology is always organized systemically by undertaking the opposition between conformity and diversity as its fundamental criterion. In order to underpin this hypothesis, the present article examines the inner structure of five classic ideologies, that can be understood as ideal ideological types. The analysis reveals that ideologies do not form a system because at the core of any ideology there is a key-concept not determined nor influenced by the key concepts of other ideologies

Introduction

One of the tasks assumed by political science is that of defining, delimiting and analyzing the fundamental features of different parties. In order to reveal such features, different structures and functions are examined.

Taking into consideration that every party is built upon an ideology, one may wonder whether a party system – *ceteris paribus* – is sustained by an ideological system. The initial goal of this research was to establish the existence and the particularities of the causal relationship existing between systems of parties and system of ideologies. The conclusion reached was that such ideological systems do not exist. So,

Key words:

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ideological ideal-types,
ideological system,
diversity/conformity

the question : do political ideologies determine the emergence of ideological systems? Our hypothesis is that the answer to this question is affirmative.

Studying ideologies: irregularities and tendencies

Any non-descriptive approach to ideology encounters numerous difficulties that make both the method and the results obtained questionable.

The first difficulty worth mentioning and, maybe, the most important, might be expressed as follows: there are no ideologies, only ideologists. Therefore, it is easier to offer a scientific analysis of J. St. Mill's liberalism, or of Edmund Burke's conservatism, than one regarding liberal or conservative ideology.

Secondly, due to various reasons, the thought of ideologists is fluctuant. Thus, an ideologist usually passes from theoretical refinement to writings of popularization when immediate political goals demand it. It is hence adequate to take into account the difference between vast, theoretical texts as "German Ideology" or "The Capital" and a synthetic, propagandistic one, such as "Manifesto of the Communist Party".

Thirdly, ideologies are altered by the socio-political contexts in which they are engaged. The struggle for power can determine ideas that are endorsed by liberals in a certain state to become part of a conservative ideology elsewhere.

Another difficulty arises from the fact that some ideologies might be considered "weak ideologies". For example, nationalism can be a dimension of any ideology, when the construction of nation state¹ is pursued. Some ideologies seem to be destined to remain peripheral or even to be rejected from the public space. It is difficult to believe that anarchism will ever be able to produce parties with solid structures, capable to engage themselves the fight for power. In addition, it is likely that any ideology militating for gaining power through the use of force, will, in the end, be declared illegal.

As a corollary, we may assert that any ideology is nothing but a "camouflage" for the desire for power. Consequently,

the colour of this camouflage will be changed rather in accordance with the context than with the intimate options of the combatants. Such a view, however appealing it may be due to its accuracy, is still a simplistic one, because it does not take into consideration the intelligence and beliefs of the individual political actor.

Therefore, many scholars prefer to see ideology not merely as a means of gaining power but rather as a body of ideas which can help us gain a direction within society. Thus, Paul Ricoeur considers the ideological phenomena as being able to receive a relatively positive appreciation, if the so-called Aristotelian thesis of the multiplicity of levels is to be maintained².

The attempt of "unmasking" the ideological and revealing its substantiality is also present in Anton Carpinschi's concerns to identify certain tendencies and regularities of the dynamics of contemporary doctrines, such as: the expansion of the doctrinarian universe, the convergence of doctrines, the curving of the doctrinarian space, symmetry, action and reaction, the lack of vacuum, or the relativity and the interchangeability of certain doctrinarian features and dimensions³.

Within a multidimensional but also limited political space, these features emphasize the fact that ideologies are interacting with one another, suggesting that they might be considered parts of an ideology system. Moreover, using the hologram principle⁴ within a complexity paradigm, we may conclude that each ideology is, in its own turn, a system.

Consequently, in order to prove whether an ideology system exists or not, we must first build ideology as a system.

Ideology as a system

Having emerged in the middle of the twentieth century, the systemic paradigm has suffered many adjustment processes. "Classical" systemic theory, which was founded on cybernetics, seemed to become, in the early 70's, during postmodern controversies, inadequate.

Coming from different fields, such as anthropology, ethnology or biology, a number of authors⁵ tried to modify the

mechanical approach, by emphasizing the importance of the human nature and human societies' development. Later on, other authors⁶ developed the systemic theory towards complexity and self-poetic systems. More recently, research of human organization as self-organized criticality⁷ has been proposed.

As, at present, systemic paradigm does not offer only one theory but a set of theories, specifications concerning the types of theories are required.

Looking for a systemic theory, I first focused on the one proposed by I. P. Culianu in *The Dualistic Gnosés of the Occident*⁸. Observing that "once in motion, the system has the tendency to exhaust all its potentialities"⁹, Culianu elaborated a method that is not interested in the historical evolution of a system, but which attempts to discover whether all the logical options virtually inherent to the system are reached or not.

These logical options become possible due to a first operation, which "consists in setting two divinities in the place of one"¹⁰, and represents the foundation of any gnosis. This first operation contains two sequences: the question and then the answer sequence. In the case of gnosis, the answer to the question "how many divinities?" is two. This answer differentiates gnosis from other religious trends, and constitutes what I. P. Culianu calls *its generating principle*.

Analogically, we shall consider that each ideology is based on a first operation, which confers its generating principle. Thus, any ideology starts with a question concerning the founding principle of any society. It also gives an answer to this question, by identifying the fundamental value on which all future construction is based.

In order to understand how to construct an ideological system, starting from this generating principle, I shall invoke Niklas Luhmann's works. Being preoccupied by self-poetic systems, N. Luhmann considers that the accent must not be put anymore on the system's unity, but on the difference between environment and system¹¹.

Thus, every social system is continuously creating itself and self-differentiating from the environment, through a characteristic binary code. "The code is the form through which

the system distinguishes itself from the environment and organizes its own operative closure"¹². As examples, N. Luhmann brought: profitable – non-profitable in economics, legal – illegal in law, action – inaction in politics, etc. Taking into account that this code refers to the way in which the system "thinks" and not to the result of its actions, it can be inferred that there are pairs of opposite types of logic: the logic of the profitable and the logic of the non-profitable, the logic of the legal and the logic of the illegal, etc. Obviously, the term *logic* is here used in its weakest meaning: well organized assertions, constructed on a set of postulates.

But what would the right code be for an ideology system?

Considering that ideologies are systems of ideas that aim to put order in the behavior of society and of individuals, I believe that they are built on the *diversity/conformity code*. Thus, a society might wish to achieve either a sort of order in multiplicity, an order of disorder, based on the logic of diversity, that is divergence through the acceptance of imperfection and multiplicity, or a order in uniformity, order of orders, based on the logic of conformity, which is convergence in the seeking of perfection. Defined in such manner, the logic of diversity and the one of conformity are mutually exclusive and seem to be capable to cover the whole ideological thinking¹³.

In conclusion, the concept of ideology as a functional system revealed the fact that each ideology has a generating principle and may be rebuilt using a specific ideological code, namely diversity/conformity.

In order to verify this assumption, the following research designs are possible:

- the reconstruction of certain original ideal-types, in order to demonstrate the existence of a primary ideological system;
- the identification of a certain ideology's evolution through time and space, in order to prove that each ideology has a systemic behavior;
- the analysis of relations between ideologies within the same political space, in order to verify the existence of a systemic organization of ideologies.

As for the purpose of this article, only the existence of a primary ideological system shall be debated. The methodologi-

cal importance of identifying the primary ideological system is overwhelming, because the lack of such a system would cast doubt upon any future research.

A structural design of the ideological ideal-type

Following the new phenomenological line opened by W. Dittlhey and Ed. Husserl, in the effort of elaborating a methodology able to make objective knowledge possible, Max Weber used and refined the ideal-type method.

For Max Weber, the ideal-type is not a hypothesis, but something that contributes to the construction of a hypothesis; neither is it a representation of reality, but something that confers means for an adequate representation of reality. The construction of an ideal-type is realized by accentuating one or more features and concatenating more isolated, diffused and discreet phenomena.¹⁴ Consequently, the ideal-type is presenting itself as a “cognition framework; it is not the historical reality, nor the genuine reality itself”¹⁵.

Since Max Weber wrote these lines, a whole series of scholars have brought further specifications concerning the modality in which this method can be used. Yet, the essential characteristics of this method, with its advantages and disadvantages, have been preserved. Thus, the advantage of using the ideal-type originates in the method’s rigorously built inner logical structure. From the method’s inner structure a disadvantage arises: any ideal-type will end up separating itself from reality¹⁶.

Taking all this into consideration, I propose the construction of five ideal ideological types, the “strong core” of the nineteenth century: liberalism, conservatism, socialism, nationalism and anarchism.

Thus, in order to construct the ideal-types, I choose the moment of their beginnings, of their origins. The selected ideologies were in such a moment of their evolution during the nineteenth century¹⁷. In order to make re-construction possible, I invoke, for each ideology, a famous work: *On Liberty* (1859), by John Stuart Mill¹⁸; *Reflections on the Revolution in*

France (1790), by Edmund Burke¹⁹; *Manifesto of the Communist Party* (1848), by Karl Marx and Friederich Engels²⁰; *Qu’est-ce qu’une nation?* (1882), by Ernest Renan²¹; *Enquiry concerning political justice* (1794), by William Godwin²².

These works share a spatial, temporal, historical and cultural unity. From a cultural and historical point of view, they were written in the rationalist spirit of the nineteenth century. Moreover, the authors knew very well both British and French culture.

However, the texts are different in purpose and style. Some are works of popularization, and others aspire to a scientific status, being addressed to a cultivated public. The first ones are characterized by visionary perspectives²³, while in the others a positivistic tendency prevails.

Among scholars, there are divergences regarding the nature of these five ideologies. Thus, some²⁴ consider that nationalism is not an ideology, but only a dimension of other ideologies. Even those authors that consider nationalism to be an ideology are treating it as a *loose ideology*²⁵, because it is insufficiently developed. Anarchism is also an atypical example, due to the fact that it has never been represented by parties with political power. This is the reason for which anarchist thinking remained peripheral, the attribute of dangerous revolutionaries or sophisticated intellectuals.

Obviously, these divergences are rooted in the criteria used to define an ideology. Because the method of this research is one of ideal-types, ideologies acquire the same nature. However, especially the reconstruction of the nationalist ideal-type or of the anarchist one might be questioned – other ideal-types of these ideologies can be built.

All these remarks being made, the question regarding the structural design of an ideology may be raised. As can be easily observed, most studies on ideologies use a scale that includes relevant characteristics to any society’s structure: human nature, reason, freedom, equality, property, justice, political regime, state, economy, and so on. The nine mentioned characteristics, aside from being generating principles, become independent variables that determine the inner structure of the five ideological ideal-types.

Taking into account my following of N. Luhmann's systemic theory, I will attempt to verify if each independent variable, when intersected with the diversity/conformity code, will receive two values.

In order to identify these two values, the nineteenth century classical perspective will be used as well as authors from the twentieth century. This suggests that such an approach can be extended beyond the considered ideal-types.

The generating principle seems not to submit itself to the diversity/conformity code, each ideology developing a principle that is not subject to this code. Therefore, after the collecting of data, I shall try to establish if a systemic algorithm of mutual determination – which might determine, for instance, the emergence of the generating principle of liberalism from the one of conservatism, and the one of socialism from the one of liberalism, and so on and so forth – exist.

The classical perspectives on *human nature* oscillate between diversity – like, for example, self determination, which becomes possible through the autonomy of will – and conformity – like complete modeling, which is realized through the individual's insertion inside a social environment. Contemporary debate on this topic, between libertarians and communitarians, emerges around the aspect of individual relationships. Communitarians propose a teleological perspective upon human nature, arguing that individuals must pursue their goals, while libertarians are advocate a non-teleological one, arguing that individuals only have the capacity but not the obligation to attain their goals²⁶.

Reason is limited by rationalism and reasonability, as revealed by M. Oakeshott's work²⁷. Hence, rationalist politics "is one of perfection and uniformity"²⁸. For a change, reasonability represents that kind of reason capable of adapting itself to different types of activity, namely to diversity²⁹.

In his famous speech, Benjamin Constant³⁰ identifies two types of *freedom*: a freedom of participating in public life – specific to antiquity – and one of protecting private life – specific to modernity. The classical essay of Isaiah Berlin³¹ is also worth mentioning. Negative freedom means that no individual is to interfere in other's activity, while positive freedom de-

rives from each individual's hope of being his own master³². Berlin underlines the fact that, at first sight, the two concepts seem not to be far from one another, but, in essence, exercising each type of liberty leads on the one hand to pluralism, an expression of diversity, on the other to authoritarianism, a form of conformity³³.

The idea of *equality* leads, within the logic of conformity, to equalitarianism³⁴, that is, *de iure* and *de facto*, equality. Within the logic of diversity, equality resumes to *de iure*, which is equality before law, and to the acceptance of inequality in other fields³⁵.

Property is, from an ideological perspective, the distinction between private and public property. Subsequently, J. Schumpeter had revised the distinction, revealing that, due to what he considered the natural evolution towards socialism, great capitalist property was depersonalized³⁶: property control is beyond owners' will, becoming common good. On the contrary, individual property is to be considered personalized and a form of diversity.

An ancient tradition, borrowed by the ideological discourse, distinguishes between commutative justice – emerged simply from social relations – and distributive one – result of the allocation of resources made by a central authority³⁷. R. Nozick considers that commutative justice is based on a non-patterned principle, while distributive justice implies the existence of a patterned principle³⁸. Obviously, the inexistence of a pattern is a form of diversity, while a patterned principle is an expression of conformity.

As regarding the *state*, I am invoking the well-known difference between the minimal state – that allows the most social liberty to individuals – and maximal one – that constrains individuals to certain behaviors. More recently, the difference is made between subsidiary state and welfare state. Within a subsidiary state, individuals are encouraged to have the initiative, with the state interfering only when its presence is imperative. On the other hand, a welfare state assumes an important social and economic role, organizing the distribution social goods³⁹. Subsidiary state is a form of diversity logic, while welfare state is one of conformity logic.

The twentieth century had proved that a *political regime* can oscillate from democracy, an open society, towards totalitarianism, a closed society⁴⁰. Beyond historical experience, differences between regimes are not given by formal and informal institutions, but by the way in which the political construction of society is being understood. This way, the community of diversity is resumed to mutual respect and protection of all individual values, while the community of conformity presumes that those with common values have the desire of living together in the good spirit of those values.

Market economy and planned economy are the two limits of *economy*. Fr. Hayek⁴¹ revealed that the concept of planning can be understood in two ways: as projecting business development or as centralized economy. The second meaning presumes that planned economy is based on obedience, as economic agents conform to indications received from the central authorities. On the contrary, market economy is one that requires innovation, competition and, in the end, creates diversity.

In order to formalize the research, I shall use P. L. Dirichlet's formula, which is pointing out the affiliation to an interval:

$$x_A = \begin{cases} 0, x \notin A \\ 1, x \in A \end{cases}$$

Let us name A the domain of diversity, and non-A the one of conformity.

Further on, the data will be gathered and enrolled into a table, in order to realize the comparison of the five ideal-types and, finally, the appropriate conclusions will be drawn.

A reconstruction of five ideal-types

Having constructed both theory and method, data collecting is the next step, unraveling for each ideology the way independent variables vary within the diversity/conformity code.

The generating principle

As it is well known, the generating principle of liberalism is represented by the protection and promotion of individual *liberties* against other community members' actions, especially the ones of people in positions of power⁴².

Conservatism is rooted in the respect for a traditional social model and in the acceptance of slow reform. Therefore, Burke considers *prudence* to be the first of all virtues⁴³.

Socialism has, as a starting point, the historical *class struggle*⁴⁴. It proposes, as its main objective, the accomplishment of a total status equality of all the members of society.

Nationalism is built on the idea of independence, and emerges from the nations' right to self-determination⁴⁵, while for anarchism, the generating principle is represented by the unlimited trust in *private judgment*⁴⁶.

Therefore, it is obvious that the generating principle is not subject to the diversity/conformity code, simply because liberty, prudence, class struggle, nation and private judgment are primary values.

Human nature

Within *liberalism*, the individual is regarded as an important value⁴⁷. He owes nothing to society; his wishes are sovereign. By definition, the individual is the best judge of his own interests. Therefore, taking into account the increased importance of the individual against society, institutions are not to be permitted to interfere with the individual's activity.

Conservatives reveal the imperfection of human nature. Since the individual is incapable of understanding continuity, he will never be able to act as he should. Hence, tradition and customs, which are created within society⁴⁸, are very important. Consequently, the conservative ideal-type is very far from the liberal individualist vision through its emphasis on the importance of society's norms.

Opposed to conservatism, *socialism* proposes an optimistic vision of human development. Characteristic to socialism is the thesis of perfectibility, which states that individuals are able to improve their moral status. Socialism identifies the forming sources of human nature within society. The conditions under which individuals evolve are the ones which explain their character and nature. Both the material and the moral dimensions of man are to be understood within a social

context⁴⁹. Individuals are regarded as being capable of reasoning and developing only within their society.

Nationalism regards individuals as social beings, because they find their meaning, values and ideas inside a nation. Although nationalism supports the self-determination thesis, both on an individual and on a community level, it considers that good political and moral action cannot be determined through abstract and universal thinking, but by the specific history or the national features of a community. Nation is the one that forms the foundation of practical action and political thinking, while an individual always has to appeal to his community or nation⁵⁰.

Anarchism considers the individual to be gifted with reason and capable to understand and conduct his actions, according to his own interest, as well as to the others', not needing any intervention from any authority⁵¹.

Reason, freedom, equality and justice

Each liberal considers all persons to be born with the faculty of reasoning⁵². On this basis, he is capable to be a part of the "social contract", to relate with others or to follow his goals.

Built around the idea of liberty, liberalism is promoting the idea of individual freedom as a lack of any external control⁵³. Consequently, social inequality is accepted, because this is nothing but the natural result of each individual's activity inside society. Inequality is the one that determines the social activism of those who are willing to reach a higher position and all forms of equalitarianism are refused⁵⁴. On the other hand, liberalism is fervently promoting equality before law. The protection of private property⁵⁵, as the aforementioned principles suggest, is both a condition and a dimension of liberty.

For liberals, justice can only be commutative. It naturally emerges, within reasonable limits, from individual action corroborated with the reaction of the others to this action⁵⁶.

For conservatives, reason also plays an important part. Yet, its understanding is fundamentally different from that of liberals. In *Reflections*, Burke distinguishes between abstrac-

tions and principles. He does not believe in abstractions, such as natural rights⁵⁷, but in great, principles of governing that have survived the test of time. Here is where the importance of prejudice resides. It does not represent a blind, irrational behavior, but a prior judgment, a distillation of experience along generations. To act on prejudice means to act the same way those that preceded you acted. Therefore, in conservative thinking, freedom is seen as positive freedom⁵⁸. Obedience to prejudices and traditions can only lead to controlled freedom, which manifests itself within already defined frames. As partisans of the *status quo*, conservatives promote an elitist vision on society, in which social inequality is accepted⁵⁹. That's how the position of this ideology on property is born. Though it is not considered a topic as important as in liberalism, private property represents a modality of accepting and promoting the existing social system⁶⁰.

Ed. Burke does not develop his ideas on the problem of justice, yet this appears to be, as a result of social mechanisms, of a commutative type⁶¹. Consequently, within the reconstruction of the conservative ideal-type, justice is a commutative one.

In its turn, socialism considers individuals to possess reason, to be capable of understanding history, as well as the present, and the advantages of a future organization of society⁶². Socialists also claim that individual fulfillment becomes possible through continuous social interaction.

Completely opposed to liberalism and conservatism in this respect, socialism considers social equality as its supreme goal⁶³. Although it admits the fact that individuals have different qualities, socialism considers the granting equal opportunities to lead to an equalization of social status. Therefore, it is no accident that socialists, along with liberals, promote the equality of rights.

Property is an important issue for socialism. Class struggle is justified precisely by the differences within the capitalist society between the ones who work and the ones who own the production means. Socialism proposes public property as the only accepted form of property⁶⁴, the only one capable to ensure social equality effectively.

Taking into account the equalitarian goals, it can be asserted that socialism is promoting a logic of conformity in what regards justice, which means that there is a tendency towards distributive justice.

Like conservatism, nationalism gives credit to reason, each nation being identified by a unique way of thinking or feeling that is exercised both by the community and by the individuals within it⁶⁵.

National cohesion is to be assured only by *collective action*, which implies a narrowed positive freedom⁶⁶. Nationalism accepts social inequality as a natural consequence of each nation's instituted order – even nations being ranked this way⁶⁷. Taking into consideration the outlook of inequality, this implies that nationalism is rather attached to private property, as a modality of delimitating between different social levels.

The acceptance of inequality and the protection of private property reveal that the ideal-type of nationalist ideology places justice under the logic of diversity.

In anarchist thinking, reason is the one that confers people the possibility to act and think freely, in accordance with their moral principles⁶⁸. Rejecting any form of authority, anarchism, like liberalism, promotes negative freedom, the one of repelling any form of interference⁶⁹. Equality resumes to equality *de iure*, the only one allowed where nothing else counts but individual qualities⁷⁰. Consequently, anarchism pronounces itself in favor of private property⁷¹, which has to be defended by a form of justice that functions on distributive grounds⁷².

Political regime

Many analysts of liberalism believe that the relation between liberalism and democracy is not as tight as it might appear, and that classic liberalism is not a fervent upholder of liberal democracy. Moreover, sometimes democracy does not produce those effects desired by liberals. Beyond this, it is possible to affirm that liberalism, being constructed on contractual grounds, maintains a conflicting environment⁷³ that inevitably leads to diversity.

Conservatism's vision on political regime is directly influenced by its organic conception of society⁷⁴. According to this conception, society is a whole where everybody performs his or her natural functions, on the basis of a well established hierarchy⁷⁵. So, political functions constitute the prerogative of the few, namely the traditional or natural aristocracy that thinks and acts on behalf of the entire community.

For K. Marx and Fr. Engels, any operational political regime might represent the object of a future revolution⁷⁶. Within the new society, proletarian supremacy emerges from the intrinsic unity of its members, who conform to strictly-determined rules and to common ideals⁷⁷.

Nationalist ideology supports a political regime focused on the idea of a nation-state. Theoretically, nationalism seems open to various political regimes, from liberal democracy to totalitarianism. Yet, taking into account that nationalist discourse does not favor immigrants and foreign workers, we may conclude that nationalism is proposes a political regime of conformity⁷⁸.

Anarchism sustains a political organization consisting in small communities, emerged as the result of a convergence criterion: each individual joins a certain community that promotes his own values⁷⁹.

State

Liberalism's position on the matter is well known. It militates for state as "night watchman": the state is called to interfere only when the natural social order has been broken⁸⁰.

On the contrary, conservatism is claims the need for a powerful state, capable of maintaining inner order, well balanced and limited by law. Taking into account the fact that the need for a powerful state derives also from the necessity of conserving traditions⁸¹, one may assert that, in a conservative view, the state affiliates to the logic of conformity.

For socialism, the state is not a product of thinking or of human will. Its emergence is justified by the existence of classes and by their struggle. Socialism wishes to transform the state from an instrument of bourgeois domination into a means of achieving the new order, by actively implicating it

in all the domains of social life⁸², which leads to a maximal state.

In nationalist political thinking, the state is a nation-state, justified by each nation's right of living inside its own state. Although nationalism does not openly declare itself in favor of a certain type of state, it implicitly proposes a maximal state, capable to secure the nation's unity and to contribute to the promotion of its specific spirituality⁸³.

Anarchism is even more radical than liberalism. Because the state has no use, it must be reduced to a minimum of functions concerning the physical protection of its members⁸⁴.

Economy

The liberal doctrine points out the advantages of a free market economy, any constraint being considered unnecessary and dangerous⁸⁵.

The *laissez-faire* was never only a liberal idea. The conservatives adopted it rapidly and supported it from their own perspective. It is also true that certain conservatives were worried by industrialization, which they consider to be a threat to tradition, due to the fact that the accumulation of capital and concurrence imply an increase of individualism⁸⁶. Edmund Burke's position on economy is unclear⁸⁷. Yet, taking into account that he was a *Whig* and he criticized the financial politics as well as the taxes imposed by French revolutionaries, I believe that Burke was rather in favor of a free economy.

Contrary to liberalism, socialism denies the virtues of the free market, which contributes to the emergence of inequalities between individuals, inequalities that lead to the appearance of classes and class struggle⁸⁸. That is why this ideology is favorable to a massive intervention of the state in economy, the state being the only one capable to organize and plan the exchanges so as to avoid all inequalities.

Because nation always means *togetherness*⁸⁹ and never separation, nationalism is predisposed to forms of economic dirigisme meant to conserve nation cohesion.

Economy finds the greatest liberty within anarchism – an ideology fully trusting in individuals' capacity of making fair trade and of securing necessary goods⁹⁰.

Finally, it is possible to provide a table that reflects the structure of the five ideal ideological types.

See the table on the next page.

Inside the table, the lines illustrate the inner structure of the five ideal ideological types. Thus, taking into account the diversity/conformity code, the specific aspects of each ideology can be analyzed, and a comparative approach of ideologies can be realized.

It is imperative to emphasize that, from the perspective of their generating principle, ideologies cannot be compared. As it has been observed, the generating principles are not submitted to the binary code and their comparison is not possible. Moreover, within each ideology, the problem of multicollinearity is emerging due to the fact that the generating principle determines each of the independent variables. For example, liberal equality is not of the same nature with anarchist equality; the first is equality-through-liberty, while the second is equality-through-private-judgment.

Still, the independent variables, excepting the generating principle, remain comparable if we take into consideration not their meanings that are evidently different, but the goals they are pursuing, which lead either to diversity or to conformity.

Considering the observations above, it is still possible to draw useful conclusions. Thus, liberalism and socialism should be considered border-ideologies, because they both use only a certain type of logic. Liberalism can be called *the diversity ideology* and socialism *the conformity ideology*.

The other three ideologies are placed between these two limits. Anarchism is different from liberalism through its generating principle and also through the political regime it supports. Conservatism and nationalism occupy intermediate positions: they are partly alike, with the exception of their generating principle and of the economic variable. The similarity between conservatism and nationalism is not unexpected,

		human nature	reason	freedom	equality	property	justice	political regime	state	economy
liberalism	liberty	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
conservatism	prudence	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	1
socialism	class struggle	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
nationalism	nation	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0
anarchism	private judgment	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1

Table: *A reconstruction of five ideological ideal-types*

because they both propose an organic perspective on society, and also appraise everlasting, inherited values.

The columns give the possibility of making interesting observations. The most important of all is that generating principles are not submitted to the diversity/ conformity code, and there is no systemic relationship that could justify the existence of a system encompassing all ideologies. Thus, liberty does not, in any way, imply class struggle, as well as prudence and reasoning do not emerge from the same register of thinking. In other words, ideologies are born independently and, we might add, considering the experience of the twentieth century, they independently evolve and disappear.

Another interesting observation is that political regime is placed under the logic of diversity only within liberalism. Therefore, it seems appropriate to define any democratic regime that accepts conflicting values as liberal democracy.

Looking comparatively to a series of columns, the same configuration is emphasized. Thus, the columns of human nature, reason, freedom and state are identical, which suggests a possible relation of determination, in which human nature influences the other three variables. The columns of equality, property and justice are also identical, which indicates a relation of dependence, where equality requires a certain type of property and justice.

The small number of ideologies and independent variables studied in this article does not allow broader conclusions. In order to better understand the ideal ideological types, extended research is needed.

However, it is clear that the data gathered in this research shows that there is no system that could include all ideologies. The data only permits some hypotheses regarding the appearance and the inner structure of ideologies.

The table indicates the way in which an ideology is formed: starting from a generating principle, variables of social thinking are articulated⁹¹ on the diversity/conformity binary code.

The fact that these generating principles are not related suggests that their emergence is an expression of non-rationality, of the individual and collective imaginary.

Although parties are built on ideologies, there are probably other factors which play an important role in the forming of a party system. Hence, the historical moment, the characteristics of social, economic, cultural, politic or legal environment, have major influence on both the structure and the functions of a party system.

Final suggestions

This article offers a comparative perspective on five ideal ideology types, but diversity/conformity code seems to be able to create for each ideology its “mirror image”. As John Gray revealed, there are two faces of liberalism, a conformity one, and a diversity one:

“Liberalism contains two philosophies. In one, Tolerance is justified as a means to reaching truth. In this view, tolerance is an instrument of rational consensus, and a diversity of ways of life is borne in hoping that it is destined to disappear. In the other, tolerance is valued as an essential condition and divergent ways of living are welcomed as signs of a diversity within good living. The first conception supports an ideal of ultimate convergence of values, the latter an ideal of *modus vivendi*”⁹².

Relating our research to J. Gray’s conclusion, a question to future studies emerges: is it possible to prove that *any ideology has two faces*? An eventual affirmative answer would give us the possibility to consider the balance diversity/conformity as a constancy for social thought and, why not, for the human mind.

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Notes:

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¹ This is the reason why some authors argue that nationalism is not an ideology. See Barbara Goodwin, *Using political ideas*, Fourth Edition, John Wiley & Sons, 1998.

² Paul Ricoeur, "Science and Ideology" (Știință și ideologie), in *From Text to Action - Hermeneutical Essays*, (De la text la acțiune - eseuri de hermeneutică), Vol. II, Echinox, Cluj, 1999, 285-286.

³ Anton Carpinski, *Contemporary Political Doctrines. A Typological Synthesis*, „Al. I. Cuza” University Press, Iași, 1991, 122 – 125.

⁴ The hologram principle affirms that each part bears the same characteristics as the whole.

⁵ We shall mention only Pierre Clastres, *Society against the State: Essays in Political Anthropology* (Societatea împotriva statului. Eseuri de antropologie politică), Ararat, 1995, and Jean William Lapierre, *Living without state? Essay on Political Power and Social Innovation* (Viață fără stat? Eseu asupra puterii politice și inovației sociale), Institutul European, Iași, 1997.

⁶ See Niklas Luhmann, *Social systems*, Standford University Press, California, 1996, or Edgar Morin, *Introduction à la pensée complexe*, ESF, Paris, 1990.

⁷ Gregory G. Brunk, *Why do Societies collapse? A Theory based on Self-Organized Criticality*, *Journal of Theoretical Politics*, 14(2), 2002, 195 – 230.

⁸ Ioan Petru Culianu, *The Dualistic Gnosés of the Occident (Gnozele dualiste ale Occidentului)*, Nemira, București, 1995. The analogy that I establish between gnosis and ideologies is not an accidental one. In my opinion, ideologies, as a modern phenomenon, replaced the pre-modern instruments for offering explanations of society's structure.

⁹ I. P. Culianu, *Dualistic Gnosis*, 18.

¹⁰ I. P. Culianu, *Dualistic Gnosis*, 84 - 85.

¹¹ Niklas Luhmann, *Politique et complexité. Les contributions de la théorie générale des systèmes*, Les éditions du Cerf, Paris, 1995, 51.

¹² Niklas Luhmann, *Risk: A Sociological Theory*, Walter de Gruyter, Berlin, New York, 1993, 78.

¹³ Within this research, conformity is equal to non-diversity. I opted for the term "conformity", because it is a common term in ideological texts.

¹⁴ Max Weber, *Theory and Method in Cultural Sciences (Teorie și metodă în științele culturii)*, Polirom, Iași, 2001, 47.

¹⁵ Max Weber, *Theory and Method*, p. 49.

¹⁶ Anton Carpinschi, *Contemporary Political Doctrines*, 19.

¹⁷ Obviously, choosing other ideologies and other relevant texts could lead to different structural design and, subsequently, to different conclusions.

¹⁸ John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty*, in *On Liberty and Utilitarianism*, with an introduction by Isaiah Berlin, Oxford University Press, 1969, republished by David Campbell Publishers Ltd., 1992.

¹⁹ Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France and on the proceedings in certain societies in London relative to that event* in a letter intended to have been sent to a gentleman in Paris, with an introduction by A. J. Grive, London, 1912.

²⁰ Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, in *Selected Works in three volumes*, Volume one, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1977, 108-137. This edition is taking over the english one from 1888, edited by Friedrich Engels.

²¹ Ernest Renan, *Qu'est-ce que une nation?* Conference faite en Sorbone, le 11 Mars 1882, Deuxieme edition, Paris, 1882.

²² William Godwin, *Enquiry concerning political justice and its influence on Morals and Happiness*, the second edition, corrected, in two volumes, volume II, London, printed for G.G. and J. Robinson, Paternoster - Row, 1796. Is to be mentioned that, in fact, the final edition is the one from 1798, as George Crowder had specified.

²³ Amazingly, in 1882, E. Renan wrote: "les nations ne sont pas quelques chose d'éternel. Elles ont commencé, elles finiront. La confédération

européenne, probablement, les remplacera", E. Renan, *Qu'est-ce que une nation?*, 28.

²⁴ See Barbara Goodwin, *Using political ideas*, 249-270.

²⁵ See Andrew Vincent, *Modern political ideologies*, Second edition, Blackwell, Oxford, 1995, 238-277.

²⁶ Jonathan Salem-Wiseman, "Heidegger's Dasein and the liberal conception of the self", *Political Theory*, Vol. 31, August 2003, 533-557.

²⁷ Michael Oakeshott, *Rationalism in Politics (Raționalismul în politică)*, All, București, 1995.

²⁸ Michael Oakeshott, *Rationalism in Politics*, 13.

²⁹ Michael Oakeshott, *Rationalism in Politics*, 77.

³⁰ Benjamin Constant, *On Liberty. To antics and moderns*, Institutul European, Iași, 1996.

³¹ Isaiah Berlin, "Two concepts of liberty" (Două concepte de libertate), in *Four essays on liberty (Patru eseuri despre libertate)*, Humanitas, București, 1996.

³² Isaiah Berlin, "Two concepts of liberty", 204 - 214.

³³ Isaiah Berlin, "Two concepts of liberty", 256.

³⁴ The extreme situation equalitarianism is leading to is that of an absolute equality, because "where everything about a person is controllable, equality of opportunity and absolute equality seem to coincide" as Bernard Williams put it in "The Idea of Equality", *Contemporary Political Philosophy. An Anthology*, edited by Robert E. Goodin and Philip Petit, Blackwell, Oxford, 1997, 474.

³⁵ Norberto Bobbio, *Liberalism and democracy (Liberalism și democrație)*, Nemira, București, 1998, 59-60.

³⁶ Joseph Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy*, New York, 1976, 219. Schumpeter uses the term depersonalized in the following sentence: "Industrial property and management have become depersonalized".

³⁷ Friedrich Hayek, *The Constitution of Liberty (Constituția libertății)*, Institutul European, Iași, 1998, 248.

³⁸ Robert Nozick, *Anarchy, State and Utopia*, Basic Books, 1974, 155-159.

³⁹ Chantal Millon-Delsol, *Political ideas of the XXth century (Ideile politice ale secolului al XX-lea)*, Polirom, Iași, 2002, 155-189.

⁴⁰ Raymond Aron, *Democracy and Totalitarianism (Democrație și totalitarism)*, ALL, București, 2001, p. 62.

⁴¹ Friedrich Hayek, *Road to Serfdom (Drumul către servitute)*, Humanitas, București, 1997.

⁴² "The subject of this Essay is not the so-called Liberty of Will, so unfortunately opposed to the misnamed doctrine of Philosophical Necessity; but Civil or Social Liberty: the nature and limits of power which can be legitimately exercised by society over the individual" in J. St. Mill, *On Liberty*, 5.

⁴³ "... the first of all virtues, prudence ..." in Ed. Burke, *Reflections*, 60.

⁴⁴ "The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles" in K. Marx, Fr. Engels, *Manifesto*, 108.

⁴⁵ "Elle (la nation) suppose un passé ; elle se résume pourtant dans le présent par un fait tangible: le consentement, le désir clairement exprimé de continuer la vie commune" in Ernest Renan, *Qu'est-ce que une nation?*, 27.

⁴⁶ "[...] it is nevertheless essential that we should at all times be free to cultivate the individuality, and follow the dictates, of our own judgment", W. Godwin, *Enquiry*, 491.

⁴⁷ "It is not by wearing down into uniformity all that is individual in themselves, but by cultivating it, and calling it forth, within the limits imposed by the rights and interest of others, that human beings become a noble and beautiful object of contemplation". John St. Mill, *On Liberty*, 61.

⁴⁸ "To be attached to the subdivision, to love the little platoon we belong to in society, is the first principle (the germ as it were) of public affections", Ed. Burke, *Reflections*, 44.

⁴⁹ Life conditions of the former society are already destroyed by the existence of proletariat.

⁵⁰ "Une nation est donc une grande solidarité, constituée par le sentiment des sacrifices qu'on a faits et de ceux qu'on est disposé à faire encore", Ernest Renan, *Qu'est-ce que une nation?*, 27.

⁵¹ "If we contemplate the human powers whether of body or mind, we shall find them much better suited to the superintendence of our private concerns and to the administering occasional assistance of others, than to the accepting the formal trust of superintending the affairs and watching for happiness of millions", W. Godwin, *Enquiry*, 6-7.

⁵² "Truth gains more even by errors of one who with due study and preparation, thinks for himself, than by the true opinions of those who only hold them because they do not suffer themselves to think". J. St. Mill, *On Liberty*, 34.

⁵³ "There is a limit to the legitimate interference of collective opinion with individual independence: and to find that limit, and maintain it against encroachment, is as indispensable to a good condition of human affairs, as protection against political despotism". J. St. Mill, *On Liberty*, 8.

⁵⁴ "A general State education is a mere contrivance for moulding people to be exactly like one another". John St. Mill, *On Liberty*, 101.

⁵⁵ "What the state can usefully do is to make itself a central depository, and active circulator and diffuser, of the experience resulting from many trials. Its business is to enable each experimentalist to benefit by the experiments of others; instead of tolerating no experiments but its own". John St. Mill, *On Liberty*, 105.

⁵⁶ "In the one case, he is an offender at our bar, and we are called on not only to sit in judgment on him, but, in one shape or another, to execute our own sentence; in the other case, it is not our part to inflict any suffering on him, except what may incidentally follow from our using the same liberty in the regulation of our own affairs, which we allow to him in his", J. St. Mill, *On Liberty*, 76.

⁵⁷ "They despise experience as the wisdom of unlettered men; and as for the rest, they have wrought under ground a mine that will blow up, at one grand explosion, all examples of antiquity, all precedents, charters, and act of parliament. They have "the rights of men". Against these there can be no prescription; against these no agreement is binding: these admit no temperament and no compromise: anything withheld from their full demand is so much of fraud and injustice", Ed. Burke, *Reflections*, 55.

⁵⁸ "One of the first motives to civil society, and which becomes one of its fundamental rules, is, that no man should be judge in his own case (...) That he may secure some liberty, he makes a surrender in trust of the whole of it". Ed. Burke, *Reflections*, 57.

⁵⁹ "... in which consist the true moral equality of mankind, and not in that monstrous fiction, which, by inspiring false ideas and vain expectations into men destined to travel in the obscure walk of laborious life, serves only to aggravate and embitter that real inequality, which it never can remove; and which the order of civil life establishes as much for the benefit of those whom it must leave in a humble state, as those whom it is able to exalt to a condition more splendid, but not more happy". Ed. Burke, *Reflections*, 35.

⁶⁰ "The power of perpetuating our property in our families is one of the most valuable and interesting circumstances belonging to it, and that which tends the most to the perpetuation of society itself". Ed. Burke, *Reflections*, 49.

⁶¹ "Whatever each man can separately do, without trespassing upon others, he has a right to do for himself". Ed. Burke, *Reflections*, 56.

⁶² "In place of the old bourgeois society, with its classes and class antagonisms, we shall have an association, in which the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all" in K. Marx, Fr. Engels, *Manifesto*, 127.

⁶³ "He [the bourgeois] has not even a suspicion that the real point aimed at is to do a way with the status of woman as mere instruments of production" in K. Marx, Fr. Engels, *Manifesto*, 124.

⁶⁴ "In this sense, the theory of the Communists may be summed up in the single sentence: Abolition of private property" in K. Marx, Fr. Engels, *Manifesto*, 120.

⁶⁵ "L'homme n'est esclave ni de sa race, ni de sa langue, ni de sa religion, ni de cours des fleuves ; ni de la direction des chaînes de montagnes. Une grande agrégation d'hommes, saine d'esprit et chaste de cœur, crée une

conscience morale qui s'appelle une nation. Tandis que cette conscience morale prouve sa force par les sacrifices qu'exige l'abdication de l'individu au profit d'une communauté, elle est légitime, elle a le droit d'exister", Ernest Renan, *Qu'est-ce que une nation?*, 29.

⁶⁶ "Le Français n'est ni un Gaulois, ni un Franc, ni un Burgonde. Il est ce qui sort de la grande chaudière où, sous la présidence du roi de France, ont fermenté ensemble les éléments les plus divers", Ernest Renan, *Qu'est-ce que une nation?*, 17.

⁶⁷ "Les plus nobles pays, l'Angleterre, la France, l'Italie, sont ceux où le sang est plus mêlé", in Ernest Renan, *Qu'est-ce que une nation?*, 15.

⁶⁸ "[...] all our voluntary actions are judgments of the understanding, and that actions of the most judicious and useful nature must infallibly flow from a real and genuine conviction of truth" in W. Godwin, *Enquiry*, 8.

⁶⁹ "It has already appeared that one of the most essential of the rights of man, is his right to the forbearance of others; not merely that they shall refrain from every thing that may, by direct consequence, affect my life or the possession of my powers, but that they shall refrain from usurping upon my understanding, and shall leave me a certain equal sphere for exercise of my private judgment" in W. Godwin, *Enquiry*, 425.

⁷⁰ "[...] one man is not superior to another except so far as he is wiser or better" in W. Godwin, *Enquiry*, 49.

⁷¹ "The first idea of property [nota mea property as benefit or pleasure p. 425] then is a deduction from right of private judgment; the first object of government is the preservation of this right [...] This is a privilege in the highest degree sacred; for its maintenance no exertions and sacrifices can be too great. Thus deep is the foundation of the doctrine of property" in W. Godwin, *Enquiry*, 443.

⁷² "All men love justice. All men are conscious that man is a being of one common nature and feel the propriety of the treatment they receive from another being measured by a common standard", W. Godwin, *Enquiry*, 455.

⁷³ "In politics, again, it is almost a common place, that a party of order or stability, and a party of progress or reform, are both necessary elements of a healthy state of political life (...)" J. St. Mill, *On Liberty*, 46.

⁷⁴ "(...) our representation has been found perfectly adequate to all the purposes for which a representation of the people can be desired or devised". Ed. Burke, op. cit., p. 54.

⁷⁵ "We know that the British House of Commons, without shutting its doors to any merit in any class, is, by the sure operation of adequate causes, filled with everything illustrious in rank, in descent, in hereditary and in acquired opulence, in cultivated talents, in military, civil, naval, and political distinction, that the country can afford". Ed. Burke, *Reflections*, 42.

⁷⁶ "In short, the Communists everywhere support every revolutionary movement against the existing social and political order of things". K. Marx, Fr. Engels, *Manifesto*, 137.

⁷⁷ "We have seen above, the first step in the revolution by the working class, is to raise the proletariat to the position of ruling class, to win the battle of democracy. The proletariat will use its political supremacy to wrest, by degrees, all capital from the bourgeoisie, to centralise all instruments of production in the hands of the state, i.e., of the proletariat organised as the ruling class; and to increase the total of productive forces as rapidly as possible". K. Marx, Fr. Engels, *Manifesto*, 126.

⁷⁸ "C'est la fusion des populations qui les composent", Ernest Renan, *Qu'est-ce que une nation?*, 5.

⁷⁹ "The habits which are thus salutary to the individual, will be equally salutary in the transactions of communities", W. Godwin, *Enquiry*, 403.

⁸⁰ "But I deny the right of the people to exercise such coercion, either by themselves or by their government. The power itself is illegitimate. The best government has no more title to it than the worst". John St. Mill, *On Liberty*, 18.

⁸¹ "I'll would our ancestors at the Revolution have deserved their fame for wisdom, if they had found no security for their freedom, but in rendering their government feeble in its operations and precarious in its tenure". Ed. Burke, *Reflections*, 28.

⁸² "Nevertheless in the most advanced countries, the following [measures -nota mea] will be pretty generally applicable. 1. Abolition of property in land and application of all rents of land to public purposes. 2. A heavy progressive and graduated income tax [...]. 5. Centralisation of the credit in the hands of the State, by means of a national bank with State capital and an exclusive monopoly. 6. Centralisation of the means of communication and transports in the hands of the State. 7. Extension of factories and instruments of production owned by the State. [...] 10. Free education of all children in public schools.", K. Marx, Fr. Engels, *Manifesto*, 126-127.

⁸³ "Une nation est un principe spirituel, résultant des complications profondes de l'histoire, une famille spirituelle, non un groupe déterminé par la configuration du sol", Ernest Renan, *Qu'est-ce que une nation?*, 25.

⁸⁴ "Government can have no more than two legitimate purposes, the repression of injustice against individuals within the community, and the common defence against external invasion"- W. Godwin, *Enquiry*, 190.

⁸⁵ "Restrictions on trade, or on production for purposes of trade, are indeed restraints; and all restraint, quâ restraint, is an evil (...)" J. St. Mill *On Liberty*, 91.

⁸⁶ Due to the critics concerning financial politics and taxes, seems that Burke does sustain free economy. Ed. Burke, *Reflections*, 223-239.

⁸⁷ Andrew Vincent, *Modern Political Ideologies*, 79.

⁸⁸ See measures K. Marx, Fr. Engels, *Manifesto*, 126-127.

⁸⁹ „ Je disais tout a l’heure : «avoir souffert ensemble»; oui, la souffrance en commun unit plus que la joie. En fait de souvenirs nationaux, les deuils valent mieux que les triomphes ; car ils imposent des devoirs ; ils commandent l’effort en commun “ , Ernest Renan, Qu’est-ce que une nation?, 27.

⁹⁰ „It is now well known that commerce never flourishes so much, as when it is delivered from the guardianship of legislators and ministers, and is built upon the principle, not of forcing other people to by our commodities dear when they might purchase them elsewhere cheaper and better, but of ourselves feeling the necessity of recommending them by either intrinsic advantages”, W.Godwin, Enquiry, 217-218.

⁹¹ Aside all variables used within the present research, other ones might be taken into consideration: tolerance, environment, external politics, etc.

⁹² John Gray, Two faces of liberalism, Polity Press, 2000, 105.

The Subsidized Muse or the Market-oriented Muse? Supporting Artistic Creation in Romania between State Intervention and Art Market.*

The analysis focuses on the manner in which public authorities in Romania have carried out their role of supporting artistic creation, as well as on the institutional and financial instruments put into practice for this purpose. First, it is about exposing the contradictory logics that grounds the public action in supporting arts and artists and understanding the character of the State intervention in the cultural field, pointing up its oscillations between mediator and cultural agent roles, neutral and valorizing instance, artistic and social rationales. Secondly, a comparative analysis points out to what extent the State intervention, especially using as instrument the direct subsidy, responds to the assumed role of supporting artistic creation and if it has contributed and is able to contribute to the development of the artistic sector and, implicitly, to the improvement of the artists' social and professional status, in the actual context of an internationalized art and a free and global art market.

Taking the precarious condition of the creators and of the art world in post-communist Romania as starting point, this study addresses the issue of best mechanisms for supporting artistic creation, considered in relation to the situation of the local and international art worlds, also aiming to respond to artists' preoccupations regarding their social and professional status. The actual stage of facts, persistent for a decade and a half, could be briefly described as follows: the Romanian artists, coming from a bureaucratic organization of the artistic life under political and ideological control of the communist State, still occupy a marginal position in the framework of the social system redistribution of the public manna as well as in relationship to the main international art institutions and markets, fact seen as a lack of symbolic and financial recognition that should be urgently remedied. Unfortunately, these legitimate preoccupations and demands have not found yet either adequate expressions or credible solutions in the actual context of internationalization of art and artistic markets. Though the above-mentioned diagnosis is largely embraced, the therapy requested by the "patients"-artists or prescribed by the "doctors"-policy makers is not satisfactory. On one hand, among artists (with some significant exceptions) one can still find a mentality of social-assisted and a way of understanding

Dan-Eugen Rațiu

PhD, associate professor in the Department of Philosophy at Babes-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca.

Author of the books: *Disputa modernism – postmodernism. O introducere in teoriile contemporane asupra artei*, (2001), *Moartea artei? O cercetare asupra retoricii eschatologice*, (2000), and co-editor of the volume *Arta, comunitate, spatiu public. Strategii politice si estetice ale modernitatii* (2003).

E-mail:
dratiu@hiphi.ubbcluj.ro

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their relations to the State which is consonant with the former centralism and paternalism that dominated for so long the public action in the cultural field. Nowadays, when the position as “artist of the State” is no longer possible, a large part of the Romanian artists is not ready to imagine anything else but the change towards the “social-assisted” condition: their demands, addressed to a State desired to be paternalistic and protective, often requested both social security and assistance for creation through direct financial intervention under the form of public subsidies or State commissions and, moreover, artistic recognition or legitimacy, symbolic and financial (e.g. art market quotation).¹ On the other hand, neither the post-communist authorities were able, for many years, to shape coherent and largely embraced cultural strategies on long term or functional cultural policies able to replace the disengagement of the former “protective” State – owner, ruler and censor of culture. The few public policies that existed in the cultural field were lacking continuity and proved to be not very imaginative as they were focused – especially between 1993-1996 and 2001-2004 – on budgetary and administrative interventions that were not transparent and in most cases arbitrary. Therefore, the cultural sector became again dependant on the public authorities thus repeating the impasse of the former “all State system”.

Or, as the researches on cultural policies in western countries have demonstrated, a voluntary State policy and the interventionism in the cultural field and particularly in the field of artistic creation, though leading to a general amelioration of the artists’ *social* condition, generate, at a *cultural* level, as many problems as they have solved, even in countries in favor of a non-interventionist policy. Classical analyses of public support for the arts, as that of Dick Netzer - *The Subsidized Muse: Public Support for the Arts in the United States* (1978) - have pointed out that the annual governmental non-selective subsidies programs were just partially successful: on one hand, regardless of the amount of money available to the arts, creative individuals will always be able to think of more projects than funds can cover; on the other hand, the subsidies turn against their beneficiaries who become dependent on

direct public support.³ Recent researches, coming from the areas of art sociology and economics of culture, reveal other faces of the “subsidized muse” as the applicability and desirability of tax-based indirect aid mechanisms (J.M. Schuster) or the relationship between public and private funding for the arts. Some studies, using the neoclassical justifications for government support of the arts that Netzer discussed in *The Subsidized Muse* as a starting point, contends that market failure is not a useful concept to understand and explain cultural policies and the degree of government involvement in the cultural field, arguing that historical-institutional arrangements and the role of non-state actors in the formation of cultural policies should be taken into account (A.Zimmer, S.Toepler), while other studies point out the negative impact of National Endowment for the Arts on private donations to the arts, that have decreased as an effect of NEA introduction and appropriations on donations (F.Borgonovi, M.O’Hare).⁴ In France, where the interventionist tradition is a strong one, the “religion of cultural policy” and the State intervention in the artistic field became the object of several debates and virulent critiques during the 1980s and 1990s, especially coming from historians of culture and philosophers as Marc Fumaroli, Alain Finkielkraut, Yves Michaud, art sociologists (Raymonde Moulin, Pierr-Michel Menger, Philippe Urfalino) and economists of culture. The analysis outcomes converged towards the idea that a voluntary cultural policy and the protectionist system thus generated were crisis factors, contributing, according to some authors, to the “defeat of thinking” and, according to other, to the sterilization of creation by the “cultural State”, and to an almighty bureaucracy more preoccupied by its incomes than by the harmonious development of the cultural/artistic sector.⁵

From this perspective, the major questions that arise regard what the artists should truly expect from public authorities: are public subsidies the best instruments of support for artistic creation or is there possible another way in between State protectionism and the abandonment of art to the market of democratic entertainment? Is the condition of “social-assisted” the viable alternative to the marginal position of the

Romanian artists in relationship with the main international art institutions and markets or another way is possible? Here at stake there is the problem of modalities of social and artistic recognition of the contemporary artist (Romanian and not only), in the conditions of an internationalized art and a free and global art market: how can the artist obtain the recognition of the art institutions and markets and what legitimate role could public authorities (still) play in this process?

In order to answer, the analysis focuses on the *cultural policies* (in the plural form), defined as “a set of public measures or mechanisms and institutional and financial means of the State’s action in the cultural field”.⁶ If the previous examination of the justifications and finalities of cultural policy in Romania has enabled us to formulate a series of conclusions regarding its founding values that determine the relationships between State and artists, as well as the roles attributed to culture and art,⁷ this time it is about understanding the role assumed by the State itself, the character of its intervention in the cultural sector and, consequently, it is about exposing the logics that ground the public action in supporting arts/artists and the dilemmas which cultural policies or the artists themselves have been confronted by. The objective is to point out to what degree the mechanisms of the Romanian State intervention respond to the its assumed role of supporting artistic creation and are able to solve the central problem: the precariousness and the marginal position of the Romanian artists and art world. Regarding artists and cultural areas at stake, the analysis focuses on the *independent artist* (as non-institutional cultural agent) and on the visual arts. From the wide range of cultural policy mechanisms, our interest will mainly focus on the public subsidy or direct financial support that was the favorite instrument of the Romanian State intervention in supporting artistic creation, thus submitted to the regime of the “subsidized Muse”. This suggestive phrase, borrowed from the American economist Dick Netzer, has the merit of revealing the inevitable tension induced by an interventionist policy in supporting creation. On one hand, the mythical motive of the muse signalizes the *regime of exceptionality* of artistic creation, seen as an act that presupposes a gift unequally distributed to individuals (differently put, creation can not be “de-

mocratized”). It also signalizes the artistic creation’s *unpredictability* (creation can not be the mechanic or direct result of material-financial conditions), along with the *risk*, understood in terms of social success or failure and implied by the originality and innovation as constitutive of a veritable creative act. On the other hand, the public subsidy, as a mean of “socialization of the creative risk” (Pierre-Michel Menger) and, therefore, of social security, is inseparable of the administrative control inevitably implied by an interventionist policy, fact that articulates the relationships between State and artists in the hierarchical terms of services exchange and control. Therefore, the use of the well-known concept “subsidized Muse” marks a central paradox of the State intervention in supporting artistic creation – the contradiction between the (necessary) creative freedom, the (desired) social security and the (inevitable) administrative control –, while the introduction of the concept “market-oriented Muse” is there to question a possible alternative.

1. The State’s intervention in the cultural field: character and subjacent logics.

The Article 32 of Romania’s Constitution, entitled “The Access to Culture” and introduced following the constitutional revision process in 2003, establishes the State’s role in the field of culture as follows: “The State must ensure the preservation of spiritual identity, the support of national culture, the stimulation of the arts, the protection and preservation of the cultural heritage, the development of contemporary creativity, the promotion of Romanian cultural values abroad”. This formula contents nothing else but the general objectives of cultural policy formulated in the official discourse throughout the time. The problem that rises is, firstly, to determine *how* the State has really acted up to now in order to reach theses objectives – as cultural agent or as mediator? as neutral or as valorizing instance? based on artistic criteria or on social considerations? –, and what logic founded its intervention.

1.1. The State: cultural agent or mediator? The voluntary logic of a cultural State versus the non-interventionist logic of a State-mediator

During the post-communist period, though ceasing the absolute control and the ideological censorship of the cultural act, specific to its predecessor - the National Council of Socialist Education and Culture, the Ministry of Culture defined its role and preponderantly acted as *cultural agent*. Between 1997-2000 (the CDR-USD-UDMR coalition government), the ministry got involved not only in the “co-ordination and funding of programs and projects in all fields of culture”, but in the “initiating” and “controlling” such programs and projects.⁸ The State’s role of “administering the national culture and the cultural act” or, in more suggestive terms, of “leading the culture’s destiny” (“*dirigire a culturii*”), was more firmly assumed by the PDSR/PSD governance between 2001-2004.⁹ Consequently, public authorities and institutions in the field – the Ministry of Culture and Religious Affaires (MCRA), the Romanian Cultural Foundation (RCF) and then Romanian Cultural Institute (RCI) – acted mainly as direct producers and administrators of culture and not as mediators between the cultural demand and supply. Only in 2005 the public authorities broke with these policies, at least at a discursive level, as the Ministry of Culture and its de-concentrated public services programmatically renounced the role of cultural agent in favor of the functions of advising, consulting and mediating. The Governance Program of the new ruling coalition (PNL-PD-UDMR-PUR/PC) regarding the policy in the field of culture stipulates as follows: “The role of the ministry and of public institutions in the field is to ensure conditions in favor of cultural creation and of protection of cultural heritage [...] The Romanian Government will substantially reduce the direct involvement of central authorities in the co-ordination of cultural institutions and cultural-artistic activities”, because, as further stipulates the 2005-2008 cultural strategy, presented by the liberal minister to the cultural committees of the Parliament, “the beneficiaries of the cultural policies should be

the public and the creators and not the authorities”.¹⁰ Therefore, one can see an opposition between a system based on direct management and one that work through incentives and regulations, both already mentioned by the foreign experts in their report from 1999.¹¹ In other words, at the level of subja-cent logics of cultural policies, there is a tension between the *voluntary logic* of a cultural State that act directly, predominant up to 2005, and the *non-interventionist logic* of a State-mediator that limits itself at facilitating the action of others in the cultural field, explicitly assumed by the government at the beginning of 2005.

The policy of the Romanian State as major agent in the cultural field determines the rise of a question regarding also a problem of principle: in this case, was (should be) the action of public authorities neutral, maintaining the balance between different elements of culture and the diverse actors of the cultural life, or did the State also get involved (should get involved) as valorizing instance, in favor of ones or the others among them?

1.2. The State: neutral or valorizing instance? The *étatique* logic of institutionalized culture versus the liberal logic of creativity

While examining the fundamental principles of the cultural policy in Romania, one can notice that the official documents from 1997-2000 – resulted either from an agreement between artistic communities and public authorities, as the *Joint Declaration on the Status of Creators and Performing Artists in Romania* (1998), or from a foreign expertise, as the national *Cultural Strategy*, formulated in the framework of the European Program PHARE-RO “The Cultural Dimension of Democracy” (1997-2000) –, proclaim the neutrality of public action and the necessity of maintaining the balance between the various elements of the cultural life, as creativity and heritage, or between the diverse types of cultural practices. Although, a certain ambiguity persists: “It is not the duty of the Ministry of Culture to valorize the ethical, moral,

human and long lasting searches of culture in general, but this duty which belongs to the government [sic!], to the society and finally to the country, will be greatly helped by the dynamic created by the strategic targets".¹² It should be also noticed that, despite the principle of neutrality, in general there persists an imbalance at a discursive level as well as *de facto* in favor of the heritage, considered to be "essential for the creation of national identity", as in the report on cultural policy realized by the Romanian experts in 1999 (report that leaves however place for the amelioration of "cultural democracy" and promotion of "creativity"). Opposite to this general tendency, there arises a tentative of favoring those forms of contemporary creation that could "redefine the national identity through the relationship with the actual western time" and "integrate Romanian culture into the world circuit of artistic values", as in the 2000-2001 strategy of the Visual Arts Department within the Ministry of Culture.¹³ Otherwise, in the case of cultural policy of the PNL-PD-UDMR-PUR governance, installed at the end of 2004, the tension between the strategic objectives as "favoring the new forms of expression and cultural practices", proclaimed in the Governance Program, and the "maintaining of a balance between tradition and innovation", as proposed in the strategy of the ministry of culture, later presented to the Parliament by the liberal minister, is still kept. Thereby, throughout the post-communist period, there is a permanent oscillation or hesitation of the cultural administration between a neutral attitude and interventionist-valorizing policies in favor of one or other type of cultural practices, either the traditional ones (popular or "high") or the avant-garde contemporary ones.¹⁴ A supplementary problem is generated by the fact that this public valorization intervenes within a situation defined by the quasi-nonexistence of viable funding alternatives from the non-governmental or private sector. Or, as it was already noticed, "in a situation where alternative sources for financing are meager and public support become a sign of quality and artistic recognition, public authorities granting the support gain much power in the process of defining art, artist, and artistic quality".¹⁵ This way, the valorizing interventions of the public authorities could

have a strong impact on the art world by twisting its autonomous structure and functioning, especially the relationships established between different tendencies or artistic practices, thus contributing to constitute and imposing an "official", dominant aesthetics/art. In due course, it is preferable that cultural policies respect the principle of neutrality and balance, in order not to offend the freedom of creation and the autonomy of the artistic field, both of them assumed as fundamental principles of the public action.

Beside the imbalance above-mentioned, unfavorable for contemporary, "living creation", another imbalance was induced (especially during the PDSR/PSD governance) between the actors of the cultural life – independent artists, NGOs and public cultural institutions –, through the practice of cultural policies centered on *public institutions* and not on *functions* (the heritage function, the function of creation support, of management etc.). This fact transpires also from the organizing structure of the Ministry of Culture and Religious Affairs and from the distribution of budgetary funds. Despite the fact that, at the discursive level, the absolute State control ("*dirijismul etatist*") is rejected, the approaches of cultural policies are actually of a bureaucratic nature, the (individual) artistic creation being subsumed to the public cultural institutions, considered as prior. Thus, The National Cultural Forum from June 2002 stated, through the voice of the president of Romania, the State's role in the following terms: "Continuing the tradition of the last century and a half [sic!], the Romanian State has the duty to support our major cultural institutions that insure the permanence of traditions, the vitality of contemporary creation and the maintaining of the artists, men of culture and scientists in the world spiritual elite. Among its responsibilities, there are regulations able to insure the optimal framework for the promoting and asserting of cultural-artistic values as well as for facilitating the large access to culture, education and creation."¹⁶

The result was the institutionalization of culture and, worse, the bureaucratization of the cultural activity, of the cultural commerce and exhibiting as well as *the increase of financial dependence of creators from the State*. And this

against the recommendations from the *Cultural Strategy* previously elaborated in the framework of the European PHARE program “The Cultural Dimension of Democracy” where the assurance of the “independence from State subsidies” appeared as one of the tactical objectives (on medium term/3 years), while the “enhancing of the role of the cultural players (artists, creators, private and public institutions)” and the effective “support to arts and culture” were included among the strategic objectives (on long term/10 years). These objectives should be achieved through the gradual withdrawal of the State from culture that would lead to a selection of the best forces in the cultural market and would balance the supply and demand on a higher level. This strategy, of a liberal nature, proves that “the strengthening of the credibility of arts in the social fabric and the strengthening of national identity” could be the side effects, besides the development of the art and culture markets (private art galleries, creation and conservation centers etc.), of achieving the respective strategic objectives that aim to “enhance creativity, offer prestige to artists and institutions, give value to artistic products and creations” as direct effects. The difference in approach, comparing to the *étatique* cultural policy based on State control, is visible also regarding the preservation of national heritage. This strategic priority is approached here from the perspective of its synergic effects as basis for the cultural market: the use of monuments as tourist attractions, as cultural, educational or research centers, that should induce, as a side effects, economic development, private initiatives and, consequently, easing the dependence of cultural activities from State subsidies.¹⁷ However, this cultural strategy, finalized through a symposium at the Cotroceni Palace in the spring of 2000, was never put into practice, being abandoned after the re-installment of the PDSR/PSD government at the end of the same year. In exchange, the new liberal administration of culture partially resumed the strategy, the Ministry of Culture and Religious Affairs proposing in December 2005 a legislative project for the concession of the historical monuments in order to revitalize and introduce them into the economic and cultural circuit. Therefore, we consider, along with Corina Șuteu,¹⁸ that the ex-

ercise of the cultural policy after 1989, though it gradually got its distance from the *étatique*, State controlled and bureaucratic model, specific to the communist cultural administration, it was for long time dominated by the (*étatique*) *logic of institutionalized culture*, that leads to increase dependence of cultural activities from public subsidies, and it has not shown itself ready – till recently and at a discursive level – for the (liberal) *logic of creativity*. At the same time, the public action in the field of culture was more *valorizing*, through the ministry of culture, than neutral. This outlines the profile of a “cultural State” – patron, administrator and controller of culture, which only sweetens but does not erase the characteristic traits of the former communist “protective” State – owner, ruler and censor of culture.

In these conditions, another question arises with respect to the nature of arguments that have supported the valorization of cultural acts by the State: is this motivated in artistic or in social terms? In other words, it is about knowing if the policy or the State intervention in the cultural field has predominantly a protective-egalitarian character, as it is derived from social considerations, or an “elitist” one, as it is founded on the principle of artistic excellence.

1.3. The State intervention: a protective-egalitarian or an elitist character? The logic of cultural democracy versus the logic of cultural democratization

The examination of the official discourse on the topic of culture support reveals that, at the principles’ level, public authorities oscillates between a policy of a *protective* or *assistential* character – in which case the public authorities’ intervention and the valorizing are mainly based on social arguments: the support of creation and the right to culture as “factors of social security” (R.Theodorescu) – and a policy of a *elitist* character which is founded on the principle of excellence, the intervention “for promoting culture and the arts” being motivated in the artistic terms of “quality” and “competence”.¹⁹ Yet, a comparison between the proclaimed principles

and the real modalities of action, reveals that the cultural policies put into practice are incoherent, “impure”, as public authorities are mixing heterogeneous principles and mechanisms without carrying about their coherence, fact that cannot but affect their efficiency. Or, in countries sometimes assumed as (new) model for the Romanian cultural policy, as The Netherlands or Nordic countries,²⁰ where a social policy as a specific cultural policy area was formulated already in the 1960’s, there is a clear distinction between *artist policy*, with a protective character, and *art policy*, with an elitist character, each of them having specific instruments of action. The “artist policy”, whose role is that of *guardian* for artists, has as main instrument the direct financial support for individual artists, regardless of artistic quality – e.g. the “Measures for Visual Artists” (BKR) in The Netherlands, through which the government provides a guaranteed income in exchange for artistic works. Instead, the “art policy”, whose decisive criterion is quality, includes alternative instruments: individual grants won through competition, subsidies for professional costs and an extended system of governmental acquisitions and commissions.²¹

Thus, a public policy intending to provide “social security” and “welfare assistance” to artists in difficulty presupposes that the State assistance is granted regardless the artistic quality. In Romania, despite this principle, the special system of artists’ social security implemented in 2003 took the form of a “merit allowance”, yet addressed just to an elite of retired artists, “personalities from the cultural fields” (excluding the other retired artists as well as the meritorious but young ones). Another governmental initiative, preceding the elections in 2004, proposed the awarding of an extra half of a pension to all categories of retired persons – members of creation unions recognized as public utility (generating a discrimination towards other categories of retired persons or towards the disadvantaged artists but young), in this way “the social-democratic mark” changing direction towards “populism and electoral malpractice”.²² At the same time, in the case of cultural policies explicitly founded on the principle of excellence, the selection and promotion of works or artists mixes up the crite-

ria of artistic nature (“the originality of the artistic work”) with considerations of social nature as the belonging to an ethnic or gender minority.²³ Or these mechanisms translate different visions on public cultural action, a relativistic one and a normative one. Consequently, not only the public authorities acting in the cultural field but also the artists themselves are confronted to the dilemmas egalitarianism vs. elitism, social security vs. freedom of creation, aesthetic relativism vs. hierarchy of artistic values, induced by the permanent oscillations and tensions between the (egalitarian) *logic of cultural democracy* and the (elitist) *logic of cultural democratization*.²⁴

In these conditions, the actual outcomes of the policy of subsidizing artistic creation and artists are – compared to the intended ones – doubtful, both at a socio-economic level (the artists’ social status) and at a professional level (artistic recognition), even if, regarding the latter, there subsist significant differences between the two modalities of action, protective and “elitist”.

It is obvious that the formulation of cultural policy objectives in both socio-economic terms of “social security” or “welfare assistance” and of artistic recognition implies an evaluation of its outcomes in similar terms. Or the precarious financial condition and the material difficulties faced by creators as well as the marginality of the art world in Romania – “with writers facing falling print-runs and sales, artists working in the virtual absence of private collections, of a country-wide network of art centers, of private galleries, and performers (most of them employed by the cultural institutions) poorly paid...”²⁵ –, already mentioned in the 1999 report of the European experts, visibly persists also today. As an applied and comprehensive research regarding the effects of these cultural policies on the socio-economic condition of artists in Romania still lacks, we shall not persist for the moment on this topic. Yet, the appeal to other countries experience demonstrates that the artists’ social and economic situation has not significantly improve in relationship to other socio-professional groups, not even in the case of promoting a social policy as the *artist policy*. The studies on artists’ social and economic

situation in the Nordic countries (Norway, Finland) reveals the existence of a similar pattern – wide discrepancies, tending to increase, between the incomes levels –, whether these countries do have policies for artist support or not. (The explanation of this paradoxical effect is the fact that artists tend to use an increase in income for increasing their art expenditures, not their social status.) Consequently, the evaluation of cultural policies estimates a “failure of the artist policy” in the countries where such a policy exists (in Norway, for instance). There should be added that, on a professional level, the reputation of the “social” measures – especially those of the BKR type in The Netherlands – turn out to be a disadvantage for artists: this public support acts more like market income, which in the “reversed economy” of art fields (Pierre Bourdieu) in most cases even decreases artistic recognition. (“This is because the transformation of money into recognition is not possible if the criteria for distributing the financial support are based on economic and social considerations, not solely on artistic quality.”) On the contrary, the prestigious subsidies – professional costs and individually granted subsidies – based on the principle of excellence and having a good reputation, have positive effects in the public as well as in the private market. Yet they induce, at the level of art market in general, a winner-takes-all tendency, thus determining the artists to allocate their time and effort to obtain public subsidies and commissions.²⁶

2. Modalities and mechanisms of supporting artists and artistic creation: A comparative analysis.

The second part of our study focuses on the *cultural policies* in the previously mentioned sense, in other words it addresses the issue of the modalities and mechanisms of public intervention in supporting artists and artistic creation. As in Romania the public discourse refers to “the artist’s right to public funding”,²⁷ we will approach two aspects: *whom* and *how* should the State fund? First, it is about the problems of eligibility for social security and of criteria for choosing the

most entitled to receive public funds among the artists, and then the problem of institutional and financial instruments put into practice. At this point it is useful to appeal again to the experience of other European countries, especially France whose cultural policies have served for a long time as a model for Romanian authorities and are still invoked by the artists as a model to follow.

2.1. Questions of principles: the eligibility for social security and the criteria for public funding of creation

According to the sociological analyses of cultural policies in France, carried out by Raymonde Moulin, public authorities are confronted with several dilemmas that are worth to be reminded here as they regard any exercise of cultural policies. In the case of *redistribution policies*, founded on the egalitarian principle, the problem is to respond the artists’ claim on social security without affecting the creative freedom and to establish the eligible ones (*les ayants droit*) without imposing an administrative definition of the artist’s status. The main difficulty thus consists in the ways of identifying “the artist” which have aesthetic as well as social consequences: in France, the preoccupation for the recognition of an equal dignity for all forms of creation led to the extension almost without limits of the concept of “art” and, therefore, to an enlargement of the artistic field, fact that determined the public authorities to confront themselves to a strong increase of the number of the eligible ones. This was a consequence of the fact that the recognition of the status of “artist” automatically implied the right to public subsidy.²⁸

The public authorities in Romania are menaced by a similar difficulty if they intend to assume, as principle of cultural policy, “the artist’s right to public funding”, especially as there still are some ambiguities in defining the artist and its social position. On one hand, the definition assumed by the public authorities (1997) is that of the UNESCO *Recommendation on the Status of the Artist* from 1980, where the term of “artist” is taken to mean “any person who creates or give

creative expression to, or recreates works of art, as an author of literary or artistic works or as owner of copyright and neighboring rights, who considers his artistic creation to be an essential part of his life, who contributes in this way to the development of art and culture and who is or asks to be recognized as an artist whether or not he is bound by any relations of employment or association.”²⁹ Yet the artist is practically assimilated to the category of “civil servants” – as State employee of public cultural institution –, or to the category still ambiguously defined of “*liber-professionist*”, with an uncertain juridical status (the emergence of *freelancers* is quite a new phenomenon in Romania). Moreover, the artist is also identified to a “cultural animator” or a social services purveyor – risk implied by the new, pragmatic vision upon the social role of culture and arts. On the other hand, though there were several approaches, more or less coherent or successful, the question regarding the social status of creators is still not approached with a specific legislation with respect to social security mechanisms (pension scheme, health insurance, unemployment aid etc.) that should compensate the precariousness of their socio-economic condition. As Delia Mucică recalls in an article on the artist’s status in Romania (2000), “during the communist regime, every creators’ union was running a mutual social security fund, which only its members had access to, [that] was supplied by contributions made by union members. After 1990, the spectacular increase in the inflation rate, together with a certain lack of economic and managerial vision, led to a drain of resources and to collapse of these funds. This was the reason for which, starting from 1992, the artists’ request was legally accepted concerning the inclusion of their pension into the public social security system.” Also, as far as the “position” and the “role” of the artist in society are concerned, “if the freedom of expression, the abolish of censorship, the access to information culture or trade union rights are an *acquis* of the last decade, the respect for the artists’ work, the public recognition of the creative work and the attached economic rights are not yet recognized.”³⁰

In the case of the *distributive policies* – as the public support for creation –, the main dilemma is that of egalitarianism

and elitism. As Raymond Moulin observes in *L’Artiste, l’institution et le marché*, while the cultural policy with a social aim implies the almost equal redistribution of the “public manna” among all of those who claim the exercise of an artistic activity and it is grounded on a pluralist and relativist conception regarding the quality of the art works, the cultural policy with a patrimonial aim – based on the principle of prestige – is a selective one, assumed as such by the public administrators which refer to a hierarchy of the artistic values. Consequently, there rises the following question: who should elaborate this hierarchy – the cultural administrators, the experts, the artists themselves or the public – and based on which criteria? The virulent polemics and debates that took place in France in the 1990s, related to the so-called “crisis of the contemporary art”, did not solve this dilemma. An interventionist and valorizing art policy is not at all lacking in other dilemmas and contradictions as the antinomy between the state protectionism and the freedom of creation, with an impact on the organizing system of the artistic life and on the hierarchy of artistic values. As Moulin points out, despite the intentions of the different ministers of culture in France, from André Malraux to Jack Lang, “to support without influencing”, “to stimulate without constraining” and “to subsidy without interfering”, history does not offer not even a single example of society that would have been successful in surmounting in a perfect manner the antinomy between freedom of creation and the creator’s social security.³¹

Therefore, if Romanian public authorities do not want that “the artist’s right to public funding” and “the stimulating of the arts” remain in the register of the pious desires, there rise two serious problems. On one hand, there rises, in the case of adopting cultural policies of a protective-egalitarian character, the problem of establishing the eligible ones for “social security” that should be financially sustainable, without imposing an administrative definition of the artist’s status; and, of course. On the other hand, in the case of adopting cultural policies directed by the principle of artistic excellence, there is to solve the problem of establishing the evaluation and selection criteria for the public funding of artistic creation, criteria

that should be unanimously accepted by the artists and the public.

2.2. Instruments of the artistic creation support system: public subsidies or incentives for private initiative?

Discussing the problem of institutional and financial instruments of cultural policies, it is time to approach the question regarding the proclaimed will of the Romanian State for maintaining a specific mission of valorizing and supporting artistic creation. How has this will manifested itself up to now, despite its subordination towards the heritage and the above-mentioned hesitations of the cultural policy?

Starting with 1990, the constants of the daily reality within the Romanian cultural sector were – as one could directly notice and as all the cultural policy reports have recorded – the insufficiency of financial means and the inadequate administration and preservation of cultural infrastructure controlled by the ministry and its subordinated institutions, on the background of a total lack of cultural strategies and policies. The first years of post-communism (1990-1992) were characterized by the attempt to articulate a normal relationship between the public administration and culture, once culture escaped the political and ideological control. However, the Ministry of Culture became a “veritable bastion of resistance to change and reform” during the FDSN/PDSR governance (1992-1996). As a comprehensive cultural policy was lacking, the public action for supporting culture was dominated by a “centralist and paternalist conception”, by attempts towards re-centralization, having as instruments the State aids and commissioning, and by the control of the cultural field dominated, at its turn, by a “social-assisted mentality”.³² The CDR-USD-UDMR coalition governance, installed following the elections at the end of 1996, resumed the reform of the cultural institutions system by abandoning the centralized-bureaucratic, pyramidal model and embracing (at least as intention) a decentralized model similar to that of Nordic countries and the Netherlands. Nevertheless, the

mechanism for supporting culture, having as declared purpose the guaranteeing of the freedom of expression and the access to culture, was conceived as a machinery put into function not only by legislative means but also by administrative ones.³³ Therefore, though at the legislative level some progress was made (through redefining sponsorship and introducing a new juridical category, the *maecenatus* - the OU 36/1998, completing the law 32/1994 -, or through organizing the National Cultural Fund - OG 79/1998), the favorite instruments of the system for supporting culture continued to consist in, besides the budgetary allowances for programs of the public cultural institutions, public subsidies for festivals of theatre or music, folk events and book acquisitions, as well as State aid for publishing houses. Public commissions or direct subsidies for creators are still present but at an inferior level (and in continuous decrease) comparing to public funding for heritage preservation or cultural institutions. This way, certain areas and forms of artistic expression – writing vs. visual, institutional vs. independent, traditional vs. non-traditional, canonic vs. alternative – were favored while the practice of evaluating projects by advisory committees in view of a regular based funding was still missing.³⁴

The distance between the public discourse and the action in favor of culture is another constant trait of cultural policies in Romania, proved by the lack or anemia of specific policies for supporting contemporary, “living” creation. As a response to the question “how should we support the creativity of our days?” the new PDSR/PSD governance (2001-2004) did not omit to mention, besides the (favorite) mechanisms of social security for “re-balancing the values scale within the Romanian society”, the implementation of a legislative framework through a mechanism of sponsorship and *maecenatus*, through tax policies and through decentralization and de-bureaucratization.³⁵ But, despite of the existence for more than a decade of this legislative framework, the practice of private funding for arts is still at an incipient stage and quite small from a financial point of view. And this due to the imperfection of the legislation (non-stimulating) on sponsorship and *maecenatus* as well as to the lack of tradition for cooperation between the

arts and the business sector in Romania and to a certain conformist attitude among domestic companies.³⁶ The proclaimed will of decentralization and de-bureaucratization did not find an equivalent not even in the institutional practice: the actions from those times of the public authorities and institutions as MCRA, RCF/RCI, Romanian cultural centers abroad – that had proposed themselves not only to coordinate the cultural activity but to intervene as producers of cultural events –, were strongly marked by a festive and centralist mentality that found its expression in the *étatique* logic underlying the public actions on both national and international levels. Thus, the cultural events or “grandiose programs and objectives of a national interest” supported by the ministry were, usually, festive manifestations as “The Days of the Romanian Culture”, “The Year of Romania” (abroad), “Festival of the Arts”, “centenaries”, “celebrations” and “commemorations” of scholars or artists. The fact that these events were put under the ministerial or presidential patronage determined that the “promotion of Romanian culture and arts (on the European and international scene)” transforms, as we have noticed before, into a self-representation activity or into a status increase activity of the cultural administrators more than of the artists themselves. Other major programs, at a national level, of the ministry – such as the *National Program of Valorizing the Cultural Heritage* (that also included art exhibitions, thus putting the promotion of artistic creation under a patrimonial sign), the *National Program for the Support of Written Culture*, with its components “Special Program for the purchase of Books and Cultural Periodicals for the Public Libraries” and “Special Program of State aid for Publishing Houses”, the *National Program for Supporting the Romanian Performing Creation and Arts* –, continued to mainly aim at supporting the “national heritage”, “written culture” and “public reading”, “spectacle institutions”, and to favor institutionalized culture against “private initiative” from the cultural field in general and the artistic creation in particular.³⁷

In these conditions, the effective mechanisms for supporting culture were mostly reduced to a bureaucratic scheme of non-regular financial transfers, having as main instruments the

“State aid” or “commission”, the “public subsidy” or “purchase” and almost completely ignoring the cultural market: even though the participation of publishing houses to international book fairs was considered and supported, in exchange the art fairs were (and still are) ignored. These bureaucratic funding mechanisms through administrative intervention on the cultural supply were generally associated with an administrative mechanism of demands evaluation and decision making, often qualified as arbitrary and non-transparent,³⁸ and with an unequal treatment of the cultural operators. As it was noticed regarding the period 2000-2004, the public funds for cultural operators were generally different, separated with respect to their juridical status (public institution, NGO, independent artist), as well as different were the access rules, the eligibility conditions, the criteria and procedures of subsidy granting – administrative decision vs. project evaluation and selection.³⁹ All these, in addition to the intermittent and deficient functioning of the National Cultural Fund that was created precisely for supporting cultural projects, accentuated the dependence – institutional and financial – of cultural activity towards public authorities. Nevertheless, there should be said that the new team installed at the Ministry of Culture and Religious Affairs in December 2004 (the PNL-PD-UDMR-PC governance) brought important changes in articulating the cultural policies and its mechanisms through the assuming of a neutral position on the cultural projects market and through the separation of the traditional authority functions of the ministry from the function of selecting and financing cultural projects. The latter was delegated, according to the principle of *arm's length bodies*, to the National Cultural Fund Administration, which was transformed into an autonomous decision body that became functional at the end of 2005, though its functioning is not spared by criticism. Also, in July 2005, there were introduced new forms of support for artists as the artistic residences – through the Romanian Cultural Institute – and the cultural mobility scholarships supported by the MCRA.

In the particular case of the visual arts, the institutional and financial mechanisms of public support have strengthened

and diversified since the founding, at the end of 1996, within the Ministry of Culture, of a Visual Arts Department (that was to be reduced in 2001 to a simple office in the framework of the General Direction for Heritage). According to the European experts report in 1999, the mechanisms for supporting the visual arts and the selection system seemed to be reasonably comprehensive and correct, “ranging from projects funding to public commissioning and the purchase of art works - each procedure being based on the advice of a competent committee”. But a problem was signalized that regarded “how to ensure, amid the influx of applications for support, that artistic criteria take priority over social considerations”. Nevertheless, all these mechanisms were put into practice with little budgetary funds, even in continuous decrease, and in the absence of artistic institutions as contemporary art museums or centers, private art galleries or a functional art market.⁴⁰ From this reason, the favorite instruments of the public system for supporting individual creation were and have been till recently the commissioning for public monuments, the purchase of contemporary art works, the organizing of contemporary creation camps and of exhibitions which, starting with 2001, were included in the framework of the National Program of Valorizing the Cultural Heritage.⁴¹ The patrimonial vision that underlies the cultural policy from that time, as well as its orientation towards self-promoting of the cultural bureaucracy, affected, however, its capacity of achieving the assumed objectives for supporting and promoting creation/creativity: in 2003, for instance, the acquisition of contemporary fine arts and monumental art works (in amount of 32 billions lei, representing 52% from the total value of MCC acquisitions) had as purpose “the endowment of the central administration” (!) Also relevant for a long time dominant (assisted) mentality is the fact the Romanian experts national report (1999), though it was pointing out the necessity of “developing the internal art market” and “establishing a quotation system compatible to those from abroad”, it suggested that these objectives should be achieved through “State purchasing”, while the European experts report recommended that, in the conditions of a decreasing budget, cultural policies should fa-

vor the emergence of new private enterprises on the cultural market (as the art galleries), emphasizing precisely the importance of private initiative, of freedom of economic operators, of concurrence and competition, inclusively in the cultural field.⁴²

It is true that there is neither a unique and magic formula for cultural policies, nor institutional-financial mechanisms that should work wherever, however and whenever. Nevertheless, we could ask ourselves what are, in the actual conditions, the most adequate (from the perspective of desired outcomes) instruments for supporting and promoting artistic creation: the direct intervention of public authorities through subsidies or the indirect support through incentives to private initiative? In order to respond to this question, a *comparative analysis* of the various models of cultural policies is desirable as the problem is still present in the western countries too. It is not about evoking the respective models for reproducing them in a different socio-economic context, as the Romanian one, but it is about valorizing the diverse European experiences and the debates they have generated in order to renew the formulating of the problems generated by the State intervention in the artistic field, and to imagine new modalities of functioning of an art policy in the conditions of the contemporary art changing regime and internationalization of art markets.

In the last decades, there have been (and still are) several models of public policies in the cultural field, even if it is mainly about general orientations including certain elements of convergence than “pure” models. Considered from the perspective of the relationship between public and private spheres, between State intervention and private initiative, two major models could be observed, that is the (Anglo-Saxon) *non-interventionist model* and the (French) *étatique model*. The first one emphasizes the free market and the legal or tax incentives for private initiative in the art field, preferring a non-interventionist policy without completely excluding certain intervention mechanisms as public subsidies. In the French model, there dominates the public intervention in favor of artists and contemporary artistic creation through bud-

getary and administrative mechanisms – abundant funding and institutional proliferation – that however leave room for the Anglo-Saxon techniques of cultural administration. In this case, the State also exercises an administrative control over the artistic field. The policy for supporting arts and artists – whose favorite instruments are the public subsidies, commissioning and purchasing of art works – and the cultural administration are exercised through cultural administrators, official commissioners and inspectors for artistic creation, through central and regional bodies as Délégation aux arts plastiques (DAP) within the Ministry of Culture, Centre national des arts plastiques (CNAP), Fonds national d'art contemporain (FNAC), Fonds d'incitation à la création (FIACRE), Fonds régionaux d'acquisitions des musées (FRAC), and through contemporary art museums and centers.

The mechanisms, the modalities and the effects of the French State cultural policies in the fine arts field were analyzed with the instruments of art sociology, among others, by Raymonde Moulin, starting with the work *Le Marché de la peinture en France* (1967) and coming to the recent works such as *L'Artiste, l'institution et le marché* (1992/1997) and *Le marché de l'art. Mondialisations et nouvelles technologies* (2001/2003). While analyzing the relationships between State and market, intervention system and private maecenatus, security and risk, the French researcher pointed out two major modalities of public action in the art field: those of the “cultural welfare State”, with its mechanisms of “socializing the creative risk” (financial and aesthetic risk), on one hand, and those of the “maecena State”, with its intervention mechanisms in the art works market and commissions, on the other hand. This “welfare” policy was characterized by the abundant funding for fine arts and the institutional proliferation. Without mentioning all the details, we invoke here just a few data in order to exemplify the immense amount of financial resources used in France in the art works purchase policy and the public commissioning: during 1980-1990, FNAC, FRAC and FRAM bought more than 12.000 works, the number of the beneficiary artists being (before 1985) 3.500, that is 35% from those affiliated to the social security system, though

only 1% among them benefited from purchases from all funds; just during 1982-1985, the total amount for purchases was 120 million French francs, the medium acquisition price per work (concealing huge differences in prices) being approximately 12-13.000 French francs. A more recent account shows that, from 1981 to 1999, the National Funds for Contemporary Art bought almost 11.000 works produced by 3.500 artists while the Regional Funds for Contemporary Art bought, from 1982 (the year of their creation) to 2000, almost 14.000 works belonging to more than 2.500 artists, without including here the works bought by the museums whose funds considerably increased at that time. In addition, there were important public commissions, in diverse modalities and levels (State or local communities), recorded by the account for DAP/Ministry of Culture between 1982-1990: a total budget of 168 million French francs for 440 artists and 468 art works. From 2.200 projects elaborated between 1993-2000, more than 900 artists realized almost 1200 commissions. The public commissioning was actually conceived as protecting artists from the market, as their artistic propositions did not correspond to any private demand, and the disciplines disadvantaged on the market, as sculpture, tapestry or stained glass window. In conclusion, the comparison between the 1980s and the 1990s reveals a global amelioration of the artists' social situation, even though the evolution of the art policy, conjugated with the euphoria of the art market at the end of the 1980s, was mainly in the benefit of a small group of favored artists (3-5% from the total) rather than the rest of them.⁴³

Apparently, the generous French cultural policy would be an ideal model that should be also applied in Romania. In favor of this borrowing there would plead, in addition to all the financial difficulties Romanian artists are confronted with and that should be removed, the affinities between the two socio-cultural spaces, among which the common preference for paternalism and State control. But, in the today's economic and cultural conditions – internationalization of art and the emergence of a free, global art market –, to wish and to expect *only* policies of direct budgetary support as the *public subsidy* or the *State commission*, followed by the administrative inter-

vention in the artistic creation field (as the first inevitably implies the second), means to preserve a passive attitude and an assisted mentality, which, through the generated and perpetuated illusions, could become dangerous for the Romanian art world. In addition to the obvious lack of financial resources and of institutional-administrative capacities for supporting, in Romania, in a coherent manner, a “welfare” cultural policy as the French one, at least two other arguments could be invoked in favor of this idea.

On one hand, it is about the distance or the inadequacy between the justifications or the ideological pretences of the State interventionism and part of its consequences as the generating of a protectionist system. As the sociologist Pierre-Michel Menger has pointed out, in an analysis on the (undesired) effects of the cultural policies of the French “Welfare State”, the attempt to tame the market pressures on creation had as result not only the financing but also the control of some assisted segments of the art markets. These segments became protected fields in which the logic of the State cultural voluntarism determined the expansion of the candidates’ population to artistic professionalization and of the number of institutions of cultural vocation as well as of the assisted artistic production (the “official” art), finally generating a crisis of artistic overpopulation and overproduction.⁴⁴ Similar critics regarding the distortions provoked by the State interventionism into the art world come also from philosophers and art historians. One could mention here personalities like the art historian Jean Clair, director of the Picasso Museum and international curator (e.g. of the Venice Biennial in 1995), the historian of ideas Marc Fumaroli, professor at College de France and member of the French Academy, and the philosopher Yves Michaud, professor at University of Paris 1 and former director of the Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts de Paris, whose positions converge towards the idea according to which the State control and interventionism in the artistic field were, in France, generating crisis factors.

Thus, when Jean Clair was acknowledging that “the contemporary French art is going badly, being absent from the international scene” and that “the artistic milieu is often unap-

proachable”, he would find the explanation in “the interventionist policy of the FRAC (State commissioning etc.), which had transformed the decision-makers determining the public taste into a small nomenclature of ‘commissaires’, too often in connivance with the market transactions, oriented towards an official vanguard and indifferent to all that does not correspond to its doctrine. In parallel, State’s solicitude had transformed the artists into social assisted, too little prepared for the competition on a free and internationalized market.”⁴⁵ The State’s protectionist system and its effects were also criticized by Marc Fumaroli in his work *L’Etat culturel: Essai sur une religion moderne* (1991) as well as in more recent publications. He denounces the paradoxical and dangerous effects of the protectionism promoted by a doctrinarian State which, under the mask of “art protection”, imposes to artists and to the public a “democratic centralism” from which take advantage just the captive clientele, the over-evaluated and over-protected artistic minorities, that is the well protected and limited circle of the “official vanguard”. An arrogant cultural administration thus becomes the guardian of an “aesthetic orthodoxy” that suffocates all attempts of innovation and taste diversity disturbing the official political orientation or ideology – identified to an international-type discourse on “contemporary art”, understood in the intolerant and jealous way implied by the *médiatiquement correct* usage of this expression, in New York as well as in Paris or Kassel.⁴⁶ At his turn, Yves Michaud took as a target, already in his work *L’artiste et les commissaires* (1989), the functioning without guidelines of an “art world that has become ‘functionarized’, ‘professionalized’ and cut from the public, never undergoing any procedures of evaluation or feed-back mechanisms meant to make it responsible”, as well as the preoccupation of the cultural bureaucracy for promoting an art where there is not too much left to see. This virulent criticism was hinting especially at the *commissaires*, those *apparatchiks cool* that make the bureaucratized art world to turn around by running FNAC, FRAC and art centers, by commissioning and deciding in the absence of criteria and based upon their official positions. It was also hinting at “the artificial support for an official art and culture that only

led to academism, to productions lacking any necessity or justification". In return, the French philosopher pleads for the State's disengagement in favor of the art market intervention (but an effective and efficient one) and in favor of a "decentralized system of (artistic) power", regionalized and especially undergoing evaluations and sanctions: evaluations from the public that visit or does not visit the exhibitions, that appreciate it or not, and sanctions in terms of success or failure for the local cultural agents, or electoral sanctions for the political representatives.⁴⁷

On the other hand, the (illusory) benefits of a cultural policy having as main instruments the direct subsidy and the State commissioning are put under question by the radical transformation of the artistic recognition and consecration process, in which the State does no longer play a significant part. It is true that in countries like France, where the State's (financial) intervention in the artistic field is massive and its role in the artistic consecration is therefore high, the action of the State intermediates – cultural administrators, museum curators, representatives of the art centers – tends to precede the private market in the process of recognition, through purchasing, exhibiting or commenting the art works, this being one of the dimensions of what used to be called in France "the contemporary art crisis".⁴⁸ But, as it has been pointed out by Raymonde Moulin in a sociological analysis of the construction and homologation of artistic value mechanisms, the valorizing of the art works and of the contemporary artists is mainly based nowadays on the association between the international network of private galleries and the international network of art institutions, having as leading actors the art dealers-gallery owners and the auction commissioners, the curators, the critics and the art agents, the public, the collectors and the investors. The specific of the actual artistic configuration consists especially in the increasing interdependency between the cultural field, where the homologation and the hierarchy of artistic values are established, and the art market, where the transactions take place: "The constitution of contemporary artistic values, in the double sense of the term – aesthetically and financially –, is realized through the conjunc-

tion of the artistic field with the art market. The price ratifies, in fact, a non-economic labor of offering aesthetic credibility, a labor of value homologation realized by the specialists, that is critics, contemporary art historians, museum professionals, art administrators and exhibition curators. Once established on the market, the price facilitates and accelerates the circulation and internationalization of aesthetic judgment."⁴⁹ From this reason, even researches commanded by the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs – in order to determinate the best measures to be taken to impose the French contemporary art on the international artistic scene – admit that a clever support for the art market is indispensable for the emergence and recognition of the most promising artistic talents.⁵⁰ This kind of findings should not be ignored by a cultural policy that wants to be responsible for the artists' positioning in relationship with the main institutions of artistic consecration as well as with the art market, and which, moreover, pretends to support and promote the arts and culture (Romanian, in our case) on the international scene.

Conclusions and recommendations

The analysis of the manner in which public authorities in Romania have acted in order to support and promote the arts and the artists demonstrated that, since 1989, the ministry of culture has permanently oscillated between the role of cultural agent and that of mediator, between proclaimed neutrality and action as valorizing instance. Moreover, this valorization was based on "impure" rationale, mixing artistic criteria and social considerations in the use of the one and the same intervention instrument as "art policy" or "artist policy", which should have kept their specificity. Besides discontinuity, the lack of strategic vision or coherence and the incoherence in implementation, another constant trait of the cultural policies was the distance between the State proclaimed will to preserve a specific mission for supporting creators and developing creativity and the public action in favor of them, given the quasi-inexistence or the anemia of specific policies for supporting actual creation. The revealing of the contradic-

tory subjacent logics of the cultural policies in Romania outlines the profile of a “cultural State” - patron, administrator and controller of culture, but still incapable to respond to its assumed role in the cultural field. On one hand, there still subsists the tension between a system based on direct management and a system working through incentives and regulations, that is between the voluntary logic of a cultural State that assumes the role to act and the non-interventionist logic of a State-mediator that limits itself to facilitate the action of others in the cultural field. Consequently, though after 1989 the exercise of the cultural policy has progressively detached from the *étatique*, State controlled and bureaucratic model, characteristic for the communist cultural administration, it has been dominated for a long time by the *étatique* logic of institutionalized culture and has not been ready – till recently and at a discursive level – for the liberal logic of creativity. The approaches of a bureaucratic nature and the implementation of cultural policies mainly centered on institutions, in a situation defined by the quasi-inexistence of viable alternatives of funding creators from the private or non-governmental sector, have induced accentuated unbalances between the actors of the cultural life - cultural public institutions, non-governmental organizations, independent artists -, in the disadvantage of the actual individual creation, leading to the institutionalization and bureaucratization of the cultural activities as well as to the increase of their financial dependency from State and public subsidy. On the other hand, the cultural policies in Romania and the mechanisms of the public action in the cultural field are not only exposed to financial constraints but also to conceptual ones, as it proves the ambiguity of the definition and social position of the artist, the latter being either assimilated to the civil servants category, included in the ambiguously juridical category of “*liber-profesionist*” or identified to a “cultural animator” or a social services purveyor. Following the attitude more valorizing than neutral adopted by the ministry of culture and its preponderant interventionist policies (but alternatively in favor of one or other type of cultural practices: when the traditional ones - popular or “high”, when the vanguard-contemporary ones), both the public action and the art-

ists themselves have been confronted with the dilemmas induced by the permanent oscillations and tensions between the egalitarian logic of cultural democracy and the elitist logic of cultural democratization: egalitarianism vs. elitism, social security vs. freedom of creation, aesthetic relativism vs. hierarchy of artistic values. Or, as the European experience (especially the French one, but also from the Nordic countries) proves, in the actual conditions defined by the internationalization of art and the increasing concurrence on a free art market, an interventionist policy of the State, especially using as main instrument the direct subsidies and completely ignoring the cultural market, can contribute neither to the development of the artistic sector nor to the improvement of the social and professional status of the artists.

However, the recall of these experiences in the field of cultural policies offered us several instructive suggestions not to be disregarded in the future that could help to formulate and implement accountable, legitimate and effective cultural policies in supporting artistic creation, and that could serve the artists in managing their participation to the new art worlds, founded on cooperation as well as on concurrence and risk. Besides the urgent measures to be taken, imposed by the precariousness of the Romanian artists’ condition, an efficient and effective cultural policy demands a patient institutional and conceptual construction, on a long term. Therefore, our recommendations will focus mainly on the most appropriate policy instruments - financing modalities and mechanisms - that should be implemented, on a long term, for supporting creation and for promoting creators on both national and international scenes. Of course, it is about offering a preliminary sketch that will be the basis of a larger research program on cultural policies in Romania and on their outcomes on the functioning and structure of the art world, in particular on the social and professional status of the artists.

As far as the State is concerned, it should limit its role and interventions to the ensuring of appropriate economic conditions for freely create art and, thus, to maintaining an autonomous cultural life. This role should be prudently exercised, in an indirect and more liberal manner, through supple

and diverse financing mechanisms oriented towards the support of viable artistic projects (previous to creation) and through the purchase of good quality art works (afterwards), while the decisions should be delegated to autonomous institutions that should make the selection based on criteria accepted by both the artistic community and the public. As Marc Fumaroli pointed out, “the good governance, in any field, means to know to well delegate, and this principle has more impact in the field of sensibility and taste than anywhere else”. In the artistic field, the State should limit itself to two main tasks: the enrichment of the artistic heritage, not just its preservation, and the support of the actual artistic creation, not through direct subsidies or through administrative interventions but through a non-interventionist policy, accentuating the role of the art market and the financial and legal incentives for the private initiative in the artistic field, for instance tax incentives for the veritable private *maecenas*, and instituting an effective financing mechanism from artistic programs and projects. It is necessary that cultural policies should conjugate with tax policies for supporting art market and for stimulating individuals to collect contemporary art, fact that could lead to the emergence of a public of art collectors and to the development of private art galleries, more capable than the State to support the free metabolism of artistic creation.

Regarding the artists themselves, the alternative to the precariousness of their actual condition is not the indulging in the nostalgia of the subsidy under the paternal gaze of the State, but the full assuming of the creator condition that involves innovation, freedom as well as concurrence (even international), incertitude and risk. According to the analysis led by Pierre-Michel Menger in his recent book *Portrait de l'artiste en travailleur. Métamorphose du capitalisme* (2002), in the contemporary world the artist appears as the exquisite figure of the inventive and mobile professional, indocile towards hierarchies, engaged into an economy of incertitude and more exposed to the risks of individual concurrence. Consequently, in order to have access to the main art worlds and to be recognized by them, the Romanian artist should assume an active

attitude of self promoting and dissemination of artistic products, both through the traditional artistic institutions – exhibitions, biennials, museums, art centers – and the private market institutions – art galleries, art fairs –, even through internet and the networking of dissemination activities and communication with the other members of the art worlds. Differently put, the artist should become co-producer and manager of its own participation to the art worlds.

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¹ On this issue, see La politique culturelle en Roumanie. Rapport national, Programme Européen d'examen des Politiques Culturelles Nationales, Conseil de l'Europe, CC-Cult (99)33 A (French only), Strasbourg, 1999, p.117 (<http://www.coe.int/T/E/Cultural-Co-operation/Culture/Policies/Reviews/Romania.asp>); Statutul creatorilor de artă și artiștilor interpreți în România. Declarație comună, Ministry of Culture and ANUC, Bucharest, 1998, pp.13-15.

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⁸ Ministry of Culture, Politici și strategii culturale 1997-2000, „Introducere”, pp.7,8, ch. „Ministerul Culturii în sistemul administrației publice în România” (H.G.nr.134/1998), pp.12-13, „Domeniul audiovizual”, p.116, „Manifestări internaționale de amploare”, p.136; Ministry of Culture, Direction of Visual Arts, Strategy 2000-2001, Bucharest, 2000, pp.11,15.

⁹ Ministry of Culture and Religious Affairs, Cultura și cultele 2001: „Cuvânt introductiv de Acad. Răzvan Theodorescu, ministrul Culturii și Cultelor”, p.3; Cultura și cultele 2003, Evaluări, proiecte, strategii: „Cuvânt înainte de Acad. Răzvan Theodorescu, ministrul Culturii și Cultelor”, p.6.

¹⁰ Programul de guvernare. Capitolul 22 - Politica în domeniul culturii, pp.1,3, <http://www.gov.ro/obiective/afis-docdiverse-pg.php?idoc=266>; Strategia Ministerului Culturii și Cultelor pentru perioada 2005-2008. Prezentare ținută de dna Ministru Mona Muscă în fața Comisiilor de Cultură din Camera Deputaților și din Senat în săptămâna 7-11 martie 2005, p.1, <http://www.cultura.ro/News.aspx?ID=514>. See also the program Serviciile publice deconcentrate ale Ministerului Culturii și Cultelor. Obiective și măsuri de reconsiderare a atribuțiilor acestora în perioada 2005-2008, Bucharest, 19 March 2005, <http://www.ro/pdf/delia-mucica-fin.pdf>.

¹¹ Cultural policy in Romania: Report of an European group of experts, pp.17, 39.

¹² Cultural Strategy. Final Report Project RO9709-01, Romania, Ministry of Culture, European Union, PHARE Programme, February 2000, <http://www.eurocult.ro/politici/prezentare.htm>, pp.8-9. See also Statutul creatorilor de artă și artiștilor interpreți. Declarație comună, pp.6,21.

¹³ MC, Politici și strategii culturale 1997-2000, p.68, DVA Strategy 2000-2001, p.1. See also La Politique culturelle en Roumanie. Rapport national, 1999, pp.130-131: „Le patrimoine est essentiel pour la création de l'identité nationale [...] Une direction prioritaire c'est l'amélioration de la démocratie culturelle: décentralisation, promotion de la créativité (le rôle des arts et des artistes), accès des masses à la vie culturelle, la liberté d'expression des individus, tolérance et pluralité des opinions...”

¹⁴ D-E.RATIU, „Cultural Policy in Romania: Justifications, Values and Constraints. A Philosophical Approach”, in: Journal for the Study of Religions and Ideologies, no.12, Winter 2005, p.116.

- ¹⁵ Merja HEIKKINEN, „Artist Policy in Finland and Norway. Considerations for comparing direct support for artists”, paper presented at The International Conference on Cultural Policy Research, Bergen-Norway, 1999, p.24.
- ¹⁶ The National Cultural Forum: „Discursul președintelui României, Ion Iliescu”, Bucharest, June 19th 2002, pp.2-3, <http://www.presidency.ro/discursuri/2002/mes-020619-ForumCult-Buc.htm>; MCRA, *Cultura și cultele* 2001, pp.3,8,11,49.
- ¹⁷ Cultural Strategy: Final Report Project RO9709-01, pp.7-10.
- ¹⁸ Corina SUTEU, Overview on cultural policy in central and Eastern Europe between 1990/2003, Policy paper UNESCO 2003, pp.16, 27, in: Policies for Culture on line Journal, <http://www.policiesforculture.org/articles&reports>.
- ¹⁹ MCRA, *Cultura și cultele* 2001: „Cuvânt introductiv de Acad. RăzvanTheodorescu, Ministrul Culturii și Cultelor”, p.3; MC, *Politici și strategii culturale 1997-2000*, pp.65-66, *DVA Strategy 2000-2001*, p.13.
- ²⁰ Virgil Stefan NITULESCU, „De ce avem nevoie de o politică (strategie) culturală?”, 2000, <http://anuc.ro/cultpolr.html>; „Cultural Policies in Romania - An Inside View”, 2002, Policies for Culture on line Journal, <http://www.policiesforculture.org/articles&reports>.
- ²¹ M.HEIKKINEN, „Artist Policy in Finland and Norway. Considerations for comparing direct support for artists”, loc.cit., pp.13-16; Merijn RENGERS, Erik PLUG, „Private or Public? How Dutch Visual Artists Choose between Working for the Market and the Government”, in: *Journal of Cultural Economics*, 25: 2001, pp.2-4.
- ²² Monica LOTREANU, „Statutul creatorilor de artă și artiștilor interpreți în România. Declarația comună la șase ani de la adoptare” (pp.3-4), paper presented at 6emes Rencontres Européennes de Cluj. Les conditions de la création artistique dans l'Europe élargie, 21-23 October 2004.
- ²³ Direction of Visual Arts Strategy 2000-2001, pp.8,13-15.
- ²⁴ On the distinction between the two logics, which are neither recent nor specific to Romania, see Raymonde MOULIN, *L'Artiste, l'institution et le marché*, Paris, Flammarion, 1992/1997, pp.90-92 : « La stratégie de démocratisation culturelle repose sur une conception universaliste de la culture et sur la représentation d'un corps social unifié [...], et comporte deux volets : d'une part, conserver et diffuser et les formes héritées de la culture savante ; d'autre part, soutenir la création dans ses formes actuelles [...] Le principe de la démocratie culturelle a contesté, au nom d'un relativisme égalitaire, les privilèges de la culture savante. La conception relativiste de l'action culturelle se traduit de deux manières : réhabilitation des cultures spécifiques et des groupes sociaux infra ou extra-nationaux d'une part, et révision des hiérarchies artistiques établies d'autre part. »
- ²⁵ *Cultural policy in Romania*. Report of an European group of experts, pp.14-16.

- ²⁶ M.RENGERS, E.PLUG, „Private or Public? How Dutch Visual Artists Choose between Working for the Market and the Government”, pp.14-15; M.HEIKKINEN, „Artist Policy in Finland and Norway: Considerations for comparing direct support for artists”, pp.20-24.
- ²⁷ Bela MARKO (State Minister coordinating the fields of culture, education and European integration), intervention at the Debates Market. Why and how should culture be funded? In Romania, Bucharest, February 2005.
- ²⁸ R. MOULIN, *L'Artiste, l'institution et le marché*, pp. 87-88.
- ²⁹ *Recommendation on the Status of the Artist*, UNESCO, Belgrade, 1980.
- ³⁰ Delia MUCICA, „The Status of the Artist on Romania”, 2000, pp.2-4, <http://www.policiesforculture.org/articles&reports>; Cultural Policy in Romania. Report of an European group of experts, p.14. For the attempt (partially successful) to integrate the pensions of artists into the public social security system (Law no.127/1995), see *Cultural Policies in Europe: a Compendium of Basic Facts and Trends*. Romania, p.13.
- ³¹ R. MOULIN, *L'Artiste, l'institution et le marché*, pp. 87-88.
- ³² MC, *Politici și strategii culturale 1997-2000*, pp.8,17,22,53; Cultural Policy in Romania. Report of an European group of experts, pp.5-7.
- ³³ V.St. NITULESCU, „De ce avem nevoie de o politică (strategie) culturală?”, pp.1-2, „Cultural Policies in Romania - An Inside View”, pp.2-3.
- ³⁴ Cultural policy in Romania. Report of an European group of experts: ch.2, „Cultural institutions, decentralization and the development of civil society”, 3 „Support for creativity”, pp.8-16. Thus, concerning the policies of the Ministry of Culture whenever budgets are tightened, the European experts observe the „iron law of wages” that the expenditure for supporting artistic creation is the first to be squeezed because the funding of permanent institutions takes precedence. For example, „the volume of the project finance allocated to the Ministry's performing arts department fell from ROL 6 billion in 1998 to ROL 2 billion in (around USD 150,000) in 1999. Similarly, the project budget for the fine arts was cut by 50% (from ROL 2.8 billion to ROL 1.4 billion).” (p.15) Instead, „the priority accorded to heritage - in particular to architectural heritage - is reflected in a major increase in the relevant budget, from ROL 12 billion in 1996 to ROL 231 billion in 1998, [which] accounts for almost a third of the Ministry of Culture total expenditure.” (p.17) In order to acknowledge how the budget was allocated across the various sectors and cultural activities during the period 1996-1998, see op.cit., pp.5-6, and *Cultural Policies in Europe: a Compendium of Basic Facts and Trends*. Romania, p.17.
- ³⁵ *The National Cultural Forum*: „Discursul președintelui României, Ion Iliescu”, pp.8-10, „Intervenția primului ministru al României, Adrian Năstase”, <http://www.ecumest.ro/arcult/stire 07.30.htm>.
- ³⁶ See the research *Business attitudes on arts sponsorship*. In Romania, add *Business Chance on Art*, Bucharest, 2004, pp.4-6.

³⁷ See the MCRA reports, *Cultura și cultele. Evaluări, proiecte, strategii*, 2001, 2002, 2003. For the allocation of expenditures on different types of activities and the tiny share of the expenditures on cultural activities into the overall expenditures of the ministry, see the chapters „Susținerea financiară”, op.cit., pp.102-128 (2001), pp.69-80 (2002), pp.79-83 (2003), and *Cultural Policies in Europe: a Compendium of Basic Facts and Trends*. Romania, ch. 4.1 „Cultural policy priorities in the past 5 years” [1996-1999], pp.10-11,17.

³⁸ On this topic, see the reports *Cultura și cultele* 2001, pp.12,47-48,129, *Cultura și cultele* 2003, p.42, and the critical reactions of the cultural media, especially related to the National Program for the Support of Written Culture.

³⁹ Delia MUCICA, „Ce mecanisme de finanțare publică a culturii funcționau în decembrie 2004?”, in: „Un nou mecanism de finanțare publică a culturii”, Bucharest, March 2005, http://www.ecumest.ro/pdf/delia_mucica_fin.pdf.

⁴⁰ Cultural Policy in Romania. Report of an European group of experts, pp.15-16.

⁴¹ See the MCRA reports *Cultura și cultele*, pp.8-11,43 (2001), pp.9-14, 34-38 (2002), pp.36-38 (2003).

⁴² Cultural Policy in Romania. Report of an European group of experts, pp.6,19; *La Politique culturelle en Roumanie. Rapport national*: „Il est a souhaiter que l’Etat amplifie les acquisitions d’art contemporain - le standing de nos artistes est, en général, modeste, voir moins que modeste.” (p.117) Pentru date concrete despre expoziții și instituții artistice, vezi cap.V „Le cadre de manifestation de l’art roumain contemporain”, pp.108-119.

⁴³ Raymonde MOULIN, *L’Artiste, l’institution et le marché*, cap. IV, „L’Etat et les artistes”, pp. 87-151; *Le marché de l’art. Mondialisation et nouvelles technologies*, Paris, Flammarion, 2003, pp.55-57. Sources: La

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⁴⁴ Pierre-Michel MENDER, „L’Etat-Providence et la culture. Socialisation de la création, prosélytisme et relativisme dans la politique culturelle publique”, in: François Chazel (ed.), *Pratiques culturelles et politiques de la culture*, Maison des Sciences de l’Homme d’Aquitaine, 1987, pp.30, 34-40.

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⁴⁷ Yves MICHAUD, „Des beaux-arts au bas arts. La fin des absolus esthétiques - et pourquoi ce n’est pas plus mal”, *Esprit*, 1993, nr.197, pp.69-98; *L’artiste et les commissaires, quatre essais non pas sur l’art contemporain mais sur ceux qui s’en occupent*, Nîmes, Ed. Jacqueline Chambon, 1989; *La crise de l’art contemporain*, Paris, PUF, 1997.

⁴⁸ Nathalie HEINICH, *Le triple jeu de l’art contemporain. Sociologie des arts plastiques*, Paris, Minuit, 1998, pp.43-46.

⁴⁹ R. MOULIN, *Le marché de l’art. Mondialisation et nouvelles technologies*, pp.39-44, *L’artiste, l’institution et le marché*, pp. 7-10, și capitoulul V „Les transformations du marché de l’art”, pp.167-246.

⁵⁰ See the report *Le rôle des pays prescripteurs sur le marché et dans le monde de l’art contemporain* by the French sociologist Alain QUEMIN, later published as *L’Art contemporain international: entre les institutions et le marché* (Le rapport disparu), Nîmes, Jacqueline Chambon/Artprice, 2002, especially the Third Part « Quelques pistes envisageables pour promouvoir plus efficacement l’art contemporain français a l’étranger », pp.179-217.

Jewish Philosophy and the Metaphor of Returning to Jerusalem

Sandu Frunza

Associated Professor, Ph.D.,
Department of Systematic
Philosophy, Babes-Bolyai
University, Cluj, Romania.
Author of the books: *Filosofie
si Iudaism* (2006),
*Fundamentalismul religios si
noul conflict al ideologiilor*
(2003), *Experienta religioasă
în gândirea lui Dumitru
Stăniloae* (2001), *Iubirea si
transcendenta*. (1999), *O
antropologie mistică*. (1996).
He is also the editor of:
*Education and Cultural Diver-
sity* (co-editor, 2006), *The
Challenges of Multiculturalism
in Central and Eastern Europe*,
(co-editor, 2005), *Pasi spre
integrare. Religie si drepturile
omului în România* (2004),
Filosofie si religie (2001). E-
mail: sfrunza@yahoo.com.

There are multiple manners of defining Jewish philosophy. The controversies woven around this topic seem to leave the issue perpetually open instead of determining a unique and final perspective. However, this outcome is indubitably an indication of the fact that Jewish philosophy proposes a privileged manner of understanding Judaism through the encounter between philosophy and religion as a founding polarity of a creative tradition. One of the ways of asserting this polarity has gained the symbolic dimension of superimposing two cultural paradigms. This has been expressed through the metaphor of two cities, namely Jerusalem and Athens, and through the metaphor of two lands, Greece and Israel. Out of these symbolic designations I will bring into discussion the standpoints of Leo Strauss and Abraham Joshua Heschel and will try to offer a new perspective over this issue.

Athens versus Jerusalem as a State of Crisis in Jewish Philosophy

Leo Strauss believes that the Western man has become what he is by a continuous effort to put together biblical faith and Greek thought.¹ Thus, the most profound experiences of the past to which Western man is bound can be designated by the metaphor of the two cities, Jerusalem and Athens.

Although their encounter reveals a unique explanatory paradigm, the two explanatory structures lay on totally different foundations. Their importance and specificity can especially be understood by reference to the distinctive features they presuppose. Leo Strauss sets as distinctive of Athens the preference of the individual in acquiring excellence, distinction, and supremacy, whereas the distinctive feature of Jerusalem can be seen in the biblical reference to „the utmost honoring of father and mother”.²

Strauss' commentators have explained these particularities by carrying further the discourse on the existence of a fundamental tension within Western civilization that is determined by the conflict between the biblical and the philosophical outlook on life. The tension between Jerusalem and Athens is perceived as a tension between autonomous life and obedient

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love. Michael L. Morgan thinks that these two worldviews inevitably lead to conflict since philosophy places man under the sign of independence and knowledge, whereas religion brings along the world of dependence and affection. Therefore the thinking of the Westerner finds itself in a permanent state of crisis. We are left to believe that the permanent conflict between philosophy and religion renders impossible their co-existence in a coherent cultural construction: that the reconciliation of the two spheres of the spirit corresponds to a state of crisis rather than a creative one.

We may accept that if we want to have a bird's eye view of Western civilization, then we are obliged to take into consideration a series of nuances in order to make the necessary distinctions relevant to understanding the development of various cultures that have contributed to the making of what is said to be of Western origin. Thus the state of tension that is brought along by the conflict between Greek philosophy and the mythical understanding of the world and of human existence reveals an inadequacy and an encounter much more tensioned than the one suggested by the encounter between Greek philosophy and Judaism. At the same time, the encounter between philosophy and theology that Christian thought gives rise to leaves unsolved the profound state of crisis that the placing together of thought and faith engenders. Actually, Christianity constitutes a state of conflict, of crisis that cannot find resolution in the balance between Jerusalem and Athens, theology and philosophy, faith and thought. Despite the fact that the manner of understanding the founding divinity of Christianity is constructed in the form of a theandric principle, the founding tension remains permanently in the domain of crisis and contradiction. This will be settled only in the eschatological perspective, which no longer pertains to that existence which philosophers can hope to integrate into their discourse. By employing the metaphor of two cities, we may state that this integration is possible in Christian thinking only through the state of war between two fortresses. In what we call "Christian philosophy" we come upon the conquering nature of Jerusalem and the state of submission of Athens, and from time to time witness attempts to break down the

walls of the conquering fortress. Hence, Jerusalem, although a conqueror, seems to be in a continuous state of siege.

Although the state of tension seems to be increasingly intensified in a description such as the one Leo Strauss proposes, nevertheless the defenders of a state of conflict between Jerusalem and Athens do not forget to specify that the secret of Western civilization lies precisely in the attempt to place together reason and faith.³ Consequently, Athens and Jerusalem are regarded as two inseparable parts of the Western spirit. It is obvious that when Leo Strauss speaks about the impossibility of a Jewish philosophy and when he builds this impossibility upon the tension between the choice for Jerusalem and the choice for Athens, his perspective is indebted to a Christian reading taken as a dominant feature of Western culture.

An important aspect of enforcing the impossibility of a harmonious relationship between Jerusalem and Athens is offered by that which Strauss calls the sociology of philosophy. This type of analysis leads Strauss to the conclusion that, in order to understand the tensioned relationship between philosophy and religion, we should not overlook the social status that philosophy has had at various times in the past. This status brings a wealth of understanding of the incompatibility between biblical faith and philosophical thought. By analyzing the status of philosophy in the Middle Ages, Strauss ascertains that for a long time philosophy did not have any social or political status. Within the medieval Islamic world, philosophy had a precarious status, the philosopher often being regarded with reserve or suspicion; in the Christian world, philosophy had come under the authority of the Church and had become part of sacred doctrine, thus losing its autonomy, whereas in the Jewish world being a Jew and being a philosopher were situations that were mutually exclusive. In this manner, the situation of Maimonides appears to Strauss to be a good example. Although Maimonides' work, *The Guide of the Perplexed* is the Jewish equivalent to Saint Thomas' *Summa Theologica*, the former did not enjoy the same authority as the latter enjoyed in Christianity.⁴ This comparison between Saint Thomas and Maimonides, Aquinas' forerunner, is a re-

current theme in the exegesis of Maimonides' thought. In this respect, Isaac Husik points out that "It is no doubt an exaggeration to say that there would have been no Aquinas if Maimonides had not preceded him".⁵ However, it is an indisputable fact that the translation of the Guide into Latin had a decisive influence on thinkers such as Alexander of Hales, William of Auvergne, Albertus Magnus, and others, but particularly on reconciliation of the teachings of the Church with Aristotle's thought as it appears in Aquinas.⁶ By rejecting the possibility of the existence of Jewish philosophy, Strauss locates the entire authority of Maimonides' thinking in the interpretation of the Jewish law presented in *Mishne Tora*. The importance that Maimonides' preoccupations with what concerns the codification of the law might thus explain why Maimonides is rather interested in highlighting to what extent the study of philosophy is allowed, than in using philosophy to justify the divine law.⁷ In other respects Strauss' standpoint toward the Guide is well-known. He asks us to understand that „it is not a philosophic book – a book written by a philosopher for philosophers – but a Jewish book: a book written by a Jew for Jews. Its first premise is the old Jewish premise that being a Jew and being a philosopher are two incompatible things.”⁸

Strauss finds one positive aspect of the precarious status that philosophy holds in Judaism and Islam. This positive element, to which we must grant an even greater importance than the author does, resides in the fact that while in Christianity philosophy has become subordinated to Christian theology, in Judaism and Islam philosophy develops in certain conditions of freedom by eluding the pressure exercised by the religious authority. Running the risk of exaggeration in his colorful depictions, the image of the medieval philosopher presented by Strauss is that of the philosopher who, withdrawn in his own world, eventually arrives at a comparison of his life with that of an emeritus.⁹ Strauss is convinced that such representations prove that medieval Jews had a clear consciousness of the incompatibility between biblical faith and philosophical thought.¹⁰ Moreover, Strauss emphasizes that this consciousness is a consistent feature of Jewish thought

for the periods that followed. As a first piece of evidence Strauss reminds us of Spinoza's statement according to which the Jews despised philosophy.¹¹ Strauss finds further support for this interpretation in the discovery that the promoter of Jewish enlightenment, Moses Mendelssohn, himself eventually apologized to his readers for recommending the study of logic to them. The tension between philosophy and religion appears more strongly marked to the exegete of Mendelssohn's thinking since he feels obliged to specify that logic is one of the subjects outside of Judaism the study of which is not subject to prohibition by the Jews.

The most significant issue that arises from this consistent and very coherent attitude of the Hebrew mentality, marked as it is by the dispute between Judaism and philosophy, is indicated by Strauss to be the impossibility of the existence of a unique cultural paradigm which encompasses at the same time both Jerusalem and Athens.¹² Consequently, the metaphor of the two cities expresses a fundamental tension, namely the tension between reason and revelation.¹³ The opposition between reason and faith is understood here as an exclusive opposition between the God of the philosophers on the one hand and the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob on the other.¹⁴

Strauss does not succeed in finding a way to reconcile the two, beginning as he does from the premise that this opposition is due to the fact that philosophy and religion have totally different foundations. Philosophy founds itself on epistemological certainty, whereas revelation relies on tradition, prophecy, and miracles. As a result, the former is critical, active, and open, while the latter is subjected, passive, and closed. In asking the question whether one can be a religious thinker and at the same time a philosopher, Strauss provides the answer that this is impossible without encountering a very profound inner tension.¹⁵

Considering this profound tension, Strauss turns to scrutinize the very existence of Jewish philosophy. Although he accepts that Western civilization rests on two poles, Jerusalem and Athens, or in other words the Holy Scriptures and philosophy, Strauss believes that the history of philosophy and

the history of scriptural religion are two worlds which will never meet. He clearly states that there is nothing that could be designated as Jewish philosophy, as there is no philosophy of religion in general: we can only speak of philosophers who make use of religion in their approach and of theologians who employ philosophy in order to achieve their own goals.¹⁶ In this manner, the two cities merely stand for an expression of the state of crisis of the state of a necessary exclusion. To Strauss, „The issue of traditional Judaism versus philosophy is identical with the issue of Jerusalem versus Athens”.¹⁷

The Golden Mean between Jerusalem and Athens

Heschel suggests a way to overcome the impossibility of reconciliation between reason and faith, philosophy and biblical tradition. He starts from the premise of necessity for rethinking the place of the Bible in relation to philosophy. In order to accomplish this, Heschel claims that it is necessary to build upon a philosophy of religion that will function as a philosophy of Judaism.

To symbolically express the special situation that this philosophy of religion holds, Heschel, too, makes appeal to the metaphor of the two cities, Athens and Jerusalem. Jewish philosophy is founded on the encounter between Jerusalem and Athens.¹⁸

By focusing his discourse on the Bible, Heschel attempts to observe a way in which this can regain an appropriate status within Western thinking. Because his interest lies in the status of the Bible, Heschel ascertains that a general feature of Western thought is that “the prophets are not present when the philosophers speak with God.” Otherwise said, the Bible is not present within the books of Western philosophy as the basis for discussing the meanings of existence and the system of values proposed by philosophy.¹⁹ Heschel tries to avoid two types of unilateral approach to the Bible in philosophical thinking. He finds totally inadequate the perspective that places the biblical contents within the sphere of primitive, mythological thinking and considers them as unsuitable for

comparison with the ideas present in philosophical systems. At the same time, it seems to him that the perspective that relies on the conviction that Moses had voiced ideas similar to Plato’s and Aristotle’s is not entirely appropriate and well outlined. Such a perspective settles the distinctions between philosophical thinking and the thinking of the prophets only at the level of style, of specific modes of expression. Postulated here is a similarity between biblical and philosophical thinking, even if in the Bible there are no elements pertaining to philosophic vocabulary.²⁰ Beyond these two unilateral standpoints, Heschel is convinced that „religion is more than a mood or a feeling. Judaism, for example, is a way of thinking, not only a way of living. Unless we understand its categories, its mode of apprehension and evaluation, its teachings remain unintelligible.”²¹

Heschel can be positioned somewhere in the vicinity of the second way of placing the Bible in relation to philosophy. Yet, he traces a very important distinction, namely the one that points out that in the Biblical faith we have encompassed a particular way of thinking. It is therefore supposed that despite the fact that Israel and Greece, Jerusalem and Athens have developed divergent doctrines based on distinct categories, the Bible represents a way of thinking to the same extent that Aristotelian philosophy is a way of thinking. Therefore Heschel does not say that biblical thinking and philosophical thinking are similar. The biblical vision and the philosophical vision are put in a relation of equivalence only because both offer complex ways of thinking. By this the Bible becomes more than a simple sum of doctrines, „it represents a way of *thinking*, a specific context in which general concepts possess a particular significance, a standard of evaluation, a form of orientation”.²²

Heschel sees as an important step towards the clarification of the status of Jewish philosophy the understanding of several aspects of the relation between philosophy and theology.²³ The major distinctions identified by Heschel are the followings: while philosophy relies on investigation, theology is descriptive, normative, and historical; philosophy begins by raising problems, theology starts with dogmas; philosophy be-

gins with problems, theology already has the answer; in philosophy the emphasis is laid on problems whereas in theology the person is important; philosophy brings into discussion problems it considers universal, while in theology any universal problem represents something of a personal matter.²⁴ According to Heschel, a similar issue is at play in the relationship between philosophy and religion: „Religion is rooted in a particular tradition or in a personal insight; classical philosophy claims to have its roots in universal premises.”²⁵ In order to grasp the meaning of this interpretation it is important for us to understand that the entire effort to encircle what we may encompass within Jewish philosophy relies on the idea that in the Jewish tradition religion is not just a simple object subjected to examination, but rather at the same time constitutes itself as a challenge to philosophy.

Yet the specificity of Jewish philosophy has much more profound sources. In this respect, Heschel points out that there are two types of philosophy: one that aims at analyzing the contents of thinking, and another that is self-examining and manifests itself as a radical self-understanding, as an analysis of the act of thinking. The author also identifies the same typology in the study of religion, where we find analyses centered on the act of faith that have as their main concern the issue of faith, and at the same time analyses which deal with the contents of faith by examining the issue of the creedal confession. Heschel shows that unlike medieval Jewish philosophy, which was concerned about the issue of creedal confession, the model of philosophy that he considers representative for current Jewish philosophy abandons the analysis of concepts only to be engaged in situation analysis. This attitude relies on a conviction that we all can share, namely that „The religious situation precedes the religious conception, and it would be a false abstraction, for example, to deal with the idea of God regardless of the situation in which such an idea occurs”.²⁶

Within the internal logic of Heschel, acceptance of the above-mentioned theology brings about acceptance of the existence of at least two types of thinking: situational thinking and conceptual thinking. Each of these is favored by a particu-

lar context. Heschel is led by the conviction that the great merit of an approach from the perspective of philosophy of religion is that this subject embraces both spheres of thinking by mutually enhancing the broadening of our knowledge regarding the world and the understanding of its existential stake.²⁷ It is not by chance that the embodiment of the philosophy of religion is fixed precisely at the point in which philosophy and religion alike claim the right to provide ideas regarding fundamental issues. Thus, the relationship between the two poles of the unique paradigm that reconciles Jerusalem and Athens highlights a particular dynamic of the philosophy of religion as unifying subject.

If we accept that philosophy is a mirrored reflection, then Heschel suggests we define philosophy of religion „as religion’s reflection upon its basic insights and basic attitudes, as *radical self-understanding of religion in terms of its own spirit*.”²⁸ This definition engenders the existence of a self-explanatory effort that presupposes the understanding of experiences, attitudes, and main teachings of religion, yet also supposes a self-examining effort in order to grasp the meaning of the genuine of religious attitude.²⁹

Although Heschel mentions that this specific self-understanding implies also a critical perspective, he expresses his discontent towards the fact that philosophy by its critical approach asserts itself as a perpetual rival to religion, sometimes even attempting to displace the latter or become a religion. Heschel does not believe that an everlasting philosophy is possible, as by the very fact that philosophy mirrors a particular philosophical school it bears a limited character, and therefore the critique it undergoes must be considered a limited one. In this way philosophy of religion appears before us as a critical re-assessment of religion from the perspective of a particular philosophical choice with the goal of finding the place that religious understanding has within the dynamic process of human knowledge in general.³⁰

Even though he suggests a critical re-assessment of religion from the standpoint of philosophy,³¹ Heschel thinks that it would be inadequate for us to consider that the mission of philosophy of religion is to provide a rational basis for reli-

gion. Accepting such a perspective would imply that philosophy is identical with the rational, but Heschel believes that „we think through reason because we strive for spirit.”³² Convinced that some fundamental themes of Judaism cannot be explained through human reason alone, Heschel advises that in addition to the specific approach of reason we should pay attention to sources of cognitive intuition like religion, which he understands as sense of the ineffable.³³ By following this advice we will notice that Judaism leads us towards „a philosophy of both ideas and events.”³⁴ Starting from this position, Heschel suggests an understanding of Jewish philosophy as a philosophy of religion tailored to Judaism. Thus it takes on the form of a philosophy of Judaism. Such a philosophy will lead us towards the conclusion that, in an approach like the one advocated for Jewish philosophy, Judaism represents the spring of ideas that are displayed within philosophical analysis. It involves an effort to understand the teachings, occurrences, and engagements that Judaism presumes.³⁵

In this way the two poles expressed by the metaphor of the two cities create a median space as a space for conceptual play and equilibrium. Despite the existence of this common space, Heschel does not deny the fact that although Jerusalem and Athens are not geographically at a great distance one from another, they stand for different worlds from a spiritual viewpoint. Heschel acknowledges that there may exist standpoints that would argue that the intellectual view of positioning oneself between Jerusalem and Athens is not essential to the contents of Jewish philosophy. In this respect stands the simple argument that God could have placed the Jews somewhere between the Jordan and the Ganges, and Jewish thought could exist under the symbol of a different encounter other than that with Greek philosophy.³⁶ Nonetheless the author urges us that, beyond such standpoints regarding what could have happened or what could happen in the future, we should not lose sight of the fact that we have before us a real fact. There really is a symbolic polarity between Jerusalem and Athens, and it is fundamental for the understanding of Jewish philosophy.

Unlike Strauss, who considered as absurd the view that the encounter between Jerusalem and Athens represents a

unique coherent discourse, Heschel argues in a very convincing manner that only by maintaining balance in this polarity can the encounter between Jerusalem and Athens be rendered possible and necessary. This encounter can be achieved under the sovereignty of a polarity which must be understood as the mental representation of an ellipse. In this manner, Jewish philosophy is portrayed by Heschel as „elliptic thinking.” He believes that „philosophy of religion is involved in a polarity; like an ellipse it revolves around two foci: philosophy and religion. Except for two points on the curve that stand in equal distance to both foci, the more closely its thought comes to one, the more distant it is from the other one.”³⁷ All that is left for us to do is to let ourselves be convinced that the tension arisen out of the rivalry of these two distinctive powers makes “this thinking with an elliptic orbit” productive of a continuous enrichment of meanings for the encounter of philosophy with religion. An appropriate understanding of the way in which this encounter takes place in Heschel’s vision must take into consideration that „The categories within which philosophical reflection about religion has been operating are derived from Athens rather than from Jerusalem. Judaism is a confrontation with the Bible, and a philosophy of Judaism must be a confrontation with the thought of the Bible.”³⁸

Return Path from Jerusalem to Athens

When speaking about the existence of a philosophy of Judaism, one cannot avoid the discussion regarding the relationship between formalism and essentialism. A phrasing of this controversy that may already be considered classical is offered by Raphael Jospe.³⁹ It makes reference to the issue of what can be designated as Jewish and by this the discussion may be encompassed in a broader discourse regarding the issue of identity. As for the Jewish character of philosophy, the distinction between formalism and essentialism bears as its ultimate form of discourse the debate over the premises that define Judaism and the Jewish people. The essentialist standpoint leads to the conclusion that Judaism is what shapes the Jewish community and provides criteria for what

may be considered Jewishness, including the Jewishness of the philosopher and his philosophy. On the other hand, the formalist approach argues that the Jewish people shape Judaism, and that therefore the elements that stand for the Jewishness of the philosopher establish themselves as the forging element of his philosophy.⁴⁰ The great challenge in defining Jewish philosophy is to overcome the formalism-essentialism dispute and to analyze various systems of thinking that provide particular means for the establishment of the relation between philosophy and religion.

Among the authors who propose a Jewish philosophy understood in terms of a philosophy of Judaism we can mention Abraham Joshua Heschel, Julius Guttmann, Colette Sirat, and others. Guttmann, for example, ascertains that even from ancient times there are constant features of thinking that point to the fact that Jewish philosophy has always been a philosophy of Judaism. The emphasis on the religious element that lies at the foundations of community makes up the distinctive character of the Jewish philosophy. Guttmann accepts the fact – also highlighted by Isaac Husik and other historians of Jewish philosophy – that, formally, Jewish philosophy bears an evolution and a manner of construction similar to that of Christianity and Islam, yet by such statements we should not cast a shadow on the specificity of the philosophy of Judaism, ignoring differences in content provided by the specific doctrines and by the peculiar dynamics of conceptual framework.⁴¹ Colette Sirat suggests a philosophy of Judaism that attempts to overcome formalism and at the same time to detour certain shortcomings that have been voiced by various thinkers regarding the essentialism engendered by the philosophy of Judaism. By striving to always remain within the surroundings of a philosophy of Judaism, she maintains that „Jewish philosophy does not signify a philosophy elaborated by a Jew; nor does it signify a philosophy of which the sources are Jewish.... This means that a given philosophy, appearing at a certain moment of human history, was brought into connection with Jewish tradition, and the traits common to certain texts of the Hebrew heritage and to this system of thought were emphasized.”⁴² Therefore, Sirat endorses a con-

ciliatory stand that agrees that the tradition to which the Jewish philosophy can make reference could form a certain part of the latter or only certain elements of Jewish thought.

The solution we adopt in defining the Jewish philosophy is one which attempts to equally integrating Heschel's vision that presupposes a clear positioning of Jewish philosophy between Jerusalem and Athens, and the one suggested by Colette Sirat, which focuses on the specific pathways of encounter between Jerusalem and Athens.

A symbolic assertion of the impossibility of Jewish philosophy as it is endorsed by Leo Strauss points out that one cannot hold at one and the same time a passport for the City of Athens and one for the City of Jerusalem. The history of Jewish philosophy shows that it is needless for someone to be the holder of two passports. Even Leo Strauss discloses that Jewish philosophy had the advantage of not feeling the pressure of religious authorities as such a great burden. This liberty of Jewish philosophy has allowed free circulation from Jerusalem to Athens and back in a creative act following which we can notice that the great systems of Jewish philosophy have taken shape. How else can we imagine the reconstruction of philosophy that a Philo undertook within Judaism in ancient times, or a Maimonides in the medieval period, or a Richard Rubenstein in post-holocaust thinking? Even a disputed case such as Spinoza's, a representative of modern philosophy, although a very special case, cannot be understood unless this journey occurs and engenders remoteness, detachment but also something that we may symbolically designate as the return to Jerusalem. Only Emmanuel Levinas succeeds in such a profound and exemplary manner as Spinoza⁴³ in accomplishing a translation into the philosophic language⁴⁴ of the deepest meanings of Jewish tradition. Although her analysis does not refer specifically to Spinoza, we may say that Colette Sirat has understood very well the general framework of the types of connections that are presupposed by Jewish philosophy as philosophy of Judaism. Yet, this encounter with the religious tradition does not have to invoke an eternal essence of Judaism. Such an essence has been underlined by the exegetes of Jewish philosophy as non-functional. Rather, one

must aim at the specific areas of encounter with certain parts of tradition that are favored by a particular author and which, bearing the hallmarks of the Jewish tradition, capitalize the experience of exile in the fortress of Athens, and return to that place in the spiritual fortress of the tradition of Jerusalem that one considers the most fertile. A symbolic expression of Jewish philosophy can be comprised within the image of the road from Jerusalem to Athens and back.

The positioning of Jewish philosophy between Jerusalem and Athens can be taken into account in the perspective of the necessity to relate the two cultural models which we contain under the metaphor of two cities. Yet, when using the same symbolic language, we must notice that by employing an “elliptic thinking” the theorists of Jewish philosophy do not succeed in building their own fortress but always remain within the sphere of “between” as a form of thinking that exiles itself both from the city of Jerusalem and from the city of Athens. With all the enchantment that Jewish philosophy can yield in the form of a golden mean between philosophy and the tradition of Judaism, I believe that Jewish philosophy should not be defined only through this paradigm, which I dare to call a paradigm of exile. Rather I would be inclined to employ another paradigm that offers the dynamic of exile-redemption. This can help us to step out of the sphere of a “between” that we may perceive as a state of estrangement (be it in relation to tradition or in relation to philosophy) and can allow us to favor the model of travel between the two cities followed by a return home. Therefore, we may state that Jewish philosophy starts its journey from Jerusalem to Athens but never forgets to take the return path to Jerusalem, taking with it the entire experience of thinking that it acquires through the complex encounter with philosophical thinking.

In spite of all that Strauss theorizes, and even though it represents one of the founding dimensions of Western spirituality, Jewish culture significantly diminishes the tension between Jerusalem and Athens by the particular approach that is Jewish philosophy, which includes the interdependence of the two cities and also enforces the self-existence of Jerusalem.

Notes:

¹ Leo Strauss, *Jewish philosophy and the crisis of modernity: essays and lectures in modern Jewish thought*, edited with an introduction by Kenneth Hart Green, State University of New York Press, Albany, 1997, p. 372.

² Leo Strauss, *Jewish philosophy and the crisis of modernity: essays and lectures in modern Jewish thought*, edited with an introduction by Kenneth Hart Green, State University of New York Press, Albany, 1997, p. 378.

³ Michael L. Morgan, *Leo Strauss and the Possibility of Jewish Philosophy in Dilemmas in Modern Jewish Thought. The Dialectics of Revelation and History*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington & Indianapolis, p. 65.

⁴ Leo Strauss, *Persecution and the Art of Writing*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago&London, 1988, p. 20.

⁵ Isaac Husik, *A History of Medieval Jewish Philosophy*, Meridian Books, INC., New York, 1941, p. 307.

⁶ Isaac Husik, *A History of Medieval Jewish Philosophy*, Meridian Books, INC., New York, 1941, p. 306.

⁷ Leo Strauss, *Persecution and the Art of Writing*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago&London, 1988, p. 20.

⁸ Leo Strauss, *How to begin to study The Guide of the Perplexed*, in Moise Maimonides, *The Guide of the Perplexed*, vol. I, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1963, p. XIV.

⁹ Leo Strauss, *Persecution and the Art of Writing*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago&London, 1988, p. 21.

¹⁰ Elements for a more suitable presentation on the relations between philosophy and tradition can be traced in Moshe Halberthal, *People of the Book. Canon, Meaning, and Authority*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1997.

¹¹ See Benedict Spinoza, *The Chief Works of Benedict Spinoza*, A Theologico-political Treatise, Dover Publications, New York, 1951, the last paragraph of chapter XI.

¹² Leo Strauss, *Persecution and the Art of Writing*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago&London, 1988, p. 20.

¹³ Michael L. Morgan, *Leo Strauss and the Possibility of Jewish Philosophy in Dilemmas in Modern Jewish Thought. The Dialectics of Revelation and History*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington & Indianapolis, p. 57.

¹⁴ Leo Strauss, *Jewish philosophy and the crisis of modernity: essays and lectures in modern Jewish thought*, edited with an introduction by Kenneth Hart Green, State University of New York Press, Albany, 1997, p. 398.

¹⁵ Michael L. Morgan, *Leo Strauss and the Possibility of Jewish Philosophy in Dilemmas in Dilemmas in Modern Jewish Thought. The Dialectics of Revelation and History*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington & Indianapolis, p. 66.

¹⁶ A presentation on the manner in which Leo Strauss argues against the possibility of the existence of a field that may be called Jewish, Christian, and Islamic philosophy can be found in Warren Zev Harvey, *Historiographies of Jewish Philosophy: The Place of Maimonide and Levinas in Raphael Jospe (ed.) Paradigms in Jewish Philosophy*, Associated University Press, London, 1997, p. 31.

¹⁷ Leo Strauss, *Persecution and the Art of Writing*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago&London, 1988, p. 20. The radicalism of Strauss' view can be explained by the fact that he begins from a pre-established decision: "we have already decided in favor of Athens against Jerusalem" writes Strauss, in Leo Strauss, *Jewish philosophy and the crisis of modernity: essays and lectures in modern Jewish thought*, edited with an introduction by Kenneth Hart Green, State University of New York Press, Albany, 1997, p. 380.

¹⁸ Abraham Joshua Heschel, *God in Search of Man. A Philosophy of Judaism*, Harper & Row Publishers, New York, 1955. Heschel bases his arguing on the conviction that Jewish philosophy understood as philosophy of religion is born out of two parents, that is philosophy and religion: "It is not born of self-reflection of religion but of the encounter of the two... Philosophy of religion did not arise in Athens but in the encounter of Judaism and Greek philosophy" (pp. 12-13).

¹⁹ Abraham Joshua Heschel, *God in Search of Man. A Philosophy of Judaism*, Harper & Row, Publishers, New York, 1955, p. 25.

²⁰ Abraham Joshua Heschel, *God in Search of Man. A Philosophy of Judaism*, Harper & Row, Publishers, New York, 1955, p. 26.

²¹ Abraham J. Heschel, *Between God and Man. An interpretation of Judaism*, The Free Press, New York, 1959, p. 35.

²² Abraham Joshua Heschel, *God in Search of Man. A Philosophy of Judaism*, Harper & Row, Publishers, New York, 1955, p. 14.

²³ It must be mentioned that in Jewish thought there are discussions both with regard to the relationship between theology and philosophy and also controversies with regard to the existence of a theology within Jewish thought. There are authors who believe theology is predominantly a Christian issue. Yet there are also authors, such as Louis Jacobs, who expresses his optimism regarding the blossom of a Jewish theology in contemporary world, see Louis Jacobs, *Jewish Theology Today* in Dan Cohn-Sherbok (ed.), *Problems in Contemporary Jewish Theology*, The Edwin Hellen Press, Lewiston, 1991. However we can mention authors who have a more nuanced attitude, for example Manfred H. Vogel, *What can the Term "Jewish Theology" Possibly Mean?* in Dan Cohn-Sherbok (ed.),

Problems in Contemporary Jewish Theology, The Edwin Hellen Press, Lewiston, 1991.

²⁴ Abraham Joshua Heschel, *God in Search of Man. A Philosophy of Judaism*, Harper & Row, Publishers, New York, 1955, p. 4. This personal character as a central element for religion is taken into account by Heschel when he highlights the fact that "The Bible speaks not only of man's search for God but also of God's search for man" *Between God and Man. An interpretation of Judaism*, The Free Press, New York, 1959, p. 68.

²⁵ Abraham Joshua Heschel, *God in Search of Man. A Philosophy of Judaism*, Harper & Row, Publishers, New York, 1955, p. 16.

²⁶ Abraham Joshua Heschel, *God in Search of Man. A Philosophy of Judaism*, Harper & Row, Publishers, New York, 1955, p. 7.

²⁷ Abraham Joshua Heschel, *God in Search of Man. A Philosophy of Judaism*, Harper & Row, Publishers, New York, 1955, p. 6. Heschel says that "All philosophy is an apologia pro vita sua." Within this context, the philosopher is never a mere spectator, he is a „toiler for truth."

²⁸ Abraham Joshua Heschel, *God in Search of Man. A Philosophy of Judaism*, Harper & Row, Publishers, New York, 1955, p. 8.

²⁹ Abraham Joshua Heschel, *God in Search of Man. A Philosophy of Judaism*, Harper & Row, Publishers, New York, 1955, p. 9.

³⁰ Abraham Joshua Heschel, *God in Search of Man. A Philosophy of Judaism*, Harper & Row, Publishers, New York, 1955, p. 12.

³¹ Abraham Joshua Heschel, *God in Search of Man. A Philosophy of Judaism*, Harper & Row, Publishers, New York, 1955, p. 10. This critique must be made with "intellectual honesty." It is this honesty that stands for Heschel as "one of the supreme goals of philosophy of religion, just as self-deception is the chief source of corruption in religious thinking, more deadly than error."

³² Abraham Joshua Heschel, *God in Search of Man. A Philosophy of Judaism*, Harper & Row, Publishers, New York, 1955, p. 19.

³³ Abraham Joshua Heschel, *God in Search of Man. A Philosophy of Judaism*, Harper & Row, Publishers, New York, 1955, p. 20. On the encounter with the ineffable, see Abraham Joshua Heschel, *Omul nu e singur. O filosofie a iudaismului*, Ed. Hasefer, București, 2001, pp. 17 and ff.

³⁴ Abraham Joshua Heschel, *God in Search of Man. A Philosophy of Judaism*, Harper & Row, Publishers, New York, 1955, p. 21.

³⁵ Thus, "philosophy of Judaism has a meaning comparable to the meaning of a phrase such as philosophy of Kant or the philosophy of Plato; Judaism as a source of ideas which we are trying to understand," Abraham Joshua Heschel, *God in Search of Man. A Philosophy of Judaism*, Harper & Row, Publishers, New York, 1955, p.22.

³⁶ Abraham Joshua Heschel, *God in Search of Man. A Philosophy of Judaism*, Harper & Row, Publishers, New York, 1955, p. 15.

³⁷ Abraham Joshua Heschel, *God in Search of Man. A Philosophy of Judaism*, Harper & Row, Publishers, New York, 1955, p. 13.

³⁸ Abraham J. Heschel, *Between God and Man. An interpretation of Judaism*, The Free Press, New York, 1959, p. 242.

³⁹ A detailed discussion can be found in Raphael Jospe, *What is Jewish Philosophy?*, The Open University of Israel, Tel Aviv, 1988.

⁴⁰ Raphael Jospe, *Jewish Particularity from Ha-Levi to Kaplan: Implications for Defining Jewish Philosophy* in Raphael Jospe and Samuel Z. Fishman (eds.) *Go and Study, B'nai B'rith Hillel Foundations*, Washington D.C., 1980, p. 312.

⁴¹ Julius Guttmann, *Philosophies of Judaism. The History of Jewish Philosophy from Biblical Times to Franz Rosenzweig*, The Jewish Publication Society of America, Philadelphia, 1964, p. 4.

⁴² Colette Sirat, *A History of Jewish Philosophy in the Middle Ages*, Cambridge University Press, 1985, p. 4.

⁴³ See Iosif Brucăr, *Spinoza. Viața și filosofia*, Ed. Hasefer, București, who points out that Spinoza's viewpoint remains one utterly Jewish. Also, see Moshe Idel, *Maimonide și mistica evreiască*, translated by Mihaela Frunză, Ed. Dacia, Cluj-Napoca, 2001, the chapter on Spinoza.

⁴⁴ See in this regard Tamra Wright, "Translating the Bible into Greek": The Jewish Thought of Emmanuel Levinas, *Le'ela*, October, 1997, p. 41 and ff.

Mark Tansey — Derrida Queries de Man. *Application to Derrida's Questioning of Hermeneutics*

This paper endeavours to point towards the direction of an answer to the problem whether or not philosophical hermeneutics is post-metaphysical. Starting from Derrida's critique of hermeneutics, the author argues that this problem reduces itself to the question: "is hermeneutics a violent form of thought?" Through a reinterpretation of Gadamer's concept of "living language of dialogue" starting from the point of view upon the history of the concept of language offered by *Truth and Method* and on the basis of the similitude between language and art the answer to this latter question is given in the negative.

The question which we would like to deal with in the following pages concerns the point up to which Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics can be considered a post-metaphysical endeavour. Taken in itself, such a question does not reveal its answer too easily. For this reason, in order to avoid an endless discussion or a discussion that does not reach a meaningful conclusion, a possible way to approach the matter would be that of comparing Gadamer's hermeneutics against Derrida's deconstruction considering this latter philosophical endeavour to be a "model" of resistance to metaphysics.

Of course, such a strategy cannot be but useful. But, for there is a *but*, are we able at this point to offer a clear definition of deconstruction? The fact that Derrida talks sometimes about deconstructions (in the plural) shows clearly that we are not dealing here with a completed philosophical corpus, or with something which could be, in a way or another, defined,

Adrian Costache

Teaching Assistant,
Department of
Philosophy, Babes-
Bolyai University,
Cluj, Romania

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delimited... Deconstruction, as movements of deconstruction, always in act, is endless. This does not mean though that it cannot be caught in the unity of a perspective which could be used as canon for judging the claim of philosophical hermeneutics to break through from metaphysics. In our view, the best example for such a unity of perspective upon deconstruction would be Mark Tansey's painting – *Derrida Queries de Man*¹.

We see in this picture Derrida dancing with Paul de Man on a mountain of texts. The top of the mountain cannot be seen. We do not have perspective upon the entire mountain, the picture itself being deprived of perspective. This is the reason why I believe Mark Tansey's work to be the example par excellence, to be exemplary for Derrida's thought. For, it grasps the meaning of Derrida's deconstruction in the unity of a perspective starting precisely from the lack of perspective. What this lack of perspective signifies is that *one cannot take distance from deconstruction*. Derrida says it straightforwardly: "... deconstruction takes place everywhere it takes place where there is something..."²

In my opinion though, this lack of perspective, the fact that the peak of the mountain cannot be seen, is also meaningful in a completely different direction. In a painting exists only what can be seen, and can be seen only what exists. The fact that the peak of the mountain cannot be seen and that its wall that can be seen is almost perpendicular, pushes us towards the conclusion that such a peak does not even exist. As far as we can tell, this mountain of texts does not have an end, is infinite. That is to say: Western culture and philosophy does not have an end; the mechanisms which have ensured their perpetuation throughout time will work for *infinity*. We should be very attentive at this infinity of Western metaphysics for it is not Hegel's "good infinity". Rather, it seems to be the "bad infinity" understood as an "indefinite limited by its very essence".

The mountain of texts of Western culture has a margin. This is precisely the place in which Derrida situates himself. The truth of this affirmation is underpinned by Derrida's work too: "I try to keep myself at the limit of philosophical dis-

course."³ Or: "[deconstruction] interrogates philosophy beyond its meaning, treating it not only as a discourse but as a determined text inscribed in a general text, enclosed in the representation of its own margin."⁴

Another thing imposing itself upon us in this image is the fact that Derrida's face is barely sketched and the eyes are not drawn at all. This means: the activity of deconstruction does not involve also the soul, or the individuality of the deconstructor, for in Derrida's view the eyes are the mirrors of the soul.

This thing can be also underpinned through recourse to Derrida's texts, for here is what the philosopher tells us in *Positions*: "Such a symptom [of privileging presence – my note] is necessarily and structurally dissimulated for reasons and on paths which I try to analyze. And, if it is discovered today, this is not in any way due to a more or less clever invention whose initiative, here or elsewhere, can be taken by *somebody*."⁵ (italics are mine)

The final thing we should observe in connection with this unitary perspective upon deconstruction is that offered by the foreground of the painting – the fact that deconstruction takes place as dance. Not few are Derrida's interpreters affirming that, if deconstruction cannot be defined, the only thing one can say about it is that it is a "discipline of rigour". We do not intend to refute this thesis, for we think it cannot be refuted, on condition that we make a small correction to it. We can speak about "rigour" in the proper sense of the term in technical matters, in science, in the case of those philosophical doctrines which are systematically elaborated... Fichte, Schelling, Kant may be considered rigorous philosophers; but in the case of a thinker such as Derrida, we believe the most appropriate word to characterize his thought would be "grace", for its authentic specificity resides in the fact that he manages to combine (as nobody else except, maybe, Paul de Man) so perfectly the vivacity and the harmony. Due to the numerous interstitials which mark his texts, to the anticipation – that is, the hurrying toward conclusions – and the clarifying tarrying upon the different thesis of the questioned authors, due to the constant coming back to its premises, when

is on the move, Derrida's thought looks exactly like a dance. We might recall Derrida's *attention* for the other in general and for the text of the other in particular.

Thus, in front of Mark Tansey's painting we understand that the question from which we have started must be reformulated. (Though it does not become simpler.) For, in order to say whether or not Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics is a post-metaphysical endeavour we should ask ourselves up to what point is this endeavour as gracious and attentive to alterity as Derrida's deconstruction. That is, can Gadamer waltz? Does he manage to rise up to Derrida's expectations in the art of dance? If we listen to the voice of hermeneutics (and here we have in mind the entire hermeneutic tradition) the answer seems to be in the affirmative. Although it never defined itself explicitly in this way, hermeneutics has always understood itself as a kind of "science of the other".

Derrida though shows some reserves in this regard. The central question addressed to Gadamer when they met in 1981 in Paris, a question for the entire hermeneutic tradition sounds as follows: "Whether one speaks of consensus or of misunderstanding (as is Schleiermacher), one needs to ask whether the precondition for *Verstehen*, far from being the continuity of *rapport* (as it was described yesterday evening), is not rather the interruption of *rapport*, a certain *rapport* of interruption, the suspending of all mediation?"⁶

For the entire hermeneutic tradition reading was thought to be the fundamental and also the minimal *rapport* presupposed by any attempt at understanding. Derrida knows this very well. An interruption of *rapport*, a *rapport* of interruption would be, in this case, nothing but the interruption of the act of reading; and this, as paradoxically as it may sound, out of the desire to understand the text as other.

In Derrida's view, the problematical point in the hermeneutic tradition is the concept of mediation presupposed by understanding. Mediation, as a condition for understanding, seems rather to estrange us from understanding. Any mediation, inasmuch as it begins from the self (and from where should it begin if not from the self?), forces the other as other to fit in the clothes of the other of the self. It transforms radi-

cal alterity, violating it, in the alterity of the self. Understanding, just like the sacred, is founded on violence⁷.

With all these things in mind, we are pushed towards a different perspective upon the history of hermeneutics, a perspective which depicts it as a violent form of thought. For, by centring the task of understanding on the idea of *Besserverstehen*, would it not be possible that Schleiermacher's dialectics was nothing but a form of the dialectics between master and slave identified by Hegel as the fundamental step on the path of a better self-knowing of the absolute Spirit?

A predisposition for violence can be found in Dilthey's thought too. For what else is the idea of transcending the horizon of subjectivity towards that of objectivity through the reconstruction in the field of social sciences of a methodology similar to that of the natural sciences? So, it is not surprising that both Schleiermacher and Dilthey propose occasionally love as the basis of comprehension⁸. As it is well known, *all is fair in love and war*.

Considering his thorough attention to interrogating his hermeneutical situation and to preventing the perversion of his philosophical project by popular conceptions, can we consider Heidegger's thought to be a violent one as well? We would be tempted to answer: all the more. Here is what the philosopher tells us in *Being and Time*: "Truth (discoveredness) must always first be *wrested* from beings."⁹ (italics are mine)

For Heidegger, this path towards truth is not one easier than another seemingly more difficult, but the only one possible for in its being the *Dasein* itself is violent. "Man, in *one* word, is *deinotaton*, the strangest. This word encompasses the extreme limits and abrupt abysses of his being. [...] Man is *to deinotaton*, the strangest of the strange. Here we must anticipate an explanation of the Greek word *deinon* and of our translation. [...] On the one hand *deinon* means the terrible, but not in the sense of petty terrors, and above all not in the decadent, insipid, and useless sense that the word has taken today, in such locutions as <<terribly cute>>. The *deinon* is the terrible in the sense of the overpowering power which compels panic fear, true fear; and in equal measure it is the

collected, silent awe that vibrates with its own rhythm. [...] But on the other hand *deinon* means the powerful in the sense of one who uses power, who not only disposes of power <Gewalt> but is violent <gewalt-tätig> insofar as the use of power is the basic trait not only of his action but also of his being-there.”¹⁰

Thus, Dasein’s relationship to beings, the essent¹¹, is violent in an eminent way: “The essent as a whole, seen as power, is the overpowering, *deinon* in the first sense. Man is *deinon*, first because he remains exposed within this overpowering power, because by his essence he belongs to being. But at the same time man is *deinon* because he is the violent one in the sense designated above. (He gathers the power and brings it to manifestness.) Man is the violent one, not aside from or along with other attributes but solely in the sense that in his fundamental violence <Gewalt-tätigkeit> he uses power <Gewalt> against the overpowering <Über-wältigende>. Because he is twice *deinon* in a sense that is originally one, he is *to deinotaton*, the most powerful: violent in the midst of the overpowering.”¹²

We should keep in mind Heidegger’s identification of the terrible and the “strange” manifested by the essent, by beings in general, with the fundamental violence <Gewalt-tätigkeit> performed by the human Dasein.

Considering all these, the situation of Gadamer’s philosophical hermeneutics seems to be sealed. Due to the fact that it carries on the hermeneutic tradition of Schleiermacher and Dilthey, on the one hand, and due to Gadamer’s scholarship to Heidegger’s fundamental ontology, on the other, it seems to have little chances to be considered a non-violent thought. This assumption is strengthened if we think of the fact that Gadamer himself centres the task of hermeneutics on the tension between familiarity and strangeness. For Gadamer, any act of understanding starts from the fore-understanding given by the traditional prejudices upon the matter at hand of the hermeneutic “object”. But, what brings about such an act is the “pulling up short” of these prejudices (and this at the level of language as well as at that of the content), a pulling up short which appears due to the strangeness of the text.

In front of this pulling up short, that is to say, in front of the violence brought along by beings, for Gadamer, inasmuch as it wants to understand, the interpreter must approach the text interrogatively. He must question the text which has already put in question his understanding of the world. But, “To ask a question means to bring into the open. [...] When a question arises, it breaks open the being of the object, as it were.”¹³

Thus it might seem that in Gadamer’s philosophical hermeneutics things stand precisely as in Heidegger’s fundamental ontology. The essent addresses us, presents itself to us as strange, it encounters us with violence and we, in our turn, answer this address with a fundamental violence <Gewalt-tätigkeit> by questioning it and thus breaking up the being of the essent. In this case, no wonder that Derrida refused Gadamer’s invitation to dance in 1981 in Paris inasmuch as this invitation took the form of an invitation to dialogue.

But, does this description justice to Gadamer’s philosophical hermeneutics? Does “strangeness” in Gadamer really mean *deinon*? And, would it not be possible to understand “strangeness” otherwise than as “the terrible” and “fundamental violence”? In order to answer these questions let us take a closer and more thorough look at Gadamer’s description of the phenomenon of understanding.

“Everything presupposed in hermeneutics is but language.” – This sentence uttered by Schleiermacher is the motto of the third part of *Truth and Method*. Not without reason, for Gadamer’s endeavour in this context is to show that: “the fusion of horizons that takes place in understanding is actually the achievement of language”¹⁴. This is because language (*Sprachlichkeit*) is the fundamental determination of both the hermeneutic object and the hermeneutic act. Why language is a fundamental determination of the hermeneutic act we have already mentioned: the putting in question of the view upon the world of the interpreter by the text to be interpreted presupposes from the part of the interpreter a putting in question of the text’s claim to truth which takes place *dialogically*, i.e. through language.

But why is language a fundamental determination of the hermeneutic act? Are we to assume that the only possible hermeneutic “objects” are the texts and the discourse of the other? Of course not: monuments and historical events, works of art – either transitive or reproductive – are hermeneutic “objects” as well, for they can always be translated into language. And, inasmuch as the necessity of their understanding appears, they must be translated into the “living language of dialogue” just like the texts. For writing, as the “ideality” of language, is “self-alienation”¹⁵.

At this point we would like to open a parenthesis in order to prevent a possible objection or, better put, to show that we are perfectly aware of it. The task of this paper is to show that Gadamer’s philosophical hermeneutics, despite the burden of the tradition in which it is inscribed, is a non-violent thought. Through this we try to defend its post-metaphysical character. Our discussion up to now has led us to speak about writing as “self-alienation” and about the “living language of dialogue” as the basis of comprehension. Anyone who is familiar with Derrida’s deconstruction or with post-modern philosophy in general might think that our argumentation has actually reached a dead-end, for concepts such as these are the clear sign of logocentrism and metaphysics. In principle, we do not refute this verdict inasmuch as the “living language of dialogue” in relation to which writing is “self-alienation” means simply speaking, the words that can be (or could be) heard. For only them can certify the presence of the consciousness to itself and can sustain the metaphysics of presence. But, we think that in Gadamer this expression – the “living language of dialogue” – sends to something completely different, and this thing becomes manifest in *Truth and Method* in the discussion of “The development of the concept of language in Western thought”.

This chapter, in our opinion, represents a key point of *Truth and Method* for, on the one hand, it ensures the coherence and the unity of Gadamer’s hermeneutic project and delimits it clearly from that of the German historicism. And, on the other, it clarifies why language has the ontological significance it has. (In Gadamer, as in Heidegger, a language is a

world, it being the sole capable of rising man above the surrounding world.)

The fundamental axiom guiding German historicism is the idea that each epoch must be understood, beyond all prejudices, staring from itself. Such an axiom though is nothing but a prejudicing of the past, for it imposes upon the past concepts that do not necessarily suit it. Historicism did not understand that the very demarcation of different epochs belonged to the epochs themselves only inasmuch as it belonged to the hermeneutical situation out of which they were studied. Precisely because of this historicism could not say why antiquity lasts from that to that moment, or why modernity has begun with Descartes and does not seem to have an end. The inquiry concerning the development of the concept of language in *Truth and Method* tries to avoid this minus or lack by bringing to light the meaning of the concept of language alongside the prejudices determining it. It tries to show what language is starting from the different ways to understand language put forward in history.

Thus, Gadamer begins his investigation from the very first work dealing with the problem of language in the history of Western thought – Plato’s *Cratylus*. As it is well known, the discussion in this work revolves around the truth-claim of the *conventionalist* and the *similarity* theories of language concerning the relationship between word and thing. Like all the other dialogues of Plato from the same period the discussion is left open. Considering the example of the christening of a slave whose name tied him of a certain life and a certain dignity Plato’s Socrates refutes the conventionalist theory. On the other hand, by pushing the hypothesis of the natural similitude between word and thing to the level of the letters, Socrates brings to light the etymological delirium one has to embrace along with the similarity theory. But a close reading of the dialogue shows us that the possibility of these refutations is given by two presuppositions which are not brought into discussion and are not shared by all the interlocutors. Socrates’ entire argumentation is based, on the one hand, on Plato’s cosmology that distinguishes between the realm of Idea and the terrestrial world and, on the other, on the episte-

mological principle according to which the Ideas can be known only by a thought free of words.

For Gadamer though, aside these presuppositions we understand that the two theories of language are extreme points of view that do not necessarily contradict each other and can be true at the same time. It is clear that every word is the result of a convention, but this is not to say that it is completely arbitrary. For, the institution of every word already presupposes the word. (We will get back to this matter shortly.) On the other hand, even though we cannot accept the idea of a natural bond between word and object, we still must accept that every word *fits* the thing to which it applies. Inasmuch as a word manages to send to a thing, it belongs to its being exactly like a representation, as the representation of a model, belongs to its model. We should be very careful at this point, for although the word represents a thing, is something like an *image* of a thing, its ontological status is not at all that of a *copy*. Its relationship with the thing it represents is not the same as that between a bed made by a craftsman and the Idea of Bed. As Gadamer shows, “a word names an object in a far more inward or intellectual way for the question of the degree of similarity [*Ähnlichkeitsabstand*] to be appropriate here.”¹⁶ Inasmuch as a word is fit, it is *perfectly fit*. We could say that every word has a “complete spirituality” and because of this we have every right to speak about its “truth” in a strong sense of the word.

This spirituality though, should be understood in what it tries to say. We must not understand that the relation between meaning and the sound is similar to that between spirit and matter. Meaning is not *superimposed* on the sound that makes it apparent, but appears along with it. As Günter Figal says, “Meaning is not <<beyond>> the words, but rather just what happens when speaking in words is performed. Meaning, however, is not thereby simply equivalent to the word, for a meaning can be expressed variously in words. Although meaning and word must be distinguished, they must be considered to belong together such that neither can be thought without the other.”¹⁷

This, to put it this way, “indistinct distinction” of word and meaning surpasses the conceptual possibilities of Greek philosophy. So, it was approached as a problem only in medieval thought.

Medieval thought has approached the problem of language only indirectly, with the view of finding here an interpretive solution for the mystery of trinity. It is true, just as meaning is completely distinct from the word and can still become meaning only through it, precisely in the same manner God the Son is different from God the Father, without being God in a lesser extent.

In order to approach this problem, medieval thought, through Saint Augustine, distinguishes between the *outer word* (and the outer word reproduced inwardly), understood as the word of man, and the *inner word* and focuses its attention only on the last one. For medieval thought, the word of God can be exteriorized in all languages and, precisely because of this, it does not have a special relationship with any of them. The *inner word* is the “language of reason”; it is the “speaking to oneself” characterized by a specific processual element. This processual element thought, is not the temporization of thought, but rather with a “thinking through to the end” (*Zuendedenken*) which does not pass from one thing to another successively. Rather, this “thinking through to the end” is an interweaving of these things starting from what it is already known. For Gadamer, this “thinking through to the end” must be understood as *emanation* in a neo-Platonic sense. For, “In the process of emanation, that from which something flows, the One, is not deprived or depleted.”¹⁸

Saint Thomas, who carries on Augustine’s investigation, identifies some fundamental differences between the inner and the outer word. Two of them are important in the context of our discussion. First of all, the word of man, in contrast to the divine word, is necessary imperfect because it does not manage to express our mind completely. This imperfection though, is not due to the word itself, but rather to *our finitude*. “The word reflects completely what the mind is

thinking. Rather, the imperfection of the human mind consists in its never being completely present to itself but in being dispersed into thinking this or that.”¹⁹

And, second of all, due to imperfection of our mind, there is a multiplicity of outer words, whereas the inner word is just one.

Our finitude forces the mind to let itself be guided only by accidents, and not by substance or essence. Because of this the sight of whoever contemplates an object will be so caught up by its particularity that this will also be transparent in speaking. No one can disagree that to speak means to subsume a particular to a general, to a concept. But, inasmuch as the concept is applied to a particular situation it becomes itself enriched and better specified. Thus, the formation of concepts presupposes the transference of meaning from a situation to another. What makes this transference possible in the end is not the generality of the concept but the particularity of the situation brought to light by language. If we transpose this at the level of language we understand that the process of word formation presupposes nothing else but the word itself, for the formation of words does not transcend the boundaries of language in any way.

In Gadamer’s view, the negative aspects of the relationship between the inner and the outer word as seen by medieval thought is surpassed by two absolutely important positive aspects. Firstly, the fact that man needs more than one word makes apparent the *infinity of the human mind* which can always renew its projects by engaging itself in thinking other things. Secondly, we have to understand that the word of man is not entirely separated from the word of God. In fact, there is a true dialectical relation between them. The word of God, as one, needs to be constantly told anew in sermon, that is, in the multiplicity of outer words. And the sermon, which announces the resurrection of God in the multiplicity of words, does in fact nothing else but to affirm the unity of the word.

From the point of view of hermeneutics, what this theological thesis is telling us is that inasmuch as every outer word is formed from another word (through transference of

meaning) it has a relationship with the totality of the outer words. By depicting the peculiarity of the thing it sends to, the outer word depicts also its being just like the inner word. The outer word always carries along with it the inner word.

In my opinion the “living language of dialogue” is precisely this - *the language of the inner word*. This language is living not because it is spoken, not because in speaking the meaning is present to the consciousness certifying in this way also the presence of the consciousness to itself. But because of the fact that in the application of the word upon a particular situation, the meaning of the word is precisely alienated from itself, because this way the play of meaning engaging the totality of what can be meant is opened. That is, because the outer word engages the inner word which, in its turn, expresses or, better put, depicts²⁰ being. Precisely because of this Gadamer can tell us without contradiction that writing is both the “self-alienation” and the “ideality” of language. For, in itself, a text can say anything - we can recall in this context Derrida’s discussion upon Nietzsche’s note “today I forgot my umbrella”²¹ -, the play of its meaning is completely open, but inasmuch as it is not translated into dialogue this play is not played.

So, how much metaphysics is in this understanding of the “living language of dialogue”? Does this have anything in common with the other doctrines of meaning and signification already formulated by the philosophical tradition? The answer is clearly NO.

Now, let us go back to the problem of the violent character of hermeneutics. From all what has been said the *inner word* looks very much as, if not it straightforwardly *is*, something like a *work of art*. For all the traits identified above are also identified by Gadamer in *The Relevance of Beautiful* as the fundamental traits of the work of art.

A painting, a portrait for example, or a theatrical representation, relates to its model precisely in the way the inner word relates to the thing to which it sends. In this case too we can speak of a *perfect fitness* and a “complete spirituality”. Because of this it seems right to speak of the truth of arts well. We have to assume that the mimesis is the essence

of the work of art but, against Plato's critique, we have to assume also that here we cannot speak of a degree of similarity as that existing between the Idea of bed and the bed made by the craftsmen either. The fundamental proof in this sense is that in a portrait we do not see a man like all the others, but Prince Charles or the Queen of England ... And even if we do not know the man in the portrait, the portrait itself offers us knowledge of him as person. His posture in the portrait lets us understand whether he was good or bad, happy or miserable, etc. In the case of theatre things stand just the same. In a theatrical performance we do not see this or that man playing Oedipus, but Oedipus himself. What we witness there is Oedipus' sufferings and not the make-pretence of the actor.

Secondly, like the word, the work of art makes possible this recognition by presenting precisely the particularities. In Dürer self-portrait we see the painter as a young man, but the portrait gives us an image of Dürer as such. Oedipus' tragedy is played on a certain scene, with certain costumes and in a certain décor. But we recognize him in agora.

Thirdly, the peculiar temporality presupposed by the "thinking through to the end", which is not the same with the temporality of thinking, has the same structure as the temporality of the aesthetical. As Gadamer shows, the time of the work of art cannot be identified with the ordinary linear time; the participation in a work of art transforms the moment into an absolute moment and thus time is invaded by eternity. The time of the work of art is Kierkegaard's "synchrony". This is why (if we truly understand art) in a museum or a gallery time always flies by without us noticing it!

But, how come that we recognize in a work of art things we did not previously know? How come we see Oedipus in the actor on stage if we did not ever meet Oedipus and have not seen a picture of him? How can we be sure that the inner word we recognize behind the outer words really is what the text tries to convey.

Gadamer's answer to this question, an answer that is merely sketched, is the following: "... the work of art presupposes a sort of self-certification (*Selbstbeglaubigung*), just like

myths, for that matter, in which we "do not believe", but find ourselves in the power of their being."²²

In what resides this self-certification? In two words, in the fact that the work of art, just as the inner word, does not present again the being which has been, but institute it in the authentic sense of the word. As Gadamer says: "Word and image are not mere imitative illustrations, but allow what they present to be for the first time fully what it is."²³

In the case of painting this thing is absolutely clear for would the painted model have been model if it were not for the painting itself?

The final truth Gadamer's hermeneutics offers us is that "It is only us those who have to accomplish what has to be."²⁴

Considering all these, can we still say that Gadamer centres understanding on the concept of mediation? Is Gadamer's thought a violent thought? How can one mediate between the hermeneutic "object" and his or hers thought is the first does not yet exist, but has to be brought into being? The exemplary model for understanding in general is the peculiar type of understanding presupposed by the poetic text which is text in the eminent sense. In this case understanding and interpretation means "co-speaking"²⁵ with the text. But in this case how can we speak about violence?

In the end, it becomes clear that Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics is a post-metaphysical thought as radical as that of Derrida. If not more radical for, due to our finitude and the keen relationship between the inner and the outer word, every word becomes a sort of *différance*.

Notes:

¹ A copy of this painting is available online at <http://www.artchive.com/artchive/T/tansey/derrida.jpg.html>

² Jacques Derrida, "Letter to a Japanese Friend" in Peggy Kanuf (Ed.), *A Derrida Reader. Between the Blinds*, Columbia University Press, New York, Chichester (West Sussex), 1991, p. 274

³ Jacques Derrida, *Positions. Entretiens avec Henri Ronse, Julia Kristeva, Jean-Louis Houbedine, Guy Scarpetta*, Les Éditions de minuit, 1972, p. 14 (my translation)

⁴ Jacques Derrida, "Introduction" to *Margins: Of Philosophy* in Peggy Kanuf (Ed.), *A Derrida Reader. Between the Blinds*, p. 162

⁵ Jacques Derrida, *Positions*, p. 15 (my translation)

⁶ Jacques Derrida, "Three Questions to Hans-Georg Gadamer" in Diane Michelfelder and Richard Palmer (Eds.), *Dialogue and Deconstruction. The Gadamer-Derrida Encounter*, State University of New York Press, Albany, 1989, p. 53

⁷ See René Girard, *Violence and the Sacred*, The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1979, Translated by Patrick Gregory

⁸ Wilhelm Dilthey who follows closely the guiding lines of Schleiermacher's hermeneutics, at one point notes: "... Schleiermacher has observed that if sympathy is the basis of all understanding, then the highest understanding requires love." See Wilhelm Dilthey, *On Understanding and Hermeneutics: Student Lecture Notes (1867-68)* in *Selected Works. Volume IV. Hermeneutics and the Study of History*, Princeton University Press, Princeton New Jersey, 1996, Edited, with an Introduction, by Rudolf A. Makkreel and Frithjof Rodi, p. 230

⁹ Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, State University of New York Press, Albany, 1996, Translated by Joan Stambaugh, p. [222]/204

¹⁰ Martin Heidegger, *Introduction to Metaphysics*, Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 1959, Translated by Ralph Manheim, pp. 149-150

¹¹ "Seiende" is usually rendered into English through "beings". Ralph Manheim though translates it through "essent".

¹² Martin Heidegger, *Introduction to Metaphysics*, p. 150

¹³ Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, Continuum, London and New York, 2004, Translation revised by Joel Weinsheimer and Donald G. Marshall, p. 357 and 356

¹⁴ Idem, p. 370

¹⁵ Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, p. 392

¹⁶ Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, p. 410

¹⁷ Günter Figal, "The Doing of the Thing Itself: Gadamer's Hermeneutic Ontology of Language" in Robert J. Dostal (Ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Gadamer*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2002, p. 113

¹⁸ Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, p. 422

¹⁹ Idem, p. 424

²⁰ Why "depicts" is a more suitable word will become clear shortly.

²¹ See Jacques Derrida, *Éperons. Les styles de Nietzsche*, Flammarion, 1978

²² Hans-Georg Gadamer, "Intuitie și plasticitate" [Intuition and Plasticity] in *Actualitatea frumosului* [The Relevance of Beautiful], Polirom, Iași, 2000, Translated by Val. Panaitescu, p. 164

²³ Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, p. 137

²⁴ Hans-Georg Gadamer, "Despre caracterul festiv al teatrului" [The Festive Character of Theatre] in *Actualitatea frumosului* [The Relevance of Beautiful], p. 186

²⁵ Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Text and Interpretation* in Diane Michelfelder and Richard Palmer (Eds.), *Dialogue and Deconstruction. The Gadamer-Derrida Encounter*, p. 46

The Religious American

The paper is in itself a statement of facts: that the American has always been a "homo religiosus", and that religion has shaped the American character starting with the early construction of America and until the current 21st secular century. America today is still indebted to the Puritans' utopian consciousness of a divine call to restore Paradise on earth. Mircea Eliade helps this reading of America, he himself an exiled that experienced the quest for the Center of the world and of the self. To the eyes of a Romanian, America of the past two decades has revealed a steady growing Eastern Orthodox Church rooted in unspoiled traditions and values, a path worthy of further exploring.

"It seems to me totally impossible to imagine how the human spirit could function without the conviction that an irreducible *re a l* exists in the world." (Mircea Eliade, *Incercare a Labirintului*)

Beyond cultures, epochs and geographies of the world, there have been two ways of being, two existential modes assumed by man in history: sacred and profane. Religiousness as an attitude in life and perception of existence is connected to the sacred. *Homo religiosus* of traditional societies found it natural to relate to the sacred quality of life. Contemporary religious man shares the same need of being closer to God but regains sacred values with difficulty in an increasingly secularized world, while non-religious man chooses the profane dimension of existence.

In his exquisite phenomenological approach, historian of religions Mircea Eliade distinguishes the sacred from the profane and shows the gap between the two coexisting conditions. By definition, the religious man recognizes those qualities of space and time that are sacred.

Mihaela Paraschivescu

Democracy Small Grants Program Administrator, and Assistant to the Counselor for Public Affairs at the US Embassy, Bucharest, BA in English and Romanian from the University of Sibiu, currently pursuing an MA in American Studies with the University of Bucharest

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To the religious man, space is not homogenous, it has discontinuities in powerful “points” in which hierophanies take place, the sacred manifests itself. A church is part of a different space than the street it is on, its doorway separates two modes of being in the world: religious and non-religious. Inside it, space is sanctified, the profane world is transcended. As sacred space and time are inseparable, by entering a church, the religious man joins the state of prayer and finds the sacred time of the event celebrated as it first happened, centuries ago, becoming contemporary to the sacred event. Christians attending a religious service are part of the liturgical time, a historical time sanctified through the presence of the Son of God in the historical person of Jesus Christ. In church, during the liturgical service, Christians experience theophany.

Therefore, the religious man lives in two kinds of time: the sacred as an eternal present, endlessly repeatable, always equal to itself, never changing, never ending, and the profane, the historical present. To the non-religious man, time has duration, the profane time is irreversible, devoid of religious significance and of the mystery of the divine presence. Non-religious man has a deep existential perception of life that starts in birth, passes, and ends in death.

Religiousness has had its specific dimensions in the United States starting with the first settlers. “Fear of God is the beginning of all wisdom”, says the Book of Proverbs. The Puritan settlers may not have sought wisdom when they set foot on land and embraced with their eyes the vast spread of space that was to become their home. But they proved wise in their enterprise. Settlers lived the religious experience of a newly found space. They felt their presence there saturated with a sense of mission.

Like any space that started being organized, America was then, to borrow Eliade’s terms, “susceptible to become sacred.” “Settling in a territory is equivalent to founding a world” Eliade explains (Eliade *Sacral* 46). Assuming the responsibility of “creating” the world in which to live, the Puritans repeated the experience of the religious man in traditional societies who sanctified the small universe making it similar to the divine world. “Religious nostalgia makes man want to live in a pure and sacred Cosmos as it was when it first came

out of the Creator’s hands” (Eliade *Sacral* 63). Eliade’s interpretation of the reiteration of cosmogony in every consecration of space seems perfectly valid for the early construction of America.

Analyzing the religious implications of the discovery and colonization of America, Mircea Eliade identifies paradisiacal and eschatological elements, as any new beginning needs the death of the old values, structures, and self. English colonists believed they had the mission to bring religion, the word of God, to the new territories. Products of the Protestant Reformation, they felt chosen by God to renew the Christian world and build an exemplary “city upon a hill”. Eliade highlights the utopian aspects of this mission and recognizes in it the roots of a lasting feature in American character: “What must be emphasized (...) is that the certainty of the eschatological mission, and especially of attaining once again the perfection of early Christianity and restoring paradise to earth, is not likely to be forgotten easily. It is very probable that the behavior of the average American today, as well as the political and cultural ideology of the United States, still reflects the consciousness of the Puritan certitude of having been called to restore the earthly paradise.” (Eliade *Paradise* 99).

Puritans’ religiousness moved beyond an ecstatic attitude towards the sacralized nature to a confident transformation of the “American Paradise”. The rapid progress in turning landscape into a garden, Eliade believes, “gave rise to the myth of indefinite progress and American optimism” (Eliade *Paradise* 91). In the centuries to follow, Americans’ notion of progress would not be “a philosophical idea, but a commonplace of experience” (Commager 5) seeing the wilderness become village, villages grow into cities and communities rise into a wealthy powerful nation.

In addition to the human transformation of nature, “a religious attitude that still moves in the culture,” Martin Marty recognizes the sense of covenant, Puritans’ belief they had an agreement with God and what they did was an “earthly acting out of a heavenly destined drama. (...) The American character is marked by a sense of the endowment that comes to the work and doings of each day” (Marty 306).

Religion does have the power to shape character and culture. Marty acknowledges the contributions of religion to America. "A vision of heaven and hell, a sense of mission and a millennial world view conspired in creating an imperial outlook in Catholic and later Christian America" (305) he says, adding in reference to the other mainstream religion that the "melange of Protestantism formed the American colonies and shaped early national life." (305) Then Enlightenment took the stage professing science and reason instead of faith. But the divine purpose was still there, available to all.

"Almost all of the principal founders of the United States, including Thomas Jefferson, were convinced that the health of republican government depends on moral values derived from religion" (Reichley 340). The Continental Congress often acknowledged dependency on God, Benjamin Franklin related the founding of the nation to God and expressed conviction that "God governs in the affairs of men." In his Farewell Address to the Continental Congress in 1783, George Washington commended the interests of the country "to the protection of Almighty God." He said: "Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supporters." Morality and religion were seen as inseparable, Washington doubted that "national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle." The sense of morality is traceable to Puritan origins and has been an enduring quality of Americans. As with morality, from the beginning of the American history, religion and the practice of democracy have co-existed.

Religion in America is of course as diverse as the nation itself. Indeed one speaks of religions. Transplanted to the New World by immigrants, the multitude of sects found in the freedom and individualism there the right medium to flourish. As Marty notices, "people were free, thanks to the voluntary climate, to be members of this church instead of that" (Marty 307). The American model enabled the practice of religious independence. In a landscape of religious pluralism, there was a need for tolerance, and the freedom of religion was stipulated in the supreme law of the land. The First Amendment to the Constitution separated church and state

both in order to protect the right to worship, and to keep the state, according to the Supreme Court of Justice interpretation "wholesomely neutral".

The Enlightenment had a universalizing tendency that reconciled its emphasis on the scientific inquiry versus religious dogma by asserting the manifestations not of a specific God of Israel but of a divine force accessible to all faithful people. Then Transcendentalism softened the tone through its intuitive approach, only to give way to Darwinism and scientific determinism and pragmatism that advocated man's perfectibility in the universe.

But Americans never truly became non-religious, despite their materialism and practicality, and in spite of the tribulations of extremes like revivalists, or the cult of the irrational, or the 20th century scientific discoveries that made the Earth look like a speck of dust in an unlimited universe indifferent to man. Their optimism was impenetrable. Although Calvinism had deplored the depravity of man and promised a better after life, Americans could not accept the idea of predestination, continued to believe they lived in the best of worlds, a Paradise on earth, and "when they imagined heaven, they thought of it as operating under an American constitution (Commager 162). One does not dispute faith.

As Justice William Douglas repeatedly pointed out in the Supreme Court opinions on church and state in the 1950s, Americans have always been "a religious people." (Reichley 2) And Martin Marty adds: "Americans want to be religious." (Marty 302) The need has often been declared. According to sociologist Talcott Parsons cited by Marty in "Religion in America", "Human culture cannot tolerate a merely random existence. Things have to mean." (Marty 302) Americans think of their nation as the Pledge of Allegiance states: "one nation under God", they even expressed their creed where least expected, on the dollar bill which states: "In God we trust."

There has been religious continuity in America and Gallup polls provide figures.

A December 2005 poll shows that religion is "very important" in the lives of 57% Americans. Over the years, 9 out of

10 Americans said they believed in God or a universal spirit, and the results of another December 2005 poll show that 78% are convinced that God probably exists, while 1% expressed doubt. Americans define themselves as essentially spiritual or religious but are very much aware that they live in a secular society. As far as their worship behavior is concerned, according to the Gallup poll of January 2006, 4 out of 10 Americans, or roughly 43%, attend weekly church, synagogue or mosque service. Gallup surveys in the past decade on “unchurched” Americans, showed that 66% are members of a church, synagogue or mosque, with steady affiliation to a denomination or other.

Like elsewhere, in the United States people are simply born into a religion, therefore individuals belong to a faith because they inherit it by birth. In recent years, statistical data announce an estimated total number of 220 recognized denominations in America, and 1200 religious groups. Of course figures are an indication of the relative outward size of religiosity and not necessarily of the depth of religious experience.

While acknowledging the ever growing diversity also in religious groups, and despite criticism of the “single construct” of ‘Christian America’, the United States has actually been primarily a Christian nation. Certainly, in America, “the Christian message has been especially determining” (Marty 118) and would be recognizable to a Romanian Orthodox Christian visitor. What however surprises the visitor used to a stable big church is to find a religious mosaic and to encounter a religious liberalism that tends to become laic. At the same time, there is the practical aspect of American religiosity, more often churches provide social activity rather than spiritual experience. There is also another tendency at work: in an increasingly secularized world, religious man tends also to intellectualize faith and turn it into private individualized practice.

In America or elsewhere on God’s land, an Orthodox Christian seeks the sacred space of liturgy, of the Eucharist and of the other Sacraments. To be closer to God, as Mircea Eliade terms it, is to an Orthodox Christian to participate in the deified humanity of Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit.

Through the sacraments and the worshipping in the Orthodox Church, the individual is called to theosis or deification, for “God became human so that humanity may be divinized.” Salvation in the Eastern Orthodox Church is personal, also communal, implies sharing, and is based on the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, in continuity with the Apostolic church. Due to the stability of its traditional values in the superfluous material contemporary world of rapid change, the Eastern Orthodox Church has grown steadily in the past decade in the United States. But this would be another path for further exploration in a future paper.

The present paper has attempted a reading of America as home to the religious mode of being, home to the soul. For more than 300 years, its geography received people dislocated from all over the world and entered dialog with their inner homelands. Mircea Eliade’s sacred homeland is the city of his childhood and adolescence — Bucharest. Claimed both by Romania and America, Mircea Eliade does not see his exile as a break from the Romanian past and culture, but rather as part of the Romanian destiny. He assumes his dislocation and valorizes it as an initiatory experience: “Every exiled is a Ulysses traveling toward Ithaca... toward the center, in other words, toward himself” (Incercare Labirintului, 86).

Eliade finds no contradiction or tension between the world and the homeland, since: “Everywhere there is a Center of the world. Once you’ve found it, you are at home, you are truly with your true self and in the center of Cosmos. Exile helps you understand the world is never foreign as soon as you have a Center. This symbolism of the Center, not only do I understand it, I also experience it.” (Incercare Labirintului, 90-91).

To Eliade remembering is very important. What is remembered is present and therefore real, and what is real is the encounter with the sacred. Memory, anamnesis, is the way religious man remembers the divine human condition. One may become estranged from a territory, may become de-territorialized, to use Gilles Deleuze’s term, but the serious de-territorialization lies in the generic dislocation of modern man in the contemporary secularized world.

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Ciphers and Existence — Karl Jaspers between West and East —

The paper tries to grasp and acquire Karl Jaspers's philosophical-mental horizons mainly with the terminological and methodological instruments of the musical – primarily symphonic – thematisation. Namely those typically jaspersian tensions and impulses, which in their connections to the Encompassing and to Existence are apparently far from them – turning back (and forth) to the oriental and western metaphysics of Sound and Light. While the “philosophical problems” elevated into **themes**, now start to interweave into spectacle (spectaculum) and – along this – they open up as ciphers. Concomitantly they do not send us – western thinkers – beyond the World, but contrarily, they attach us to the communicative responsibility towards the world, to ourselves respectively to others.

Every philosophy is in the same time personal. Therefore every approach to philosophy must also be in the same time personal. Generally, this is not what actually happens. Methodology becomes a technique or an algorithm, the body of philosophy a list of concepts, and the philosopher a bust. Thus meditation either becomes a **profession** (which means subsistence), or we close it up into ourselves as a noble, but fairly useless part of our existence. The title-words of “rethinking”, “actualization”, which usually guide this process, should not lead us astray. Starting them anew usually means merely continuing them. Naturally, that is not completely uninteresting either.

Karl Jaspers knew that this must also be done, and that it is not a minor matter. Yet, he warns that it is not enough. We are facing a fissure which is impossible to cease or fill: we live in the tension of tradition and the thinking of the present. However, to think over this tension, fissure, or crack is one thing, but to think through it is another. But what can the thought lean on if it stands at the same time in front of depth and distance, and if – being human as it is – it has no wings?

István Király V.

Ph. D. at Department of Philosophy, “Babes-Bolyai” University, Cluj-Napoca, (Romania). Author of the books: *Határ – Hallgatás – Titok* (1996); *Filozófia és Itt-Lét* (1999); *Fenomenologia existentială a secretului – Încercare de filosofie aplicată* (2001); *Moartea și experiența muririi – In(tro)spectie metafizică și filosofico-aplicativă* (2002), *Kérdő jelezés* (2004). E-mail: philobib@bcucluj.ro

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On seeing and hearing, of course. Jaspers therefore thinks in **images**. That is what he seeks and then sends away all over, listening to their remanded noises. Because, in his opinion, making philosophy also means **the ability** to see and hear. And we must also know how to do this. His thoughts cannot be approached in the usual ways, because they cannot be reached thus. But in the lack of tradition we avoid them. It is the achievement of this ambivalence which should be attempted here.

In the spirit of the traditions of European philosophy Jaspers develops his worldview in a **pattern**. But this pattern for him is rather an aid and necessity for communication which is always overflowed by the actual flood of thoughts. This philosophical pattern is certainly not some kind of scheme or table, but a world tableau formed during the operation of central generative principle(s). This principle for Jaspers is the **fissure of subject and object**. According to this we (as subjects) always direct ourselves to some kind of object, which is **different** from ourselves.

This difference and the unavoidable fissure it creates have a decisive role from the point of view of the first question of philosophy, namely “What is existence?”. The “entirety” of existence naturally cannot be only an object, nor only a subject; while we ourselves are incapable – stepping out from the object-subject fissure – of examining both together at the same time. Proceeding along this line of thought we must say thus, that existence is always **more** than subject and object, but this “more” **shows itself** in the fissure of the object and subject (*Subjekt-Objekt Spaltung*). This is what Jaspers calls the **Encompassing** (*das Umgreifende*). Everything which becomes an object because of the subject, becomes one by leaving the Encompassing and it relates thus to the subject, but also to other objects.

In the fissure of the subject and object we move thus towards the Encompassing. In this movement the fissure of the subject and object becomes an **image** which shows and expresses that which in fact can never be an object. Because important differences and nuances can be derived from our subject-nature which influences our direction to a certain

object-sphere. This is how the fissure, the crack of the subject and object offers a view on the different **modes** of the Encompassing. As a **factually living being** (*lebendiges Dasein*), our impressions are realized as being present and make us realized in our **environmental world**. The preparation of this environmental world is personal and cannot be generalized, but it is characteristic. We turn towards objects defined as **meaning**, about which we develop a knowledge which should be strict and generally valid (that is, scientifically true, etc.).

This is how “consciousness in general” (*Bewusstsein überhaupt*), as well as the fissure of the world of objects is born. But the World is not a concrete object which can be examined, but an idea elaborated by the spirit in order to integrate our generally valid, but limited and dispersed knowledge about the given objects. The idea shows thus the fissure of the World and the Spirit. However, this fissure only shows the mysterious lights and calls of **transcendence** shine through, to which we are striving as **existence**, changing this relationship necessarily into **ciphers**.

The transcending philosophical thinking – says Jaspers – is the method to meditate on the subject-object fissure in such a way that, perfecting the fissure in our mind, we make that what encompasses it able to be illuminated.

By these forms of subject-object fissure we see more closely the Encompassing, as we have shed light on its several modes: factual existence, consciousness in general, the spirit, and existence. But existence as such reveals itself in the completeness and “image-like” totality of the subject-object fissure, and the pertinent answer can only be given by reviewing the modes of the Encompassing.

Jaspers in his characteristic “method” leads the problems through the different modes of the Encompassing, examining how these problems are raised (if at all) on the “levels” of factual existence, consciousness in general, the spirit, and existence. But the explicit, actual examination of the problems largely entangles the unperturbed advancement (seemingly) suggested by the pattern. Therefore the researchers dealing with Jaspers understand the pattern itself in various ways, so

that some only know three modes of the Encompassing, while others derive it from one mode (transcendence); yet others (as also myself) find four modes... But we feel still, that we could go on counting... but without ever getting closer to the lively, intellectually enriching atmosphere of Jaspersian thinking.

All analyzers of Jaspers emphasize the logical and linguistic difficulties of the conceptual seizure of his thoughts. The purposeful contradictoriness of his sentences, the lack of positive definitions, the great number of negative references, the multiple meanings of his expressions, etc. all pile up as barriers which are impossible to overcome without the dangers of simplification or inexpressiveness. Indeed: among his sentences and thoughts we find ourselves at the same time on a narrow blind path and a broad boulevard. Even with the expense of building new ways, we have to find our own path between and inside these barriers.

In the pattern in which he puts forth his worldview, Jaspers' concepts are in a constant movement, drifting and flowing, and a constant change of accent. The rhythm of fine, opposed nuances fragments, colors, and abstracts the ideas almost to the level of musicality. Therefore it is only possible to grasp, perceive, and react to it only by some kind of **listening enlightenment**. All this will probably be better understandable if we try to grasp the **pattern itself** as a system of images in movement and reorganization. In this, the images follow each other not only as a kaleidoscope, but from behind their transgression, called back in time. But they are born not in a plain and spatial placement to be determined (and which will change again), but circled by its own previous images and relations, resonating and moving by the tension of the spiritual atmosphere of faith and effort. This sometimes receives an illuminated shape, which is however changed again, because it is an impulse which, radiating, offers a new light, new "energy", new image, self-image and sonority to the spectacle which embraces, defines us. Because this is not a vision but a spectacle, which is given birth, voice, and movement by the force of philosophy.

This is how the Encompassing becomes sometimes One, "then" six, or three, four, seven or again one; this is how the

faith becomes Jesus, Job, then image, cipher, and transcendence. "Consciousness in general" sometimes receives the shape of Descartes, Kant, or Galilei, and "after that" all there is left of them is the trial of an unbelievable power, completed as an experiment. Still, it is these images through which the spectacle, lighted through, **speaks** and **transforms**. Because we cannot accept Jesus' redemption, Job's certainty, Descartes' night's sleep, Galilei's gesture of revocation, Kant's recoil as a relief. What is more, it is their spirit which – beside all the light of their conviction – radiates the sounds of uninterrupted **questioning**.

It is obvious thus that in Jaspers' case we are speaking about something different than a methodology understood in the usual sense, which would guide us, by a finite number of steps, leading on a determined path, all the way to answering the questions. Naturally the need for a methodological "training", the requirement of being able to operate with concepts, categories, or criticism is alive here as well. Still, the existential, philosophical, and cultural openness, which develops mobile relationships with questions searching time, history, or the present, is more important. But the relationships identified as such do not end up in the field of a merely technical problem management, but they accompany them to the "borderlines" of the questions.

Questions become thus not so much problems but rather **themes**. The Theme is a living-forming, searching-concealing problem, inviting self-formulation. Such themes of Jaspers are the "cipher", the "border-situation", the "categorical requirement", the "man", "philosophy", the "Encompassing", etc. The themes and variations gain a special articulation, but also an echo-like cohesion in this world of the thought. Therefore we can say that for Jaspers only the problems are bordered, and the theme as an element of thought is not. It is exactly the meaning of theme-treatment that **not even** on the borders of the problems can we find some kind of Archimedes' point from where we could look around with an objectual accuracy on both sides of the border.

Seeing beyond is only ensured by the projected light sent out from **within** the border for an invited encounter. At the same time, this "sheaf of light" circles and flutters the

problem itself as a constant experiment. This is how it becomes theme and image at the same time.

It is not chance, but the inner drift, the atmosphere and the structure of Jaspers' thoughts which makes me speak about it with the help of certain concepts of musical composition. The theme – as a living-forming problem – is itself an “element of articulation” which is capable of sustaining a whole, self-supporting part of the movement of thought. This is where the sensation which fills us on reading Jaspers' works comes from, that in any single chapter his **entire** conception is condensed and unfolded at the same time. As if the single chapters would be the parts of a multi-thematic, or several one-theme symphonies, both at the same time. However, the theme is also able to go through evolution or transformation.

Just like in music, Jaspers' themes also have energetic surpluses exceeding inner necessities, which abstracting and condensing the temporality of the whole, ensure the stresses of its transformation. When problems are turned into themes by the power of thought, then these radiate around their energies from their inner sources: the movement of the themes arrives at a light and sound of its own. Therefore sentences like “What is transcendence?”, “What am I?”, “What is actual existence?” – despite their interrogatory form – are not questions. They are not questions which are **answered** by a given knowledge. They are “only” themes, which are brought to life by an existential way of thinking, and carried on further on an inner, growingly flashing course, where they are illuminated again as an effort, being certain of their authenticity. The answer given to them is not a piece of knowledge but a **conviction and a co-respondence**.

The self-grounding, unconditionally Encompassing tends – says Jaspers – to take on the form of an object before our eyes, although this form is foreign to it. So it must collapse, must crumble by itself. Following this there will be nothing else left than the clarity of the mere conviction of the presence of the Encompassing. **But any theme must be led that far.** Problems are general, but the theme is **personal**, as it is our task to bring it to life. This is to what the philosophy born from historical traditions and the motivations of the

present, the “enlightening thinking” (*erhellende Denken*) is a great help.

What Jaspers calls “erhellende Denken” must be more closely examined. The expression itself clearly indicates that it is a kind of thinking which wishes to behave **as light**. But – as Gadamer also says – to shine is to shed light upon something, and thus to appear on that what the beams fall onto. It pertains to the ontological structure of the light that it is reflexive. That is, it can only become visible if it enlightens something. Thinking which behaves by the analogy of light obviously refers to the field of the intelligible, and this, similarly to Plato or Aristotle, is not the light of the Sun, but of the **nous**. Enlightening thinking is indeed the effort, action of existence by which it explores the “ciphers of transcendence”.

The determined dynamism of existence is that in which the products of tradition stand out, speak and become certain as the ciphers of transcendence. During their reading or listening – in the presence of the Encompassing – **new** ciphers are born. But thinking itself, as the enlightener – similar to light – is also reflexive. Consequently it is also the enlightening of its self, and not only the light of the nous, which enlightens the field of the intelligible. Speculation as **speculum** (mirror, mirroring) in enlightening thinking means that it is at the same time the “source of light” and the “mirror”. Thus the “reading” of the ciphers is not only their enlightening, nor is it an enlightenment (to which existence arrives externally), but – as thinking – it searches-awaits the lights of the ciphers with and in the lights of its own efforts, “inner actions”. And in the shine of this **encounter** it enlightens **itself** in the origins of its convictions.

The reading and hearing of the ciphers gives birth to newer ciphers in enlightening thinking. Ciphers – which are thus the historical offsprings of enlightening thinking conceived in the presence of the Encompassing – have their **own** light. Just like the Beautiful for Plato, the ciphers also have the nature of shining out for existence. Thus the “shining efforts” of existence searching for its origins in its historical present meet the shining lights of the ciphers. This encounter is the glare. The speculum becomes **spectaculum** (spectacle).

Of course, there is something actually sensory in any spectacle. The spectacle which starts to glare in the light of the spirit, the nous, is naturally different: a new cipher. But it is exactly the reflexivity of thinking supported and sharpened by the reflexivity and ontological structure of the light which Jaspers calls “Existenzerhellung”: existence is that which, enlightening the ciphers of transcendence, enlightens its own self. It becomes certain in its origins and roots, in the historical presence of its essence. This is what is achieved in the **decisions** rooted in the tension of the relations and efforts of transcendence with its ciphers. Enlightening thinking is thus different from the enlightened mystical consciousness or spirit, because this does not search **as light** but lives the experience of light. Even if it senses it “inside”, it is not the source.

Philosophy, the enlightening thinking helps to transform the generality of “problems” into themes which are rooted in our personal origins and which should be taken to the end. Therefore Jaspers may interpret the great metaphysics, arts and ethical actions of history as the enciphered descriptions and pioneers of existence and transcendence, which were elaborated, chosen, and decided by the beings for the enlightenment of themselves and existence in the presence of the Encompassing.

However, ciphers are not given, but alive. Their life is a history initiated by tradition, the beginnings, and the tensions of the present. Ciphers therefore cannot be acquired from tradition by learning and rehearsing them. In our historical present the experience of tradition in most cases proves insufficient. Ciphers therefore must be understood in an existential way: their light, their sound must be seen and heard as fulfilled in our present.

But what is it that Jaspers calls a “cipher”? The cipher is a metaphysical symbol: the non-objectified language of transcendence. Apart from other symbols, ciphers cannot be interpreted from the point of view of their meaning. There is nothing behind them to which we can point as being ciphered by some conception or other. Nevertheless, this is the language that transcendence speaks. Its words must be understood and its voice must be heard in this way too.

Only existence is able to hear the voice of transcendence. It is only existence which raises at least to the level of sensing: through the crack of the subject-object fissure it is the voice of something encompassing it which is heard. This voice is thus a **reference**. So, when Jaspers says that transcendence speaks to us in the language of ciphers, this means that, on the one hand, it **talks** in this way, while on the other hand, that all this is connected to the essence of the sound rather than that of language.

The essence of the sound is not that it is sounding, nor is it that it is expressing something. The metaphysical meaning of the sound is that it is an **index**, a reference, what is more, an existential reference. The essence of the sound, as Aristotle emphasizes it when meditating on the soul, is that it is a **multi-factorial act** which arrives to us by a certain medium. Sound is thus the reference, the index of the **dynamics** of existence. This is why Bergson attaches it so closely to **time**.

The language of ciphers speaks thus first to existence, and it speaks by showing that in its historical present – as an appeal (*Appel*) – the dynamic of the Encompassing exists. Still, the ciphers are not some kind of waves which transcendence keeps emanating, but for the “reception” and formation, articulation of which only existence is prepared. Jaspers tries to better explain it in connection with the example of Kant and the Old Testament. Kant considers that the most essential element of the Bible is the commandment which forbids people to make images or doubles to God. Still – says Jaspers – the Old Testament itself is full with descriptions of God which depict him as good, or furious, or law-maker. That is, the Old Testament forbids and cultivates the creation of images for God at the same time. However, this is not a contradiction that the Bible carelessly fell into, but an unavoidable tension which goes with the man’s “finite” essence, existence. It is about man being able to think of transcendence only in images. These images are ciphers in which, on the one hand, transcendence did not hide and reveal itself by itself (that is, these are not **riddles** offered to be solved); on the other hand these are not born from existence, with which it would take

around its inner secrets, shown circled by interdictions, as secrets (**mask**).

The cipher is born and receives image and sound in the permanently active tension, which is shown on the level of the fissure of subject and object, the modes of existence. Transcendence only exists for existence, and only as a cipher. For the mystic in the decisive moment of the **unio mystica** transcendence turns into immanence. However, this incommunicable experience, not so much personal than individually valid, does not belong to philosophy. Such ciphers, as – beside the already mentioned ones – “Nature”, “unsuccessfulness” or “fall” etc. only become ciphers, language, by the efforts of existence, which should be read and listened to in the ever newer actions of enlightening and inviting thinking, and in the presence of the Encompassing. Therefore the inner rules of the language which speaks but does not utter, do not offer a clearly explicable, formal meaning, but the images of which are not projections, well, that is a cipher-language based on the metaphysical meaning of light and sound.

Understanding the language of ciphers by the metaphysical meaning of light and sound leads involuntarily to the ancient idea of sounding light and bright sound. The connection of light and sound is a very old and widespread mythological idea in the creation of the world. The Vedic god Pradjapati was born from a loud breath, and he himself is nothing else than a song of laudation. The **Kathaka Upanishad** describes Athman uttering the basic creating word AUM (or OM) as an immense light. The body of the first men is transparent; it is made up of light and sound. Their life, their existence is a bright and sounding floatation. It is the veil of Maya which – by matter – weakens the sound of light. The sound can only penetrate through it in shreds. This is why later mankind cannot see the bright sound. This state of floatation, in which the world’s essence of sound and light can again be perceived, may only be reached by enormous efforts. For the Greeks, Apollo is the god of light and music. The same tradition lives on in the teaching of Christianity about the **verbum creans**, when God spoke first at the creation of light.

But what can the significance of all these be in the understanding of Jaspers’ philosophy, as any kind of concrete mysti-

cal or mythological explanation stands far from him? It is evidently the specificity and structure of the relation, the connection with existence is what connects Jaspers’ “theory” of ciphers, his ideas about the enlightening thinking, as well as the essence of making philosophy to these ancient basic concepts. Jaspers always emphasizes that philosophy and making philosophy mobilizes the man and existence as a whole. For him, philosophy is an “action of thinking”, an “inner action”, inner fulfillment, etc. It is thus something which urges the **entirety** of the abilities and sensibilities of the thinker to operate with the greatest possible effort. The thinking internal action activates all the kinds of openness and sensitivity. And this is exactly what is heard, enlightened, out of every myth of the creation – the self-origination of historical mankind – understanding these as the ciphers beyond the concrete contents of the transcendent. However, this is not some kind of “new interpretation” of myths which would make us better understand their origins, inner content, or concrete types. Understood as ciphers, myths are not fixed, on the contrary, they are floating.

Floatation (*die Schwebe*) is one of the most important and most difficult “concepts” of Jaspers’ line of thought to analyze. It is so because it is not a feeling or an impression that Bergson for instance analyzes when inquiring about the state generated by the succession of mere diversities while listening to music. Floatation is a transcendental (in the Kantian meaning of the term) existential spiritual situation, which philosophy creates in the form of complete willingness, determination and readiness, or availability. It is a transcendental skill because it shows that the encounter of transcendence and existence happens **in the world**; and that philosophy is nothing else than being **in-between** the origin and the purpose. “Transcending thinking”, philosophizing, as Jaspers does and explains, leads to a dead end in the opinion of many. The fact that no meaning is fixed, offers such a secure theoretical shelter where Jaspers can always draw back, without ever exposing himself to the danger of being weighed in contradictions.

In this perspective thus his thinking appears as impossible to be discussed, since the convictions born in this floating thinking may claim to be a personal spiritual experience of

such a kind that even their discussion may be hindered by serious barriers. There is a difference however between information and communication. Information is the **sharing** of an “independently” completed experience with others. The partners are informed about each other’s news or experiences. Communication is not merely a contact with a community perceived as audience, but it is the **communion** of existences searching-inquiring by the specific encounters and identities of our traditions in a historical present. So, what Jaspers calls communication refers to this more original community, and not some kind of competence to which we arrive by information. It is the community of questions, problems, themes, the unavoidable situations of historical existence, etc. in which this communication happens and an authentic contact may take place. Wittgenstein’s formulation is of a similar sense, when saying in the often misunderstood introduction of the **Tractatus** that his book is not a manual, but it speaks to those who also struggle with the immeasurable difficulties of such questions.

A serious, authentic communication can only take place in a common atmosphere created by the efforts connected to identical questions. It is because of this that the impossibility to discuss Jaspers’ thoughts refers to an external impossibility of discussion. But nothing is possible to be discussed externally. The efforts, completed one by one, and rooted in the age, in tradition, and in personal fate are the prerequisites for the circumstances of an authentic communication. Communication always contains the common existential experience of thoughts, sensations, and situations. But every man is a possible existence. This is a chance which cannot be given up until the last moment of individual being.

The thinker intends thus his words to be heard by everybody. But the thoughts exposed like this are merely **invitations**. The invitation is naturally an authentic existential, thinker’s act. Jaspers himself frequently practiced it. Not only in his writings circulated in many copies, but also when committed to radio waves in the form of lectures. However, the invitation is merely the **search** for communication. It is an identical existential level which is necessary for an authentic communication.

Thus, ciphers are alive, and their life is in the history forming from the existential tensions of the present and the beginnings. There are countless ciphers, and from their authentic reading in the presence of the Encompassing yet others are formed. The Gods of Jacob, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, or Luther are all ciphers. It would be thus a mistake to identify the Encompassing with something “determined”. In the usual sense Jaspers’s Encompassing is an empty term, because it does not yield a new knowledge which would make a previous one more accurate, but it “merely” changes our consciousness about existence and ourselves. The transformation of problems into themes and their follow-up reaches not only their boundaries, but their **roots** as well. Near the boundary the theme looks around.

Thus philosophizing, although not moving backwards, always sees its roots **in front of** itself, as a presence. Thus the enlightening thinking returns; however, not in a phenomenological circle which closes up thus, but, re-creating and re-living its themes in the new light, it finds new themes. Despite their movement, Jaspers’ themes do not have a solution, are not relaxed. Their meaning is exactly that they are uttered as a spectacle, and their authentic silence is identical with their perfecting **retake**: deepening for elevation in their roots, and in this elevation deciding ourselves.

It pertains to the nature of man that, waving-floatating every cipher (*in die Schwebe halten*) and transgressing them with a final effort, he attempts to exceed the obsessive fissure of the subject and object. This tendency, represented by Parmenides, Plotinos, Meister Eckhart and others, which is always present in the West, but seems to have been perfected only in the East, signals that basic philosophical-existential struggle to try to gain certainty in transcendence by raising above any ciphers. The **Borobudur temple** in Java is the architectural representation of this road. It pictures that elevation which, from the expressive-sensory forms of the human world to Buddha’s cipher and beyond, reaches to the point where everything calms down and becomes silent even as a reference and, finding its way into the pure “geometrical” form, and the emptiness of the wonderful distances and

heights of the sky, arrives beyond the cipher. But to what extent is this still thinking? – asks Jaspers.

In the kind of thinking Jaspers speaks about we think about something – be it even a cipher. Asian philosophers however, Nagardjuna and other Buddhist sources, use thinking for the annihilation of thinking, for stepping beyond the world also. The absorbing exercises of meditation which they practice do not mean a valid path for Western thinkers. Primarily it is not a “technical” impossibility, it is about the fact that the basic question for us is **whether or not we want the world**. It is not a recoil in front of the barriers of a road which otherwise has a lot to offer. After all it is about an existential tendency which is an element of our nature and can also be found in our own traditions. But in the ciphers the world becomes the theme of an existential decision.

None of the Buddhist sects wants the world – emphasizes Jaspers. It is an indifferent burden for them. We, on the contrary, **want** the world, want to live in the world, and do not want to deny the world. We cannot decide whether they found the truth there in the East, because those wise men, just like the mystics, are also only able to symbolically present what they had experienced. Thus in their lectures they were also blocked at the level of ciphers. However, we can decide whether we want, we accept the world and with/within it our existence as a thinker. Jaspers does not want to exceed these ciphers, to leave the world, to give up the seriousness of life and practice.

There are several ways to be a “Western” thinker. Thus, several types of Europe-centrism grows out as a product of the West. The tradition-guarding turn to the past often happens under the sign of the West. The profuse crisis of our culture and civilization, the rootless critical consciousness pours, as if on a conveyor belt, the easily made spiritual products of our Westernness. However, there is hardly any thinker who accepts and accomplishes his Westernness in the form and on the basis of an existential decision. Jaspers is not a Western thinker merely because of his birth and education, but because of an existential decision. This decision is born however in heights where the encounter with the Eastern spirituality is

also achieved. Jaspers is not constrained by his Westernness, he does not want to get rid of it and become Eastern in his spirit. But for a decision made at this level it is necessary to keep the ciphers floatating, not going beyond them. This is how a thinker’s action becomes the source of an authentic **personal commitment**.

Philosophy thus does not peak in statements which contain convictions, but in such a texture of ideas which **permeates a whole life**. The philosophy which is given, already linguistically formulated and crystallized is only memory, precondition, opportunity and support. These works of thinking are in fact only “half-truths” which have never been completed, and which only gain their value by completing those who do not only approach them as “systems of ideas”, but also accomplish them in their existence. Because philosophy is the greatest gift gods have ever offered to man: it is by this that man was offered **to his own self**, and can arrive at such a consciousness of his responsibility and freedom in which the necessity of communication already appears.

This is of course connected again to the essential and original musicality of philosophizing and philosophy. That is, to the fact that this musicality concerning philosophy means in a certain basic sense – mentioned already by Pythagoras – also a more original prevalence of music in thinking about our existence. Naturally, the words addressed to the (explicitly musical) hearing or the “listening soul” are not merely and primarily (musical) sounds, melodic fragments, or (musical) themes created by these... On the contrary, it is always the inviting and understanding wisdom of the possible experience of the **showing sound** and the hearing-listening seeing perfected in our presence and present.

If philosophy only listened and hearkened, or if it only “composed” for the understanding listening with sounds ... then this would naturally not be philosophy, but only music. But – beyond music – philosophy must not only be able to make heard, to listen, and to hear, but at the same time to look, to see, and to make seen. This – as we see and hear! – is one of the greatest difficulties of philosophy: to see and make seen that to which the sound always – but “only” – refers,

and hear and make heard that which “only” sounds – mostly unseen – around that what is seen.

Therefore, in that basic and original meaning of philosophy and philosophizing, which is probably only outlined in our age by the dialogue with Karl Jaspers, the essence of philosophy and philosophizing lies exactly in the skill, ability, and determination to essentially think over the original connection of Light and Sound. This is the way in which we humans, as beings amidst beings, liberally conduct our lives, existentially projecting – that is, making heard or seen – our entire lives as beings who feel and also think, with regard to our existential possibilities.

Despite his pedagogical inclinations built upon the urge for communication, Karl Jaspers was not the founder of a school. This is also understandable perhaps on the basis of those said above. His standpoint is a fairly uncomfortable one, equally for the individual, the power, the philosopher, and for God. Power can no longer expropriate us because the source of our freedom comes from higher regions; God can no longer lead us step by step because he has originally offered us to ourselves; and the individual does not possess his freedom together with his birth certificate but has to fight for it with the power, God, culture, himself, and his peers. And the philosopher does not have the task to make his environment fully comfortable.

That man is a goal in itself, that oppression is unworthy, that lying, cruelty, and hypocrisy are mean qualities, is something that one can learn by education or culture. Still: we accept oppression, we resign ourselves to being the toys of power, and see artful hypocrisy almost as our evident environment. It seems thus that the institutional transmittance of values by education, learning, and culture gives no sufficient reason and strength to transform the ideals thus acquired into the basis of a decision which would clearly guide us, pervading our whole life and essence, and would show us: who we are and what can we become.

So Jaspers did not found a school. This is so because approaching him is a personal, staggering intellectual and cultural experience which cannot be avoided. He became a

movement, a noise of breathing, an element of our air. Now, when it is not enough to inwardly reveal our traditions, when others’ shadowing memory stretches over our oblivion, Jaspers’ thirst for tradition is even more burning. It suggests that our traditions must be found in an authentic and critical culture, and on the basis of these we must fulfill our personal and indestructible existential accomplishments. This is how we can find and create values which can be validated and recognized in the permanent conjuncture of survival. The “fight fueled by love”, the “das liebende Kampf” can be enriching even here, in the conditions of a minority existence. Jaspers himself is the evidence that this is not “aufklärism” or utopia, but the accomplishing process of self-legitimizing systems of connections formed **behind** cultural achievements, beyond any *a priorism*, or institutional or legal assurances. This process must be personal and open, and not private and isolated. It must be fought for on all grounds.



Marius Jucan

Andrei Pleșu Comedii la porțile Orientului Farces at the Orient's Gates

Humanitas Publishing House, Bucharest, 2005.

For the consummate skill of an author as Andrei Pleșu who remarked himself as a versatile critic and interpreter of artistic, philosophical and theological themes, journalism might hide a sort of paradoxical challenge. The challenge consists merely in merging the brevity of a short article or essay with the ineffable stamp of a moral or a philosophical reflection. On one hand it might summon the writer's energy to address his favorite issues in a simpler, yet more elaborate style, on the other, it could possibly drain the author's gusto for theoretical demonstrations into persuasive stratagems to win the understanding of the present-day cultural consumer. Neither of the two appears true, however in Andrei Pleșu's recent book. Seemingly, journalism appears as serious an enterprise as the other author's editorial achievements on art, morals, theology were. Still, a capital difference tells *Comedii la porțile Orientului* / *Farces at the Orient's Gates* (Humanitas Publishing House, Bucharest, 2005), from previous titles.

Claiming to disguise the philosopher and / or the moralist under the mask of an affable ironist, Andrei Pleșu dramatizes

events of everyday life, as well as the course of events, including also parts of his biography as a governmental official, in a sort of theatrical representation where transition is the main protagonist. The clash between modernity and tradition, ideals, goals and means in post-communist years, or rather between the modernization and resistance against it, are rendered with the genuine help of an inborn theatrical spirit which seduces the reader, as if he/she were the spectators of a fascinating and at the same time comic political show going on uninterruptedly before their eyes. The short essays of the volume could betray at any moment the philosophical or the moralist vein of their author, yet they are completely free from the author's will to sermonize. They are not intended to parallel the discourse of a long, if not, an agonizing transition, reiterating its leit-motifs. Quite on the contrary, they convey the writer's empathy to the tortuous stories of our "interesting times", in the sense moral reflections or sanctions do not echo the harsh sound of moral excommunications or political sanctions, but they bring a fresh look, seemingly belonging to an outsider. Is the moralist an outsider of the everyday life? Should we look for a moral outside the securing borderlines of our everyday life? Tough questions for which I am suggesting possible answers in Andrei Pleșu's book.

The observer of the present-day Romanian scene displays in this way a sort of fraternal understanding, unmitigated compassion, a glimmer of hope for every case of complete moral failure, yet without showing any sign of haughtiness. The moralist does not vanish into thin air, neither does he prefer a majestic stance. The pedagogy of laughter provides the writer with a rich palette of nuances, instead of a simple kit of tools, useful to paint, so to say, the grotesque birth of a new world, which anyone could recognize as the world of the post-communist transition. In fact, from the authors' point of view, it is rather ambiguous whether one attends the coming into being of a new world, or whether the "old" world survived under the camouflage of a shabby liberal or democratic garb. The ambiguity of such a choice is but quickly dismissed. Actually, the journalist's hallowed mission, that of conveying to the reader's imagination the newness and often only the

Marius Jucan

Marius Jucan, Associate Professor, Ph.D, Faculty of European Studies Babes-Bolyai University, Cluj, Romania Author of the books: *Fascinatia fictiunii sau despre retorica elipsei* (1998) *Singuratatea salvata. O încercare asupra operei lui Henry David Thoreau din perspectiva modernitatii americane* (2001) *The Complex Innocence A Phenomenological-Hermeneutical Approach to the Tales of Henry James* (2001) E-mail:marjucan@yahoo.com

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modernity, tradition,
transition, authorial
language, Andrei Pleșu

shock of an event, appears under the penmanship of Andrei Pleșu as a subtle study of manners, characters and intentions mysteriously blended in the atmosphere of a carnival. But carnival is only an ironical frame, as in one Caragiale's plays, where within the tumult of a loud spree, the morality of a "world" is cruelly diagnosed through the rendering of a play within a play.

Laughter does not claim its toll by making us, readers, face a comic situation from the very beginning, since actually few things would make someone living inside the so-called transition period, laugh willingly at oneself or others. Laughter needs not only a safe distance to instill a different outlook in the mind of people who laugh and not simply mock at just to mirror themselves superior to others. Laughter brings along with its theatrical representation a specific use of language, and moreover, as Nicolai Hartmann underscored, an "ethos of laughter". Indeed, a theater stage for the political carnival and the pedagogy of laughter would not work without a more comprehensive philosophical outlook. It is important to mention here that the ethos of laughter reveals itself especially through the unusual richness of language, quite an unprecedented inventory of all registers of Romanian, revived after the long hibernating season of the so called "wooden-language", or the "newspeak" of the communist period. One should perhaps dwell more on the fertility and sumptuousness of the language used by Andrei Pleșu in his subtle and indirect critique of Romanian transition, a critique partly veiled by a good-humored laughter, partly castigating sarcastically what is called "the obscenity" of transition, and realize that the author does not simply win laughter on his side, but counts on the adequacy of words in representing the play between reality and its simulacra in times of transition, so similar, after all, to a carnival.

Stalinism banned, as one knows, freedom of language, not only in everyday language but also, especially, in the cultural discourse. Writing seen as expressing cultural originality, viewed in its variety of forms, from fiction to history, from art criticism, reportage to philosophy underwent under Stalinism and after, and this is the case of Romanian post-

stalinism, not only an ideological purgation, but implicitly an irreversible impoverishment of language. "The language of work" as Ceaușescu, Romania's last dictator, liked to refer to linguistic and cultural difference of Romanians in the '80s was following closely the ideas of the Soviet linguist N.I. Marr, who claimed that eventually the working class heroes will communicate only through ideas, renouncing language which was bearing the stigma of the past. The society of command took any precaution to deepen the chasm between the free enrichment of language and its censored use. Needless to say that this reductive usage of language born from a long unsanctioned abuse, continues to resound in the present-day discourse. The relevance of a highly authorial language as a necessary aesthetic frame in portraying Romanian transition consists in refusing ready-made models, clichés and actually a controlled planning of how to refer to transition. The pedagogy of laughter is perhaps a synonym to the way of expressing freedom in one's commitment to journalism.

Adrian Neculau (ed.)
Viața cotidiană în communism
Everyday Life in Communism
Polirom, Iași, 2005, 367 pages

An anthology of texts joining different contributors, psychologists, historians, sociologists, writers, under the aegis of assessing the cultural impact of everyday life in communism brings to discussion various aspects of method and why not, within the framework of the omnipresent discourse of transition, the issue of how images and the imaginary of transition are being shaped. In other words, such an anthology earns from the very beginning the interest of a large category of readers, as it merges scientific approaches to the study of communism, rather rare by the way, with the account of personal experience, confessions and cultural points of views on the quality of life in communist years. Methodological aspects are tackled by the reputed psychologist Adrian Neculau in the prefatory study of the volume, highlighting on identity and social representation, thus enhancing the importance of the formation of a new habitus, striking its roots in a historically and politically determined span of time between the end of WWII and the end of the Cold War. Professor Neculau is also the author of a highly interesting study of the Stalinist “re-education” carried on secretly in Romanian prisons in the 50’s. Romanians’ passive subordination to the communist regime seen

as a “learned” habitus is not so unexplainable as it would appear at first glance. If one digs deeper in the history of the Romanian modern society it would be not difficult to find out how deep-skin such notions as liberalism, citizen and citizenship, civil society were. On the other hand, the communist regime never claimed a rigid ideological stance comparable to the Asiatic one, opening an ambiguous space between the fervor to obey and mute obedience or indifference to civic life, a crucial factor which cemented the communist pretense of legitimacy. It is worthwhile mentioning that such a comprehensive study of life in communism was delayed for quite a long period, until a safe distance could distance Romanians from the dire times of what sociologists called the “culture of scarcity”, and naturally ideological repression and its host of restrictions.

Generally the culture of scarcity covers the drastic reduction (or almost complete lack) of food, fuel, heating, information, communication which were forced upon all Romanians (excepting the nomenklatura and the secret services). Starting with the 80’s, the culture of scarcity worsened its course down to unthinkable examples for a civilized country of the 20-th century, until December 1989. The Stalinist cult of personality, which was never properly debunked in Romania, but quite on the contrary, was latently nurtured and actually revived by national communism, was closely related to the culture of scarcity, as the last years of Ceaușescu fully demonstrated. The culture of scarcity has undoubtedly left not only humiliating memories, but a collective scar, transforming citizens into non-heroic survivors. Presumably, the mind of the new generations, though not so much exposed to ideological distortions or brainwashing, had to witness the dire struggle for survival which addressed every family or individual, as if the country had fallen under the siege of an invisible enemy. Actually, re-establishing a normal course of life after a long troubled period when identity and social representation of citizens were almost denied, meant also to explain people why communist order resorted to the tactics of the economic and political siege in order to rule. The ending phase of communism testified the denial of all previous socialist utopian prom-

Marius Jucan

Marius Jucan, Associate Professor, Ph.D, Faculty of European Studies Babes-Bolyai University, Cluj, Romania Author of the books: *Fascinatia fictiunii sau despre retorica elipsei* (1998) *Singuratatea salvata. O încercare asupra operei lui Henry David Thoreau din perspectiva modernitatii americane* (2001) *The Complex Innocence A Phenomenological-Hermeneutical Approach to the Tales of Henry James* (2001)
E-mail:marjucan@yahoo.com

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everyday life, communism, re-education, Romani, Ceausescu, Adrian Neculau

ises, and the cruel realities of the return of the dictatorship. The issue of everyday life in communism is so the more appealing not only to foreign researchers, but also to Romanians, since, the “small history” of the unimportant, less visible citizens came now under the limelight, so that the “mass” effect of the communist discourse is finally dismantled, and accordingly, one can not only remark the traces left by the ravaging ideological repression, but also contemplate repercussions in immediate future, to mention only corruption or the passivity of civil society. It is an ascertained fact that Romanians trust more than other institutions the Church and the Army as the credible ones, not vouching thus the significance of the Parliament or of other organizations in representing civil society.

A fragment of social biography emerges thus from under the scalpel of historians and psychologists to the readers’ attention. It is to note that consideration given to the otherwise conspicuous aftermath of communism does not come naturally after an epoch of suffering, whether physical or moral, usually mellowed down, or even completely obscured by the wish to forget. Yet it is rather difficult to struggle not only with people’s general opinion that communism is already a stale story so that one should stop looking for other pieces of evidence since we have a promissory claim, as for instance, entering the UE. Communism should not be primarily analyzed for the sake of demonizing the moral culprits or rewarding its last survivors. It is equally difficult to tell truth from the subjective memory of both victims and victimizers, in the sense that the magnifying lenses should not be focused only on some aspects and not on the whole picture of Romanian society lacking in the main traits of modernization. Communist terror was grafted therefore rather easily on the pre-modern mindset of rural or sub-proletarian masses. The lack of any noticeable resistance to communism as compared to other neighboring areas, to mention only Hungary and Poland, speaks for itself about the absence of any major civil development in the modern Romanian society, in order to secure or preserve to a certain extent the identity of the community against social catastrophes. From this point of view identity

and social representation proved their relevance for the study of everyday life. The claim of reconciliation or of social harmony rings hollow when one comes to share the widely accepted evidence of economic polarization in Romanian society after 1989, which stands for a tardy avowal of deep inequalities underlying communist order. Even if some of the main major sources about repression in communism are still being kept secret (the Securitate documents), one could perhaps realize the unprecedented impact of the totalitarian society on the Romanian mindset. Which does not mean however, that Romanians are nowadays unable to implement the rule of democratic institutions, though the delay of modernization and / or its distortions add a new distance to catch up with for them as for the sons and daughters of a hopeless straggler. The interest for studying the past communist everyday experience should not be gauged only from the perspective of the historical timeline of Romanian communism, which shows noticeable variations in the repressive state control on the individual and society, but as this volume proves, in bringing to light an isomorphism of fear and repression within the whole rule of communism. It is interesting to see how fear and repression merged in the experience of endless queues for food, fuel, etc., as queuing up was the most preoccupied and at the same time the most debasing activities of Romanian population in the 80’s. The planned infliction of fear, hunger, cold and cultural isolation on “the masses” had never brought to justice other authors than the deceased presidential couple, which shows the present-day drawbridges communism still keeps shut.

It would be hard to make a selection of the most inciting and equally informative contributions. Actually all articles bring their part to the half-disclosed puzzle of everyday life in communism. Articles are signed by: Adrian Neculau, Alexandru-Florin Platon, Andrei Cosmovici, Radu Clit, Aurora Liiceanu, Gilles Ferreol, Tatiana Slama-Cazacu, Septimiu Chelcea, Germina Nagăț, Liviu Antonesei, Laurențiu Șoitu, Liviu Chelcea, Puiu Lăteș, Dan Lungu, Paul Cernat, Ruxandra Cesereanu, Lavinia Betea, Dana Bichescu, George-Florian Macarie, Dan Goglează.

Daniel Barbu Politica pentru barbari Politics for Barbarians Nemira, Bucharest 2005, 242 pages

DANIEL BARBU
POLITICA PENTRU BARBARI



Marius Jucan

Marius Jucan, Associate Professor, Ph.D, Faculty of European Studies Babes-Bolyai University, Cluj, Romania Author of the books: *Fascinatia fictiunii sau despre retorica elipsei* (1998) *Singuratatea salvata. O încercare asupra operei lui Henry David Thoreau din perspectiva modernitatii americane* (2001) *The Complex Innocence A Phenomenological-Hermeneutical Approach to the Tales of Henry James* (2001)
E-mail: marjucan@yahoo.com

The political writings of professor Daniel Barbu, a distinguished political scientist from the University of Bucharest, have added in their well documented and elegantly argued polemical tone new vistas to the present-day engrossing debate on the Romanian issues of modernization, or rather on its lack of systematic modernization. Such volumes as the *Republica absentă / The Absent Republic*, Nemira, Bucharest, 1999, *Bizanț contra Bizanț / Byzantium versus Byzantium*, Nemira, Bucharest, 2001 or the recently issued one, *Politica pentru barbari / Politics for Barbarians*, Nemira, Bucharest 2005, provide the reader with a timely opportunity not only to share an original political diagnose of recent years, but also to endorse an insightful examination of our political culture. The author's intention is revealed from the first page, which points not only to a certain hasty cutting out of introductory

stratagems, but also to the gravity of the misgivings and shortcomings pervading recent political life in Romania. Daniel Barbu's starting premise consists actually in comparing the general perception of politics in recent Romania, grafted in the mindset of ordinary people as well as in the present-day political class, with Tocqueville's analysis of an early 19-th century nascent political culture: the American one. Obviously, this comparison holds true on a general level, excepting the salient particular differences extant between the two terms of comparison. The comparison targets the validity of classical political philosophy for the experience of Romanian governance, focusing on political representation and how it was tackled in Romanian modernity. In this train of thought, if Daniel Barbu starts from claiming that Romanians "do not want so much to be represented, but rather to be governed", it is because the effective political task of representation has remained an unfulfilled hope in spite of the attempts to implement it, especially after 1989. The implicit confusion between being represented and being governed, leads to discussing the difference between being a subject and a citizen, and thus to perceiving the image of barbarity and barbarians. The divide between barbarians and the civilized sets for another distinction, that between a political elite, or an elitist region of the world (geographically mapped) where true, civilized politics is exerted, and the rest of the world, seen as the realm of political crimes and blunders. The question of how genuinely political representation has been dealt with in Romania after 1989 comes into focus when one looks for necessarily different political programs, and sooner or later discovers that these are replaceable versions of the same post-communist, populist demagoguery.

The shadow of the unique party is still towering over young Romanian democracy and the party-state concubinage is echoed in the dominant lack of trust in civil society. Instead of the appearance of different groups / societies of citizens who would declare their commitment for public causes, assuming thus their role of representatives in sustaining them, Romanians seem to continue to praise the impersonal status of power and its official rituals. The fountain of this willing

Key words:

modernization, political life, manipulation, barbarians, Romania, Daniel Barbu

power is to be located in the figure of political party leader, or in the paternal figure of the nation. Usually party leaders are perceived as ‘locomotives’, a recurrent metaphor showing the sacred place of the leading role in the party, at the same time the detrimental image for the ordinary party members, the periphery and the silence of it. The absence of an active and constructive response from civil society to an endless number of issues may point the finger to the long years of dictatorship mostly belonging to the communist period, and thus, to a political culture in which the issues of representation was meant either adorn dictatorship or to be the instruments of a rigid ideological yoking.

Under these circumstances, a radical assessment of the situation cannot, and should not be avoided or toned down endlessly. It is from this perspective, it seems to me, that Daniel Barbu resorts explicitly to a necessary distinction among real politicians, political mentors and demagogues. Real politicians are those who enroll in politics to dedicate themselves for the benefit of their communities and prove the authenticity of their commitment by their effective contribution to the rise of the ideological standards in their political groups, by making thus politics *visible* for the common citizen, by bringing eventually higher standards of living. In this way, the true politician should abstain from mingling politics with affairs, no matter how profitable this might seem chiefly in times when the position of the judiciary seems rather unsettled. Actually, the appearance on the public stage of rather unschooled would-to-be political leaders, who can barely tell the difference from one party to another, is a signal for the low standards of the political class, which has been already warned for several times by voters. The high risks run by the political class to jeopardize political symbols of democracy, and consequently nurture nostalgic feeling for totalitarianism should not be overlooked. Within these days, a politician’s task appears so the more complicate, and it appeals, in Daniel Barbu’s words, to a resemblance with a religious believer, in the sense that the politician should distinguish once again between private and public interests, sorting out governance from public administration. In this line, politi-

cians should actually face the political and philosophical fundamentals which build the modern world, or otherwise they may be judged as insufficiently mature, chiefly after the experience of totalitarianism and its various forms all over the world. Political mentors though rare in the transition period of post-communist, should not be confounded with journalists. Whether journalists observe with an undeniable sense of tracing political intrigue or intuit perils for democracy, a political mentor is different from a political fighter or a political reporter. A political mentor counts on the interrelationship between culture and politics and therefore, exploring the political traditions, he should imagine or rather project the consequences of his remarks, praising silence as well as public interventions. In a country where political journalism has replaced almost completely political philosophy, Daniel Barbu could naturally aspire to the position or role of a political mentor. Dealing with such complex and sensitive issues as (and I am quoting some chapters of his recent book) as for instance “On the Romanians’ Difficulties to Perceive Politics”, “Democracy and Contestation in Romania, 1918-2004”, or “Between Village and State : How Many Origins Has Got Romania?”, Daniel Barbu makes it clear that politics is usually regarded in Romania as manipulation, unethical bargaining, naturally devoid of any idealism, or of any spiritual content. Demagogues have obviously contributed to the present state of things by practically proving that politics could gentrify and legitimize them better than their less flashy jobs. The enthusiasm the public affairs, considers Daniel Barbu, should call forth philosophical and cultural debates to endorse the competition for the benefit of the community, but instead, in Romanian politics at least, it engenders only the sense of a strong adversity eventually claiming the exclusion of the other, which reminds of the political tactics of our recent past. Contemplating the chasm between the meanings of modernity in Western Europe and the significance of modernity in Eastern Europe, the author may sound skeptical, true, but at least he commands the knowledge of his subtle assertions.

Politics for Barbarians exacts a mature blend of hope and realism in gauging Romanians’ political heritage.

Marius Jucan

Jean-Francois Mattei
Barbaria interioara. Eseu despre
imundul modern
On Inner Barbarity. An Essay on
the Modern Vile

Traducere de Valentina Bumbas-Vorobiov,
Paralela 45, 2005, 316 pagini



Marius Jucan

Marius Jucan, Associate Professor, Ph.D, Faculty of European Studies Babes-Bolyai University, Cluj, Romania Author of the books: *Fascinatia fictiunii sau despre retorica elipsei* (1998) *Singuratatea salvata. O incercare asupra operei lui Henry David Thoreau din perspectiva modernitatii americane* (2001) *The Complex Innocence A Phenomenological-Hermeneutical Approach to the Tales of Henry James* (2001) E-mail:marjucan@yahoo.com

The meaning of *barbarity* and *barbarous* have left indelible traces in praising or criticizing modernity. The modern man portrayed himself as a victor over a world or a time in the evolution of society when barbarity was imagined to have reigned. European civilization identified itself as having curtailed barbarity or the rule of barbarian habits or customs. Barbarity covers more or less a style of life (or actually the lack of any style) thought to be crude, savage, brutal or simply primitive. Barbarians often appear in European (Eurocentric) imaginary in a vivid contrast to nomads, usually peoples who were in bad need for civilization's assets, or quite on the con-

trary, who destroyed civilizations and cultural assets due to their incapacity for praising otherness. In this way, the prevalent meaning regarding barbarity and barbarians is hopeless inferiority, quite often transferred into racist or ethno-centric views and / or opinions. Dealing with barbarians and barbarity, Europeans have too often taken pride in sprucing themselves up with the mission of having saved other peoples or communities from their base condition. But, not surprisingly, the notion of barbarity has traveled to other parts of the world, for instance in China, where peoples in the Western part of the world were usually regarded at the celestial court as nothing else but barbarians.

The figure of the "new" man, whether inspired by religious or ideological beliefs, the idea of modern justice, rights, technological advancement, gradual social progress, good political governance enabling change in human society, definitely depart from the picture of barbarity. The "new man" has always proclaimed his severance from the barbarian times. In a classic description of the civilizing process, Norbert Elias wrote about how warriors transformed themselves into courtiers, and how "courtisation" embraced Europe between the 12-th and the 18-th centuries. In this way, overstepping barbarity meant leaving behind the dominance of the warrior caste and the rise to power of other social actors, within an ample cultural ring of changes. Following Elias's description of the civilizing process, one cannot stop thinking about similar changes (sociogenetic ones) occurring within colonial administration or within the communist nomenklatura, where the "purist" types were eventually surpassed by more sophisticated, creolized and gentrified models.

Ancient Greeks and Romans hurled the crushing weight of barbarity over the boundary of their city walls (*limes*). They thought that the barbarous could not live but inside the undeveloped language and customs of the foreigner(s), which always raised besides the pride of being different, the anxiety of not falling under a base, lawless, or inhuman order. The idea of a constant cultivation of an urban way of life, was destined by Cicero to the cultivation of the soul, which was philosophy's task. But cultural sequences intertwine, at least

Key words:

barbarity, customs, ideological beliefs, modern man, Jean-Francois Mattei

in Europe, in an engrafting manner. The fundamentals of modernity are articulated on different cultural grafts as for instance the Christian one, for which the old distinction between the civilized and the barbarians did not work any longer. At the crossroads of another cultural sequence, Schiller reviewed the historical roots of the question, distinguishing between the savage and the barbarous, attempting to clarify the matter in relation to the idea of nature and freedom. Nietzsche (and almost all of the modernist thinkers) warned about the advent of “modern barbarians”, portraying the destruction of the very concept of man, claimed to have been transformed into a mindless robot.

Jean-Francois Mattei provides in an interesting and highly knowledgeable volume recently translated in Romanian a genuine contribution to a nuanced understanding of notion of barbarity, making room not only for a necessary recapitulation of cultural values, but also to an engaging intellectual debate on it. In fact, Mattei reviews the interpretation of what was perceived as *barbarous*, first of all starting from the ancient distinctions made in the world of Greeks and Romans, so that the reader might grasp more intuitively and at the same time in a documented manner what *barbarity* should mean to the modern man. Before Enlightenment caused a rupture with the world of feudal tradition, the notion of barbarity had been operating already with clearly marked distinctions, either between ethnic groups, or between urban and non-urban communities, highlighting the importance of laws, political organizations, moral values, development of arts and letters, the status of citizens, the issue of education and least but not last, amenity in manners. The issue of barbarity and barbarians knew an unprecedented popularity in modernist times, when modernity was looked upon by a great number of writers and thinkers as being simply barbarous, in the sense of dislodging and perverting the authentic substance of man. The cult of primitiveness in the artistic vanguard at the beginning of the 20-th century was a sign of condemning the establishment values considered for long as being a barbarity. The bourgeois was seen as the “new” barbarian. Under his well-off way of life or easy circumstances anti-bourgeois attackers of

all folds (from anarchists to socialists) found vulnerable spots, especially the way in which the bourgeois order parceled and policed power and representations. From the bourgeois, or from the Establishment view, any innovatory move, especially the artistic but also social ones were often describes as “barbarous”, including fashion in clothing but also political rights. The 20-th century reposed the issue of barbarity almost on every level: not only the encompassing tragedies of the two world wars which raised its toll to an unprecedented figure, but generally the increasing relativisation of human values and the process of globalization rekindled the interest for these rather old notions.

The original point of view brought into discussion by Jean-Francois Mattei is a crucial one : whether barbarity is exterior or interior, in other words whether we should depict the barbarian world outside ours. The issue of locating barbarity beyond a wall, border, limit, or that of imagining it as an inside dimension of man leads to rethink the nature of man. From this point of view, Jean Francois Mattei employs a revisionist technique in order to persuade us that modernity has performed in a clandestine way a passing from a substantial culture to a procedural one. According to Charles Taylor, the present-day world is mostly a world of procedures which impoverishes the substance of man, resorting only rarely and symbolically to human and humanist culture, pushing into oblivion the complex tradition about man and the sense of living. Criticizing modernity for enchaining man rather than emancipating him, siding thus mainly with the Enlightenment critique and its inheritors, Mattei points out to the self-destruction of mythical reason, reminding us what Vico said that barbarity lies not only in senses but also in reflection. Going further, Jean Francois Mattei unfolds an ample and convincing demonstration about his major theme, namely that it would be simplistic to find the realm of barbarity in somebody’s else’s country and place, or to think that barbarity disappeared due to technical inventions. Mattei reiterates the self-destructive, implosive trait of barbarity, in what regards eventually the annihilation of human individuals and values, as in the case of totalitarian regimes. For him barbarity



Marius Jucan

Marius Jucan, Associate Professor, Ph.D, Faculty of European Studies Babes-Bolyai University, Cluj, Romania Author of the books: *Fascinatia fictiunii sau despre retorica elipsei* (1998) *Singuratatea salvata. O încercare asupra operei lui Henry David Thoreau din perspectiva modernitatii americane* (2001) *The Complex Innocence A Phenomenological-Hermeneutical Approach to the Tales of Henry James* (2001)
E-mail:marjucan@yahoo.com

should be transcended in a proper cultivation of the cultural tradition which should be respected as such, and not diverted to instrumental usages, detrimental not only to the education of younger generations, but also to the very preservation of human memory. Subjective individualism on one hand and over-socialization of man on the other, fragmentation of human ideals have paved the way to a highly relativistic status of man which are dealt by Jean-Francois Mattei in a grave and even alarming tone as for instance in the respective chapters on barbarity and education, culture and politics. The whole book conveys the tone of a passionate urge to keep modern man within the world of humanity.

A word for the quality of translation belonging to
Valentina Bumbaș-Vorobiov.

Marius Jucan

Matei Călinescu
Cinci fețe ale modernității.
Modernism, avangardă,
decadență, kitsch,
postmodernism.
Five Faces of Modernity.
Modernism, Avant-Guard,
Decadence, Kitsch,
Postmodernism
Collegium, Polirom, Iasi, 2005

When visiting the Babeș-Bolyai University of Cluj, in the spring semester of 2001, professor Matei Călinescu was perhaps ready to undergo a twofold experience: that of rekindling reminiscences of past times when revisiting the town where he had defended his doctoral thesis, and of continuing his work to mould in a more comprehensively way his encompassing study of modernity and its representations. For students and academics, the professor's stay in Cluj yielded in two memorable courses offered at the Faculty of European Studies and the Faculty of Letters. Those interested in mapping and remapping modernity and at the same time willing to witness the practice of hermeneutic experience in reading

Key words:

modernism, postmodernism, decadence, kitsch, communist propaganda, Matei Calinescu

and rereading as a modern intellectual vocation could follow Matei Călinescu at work. The spring semester of 2001 meant for Matei Călinescu the publishing of a talk about the meanings of the modern and modernity, which later on, in 2005 constituted the core of an important addenda, the ending chapter of the second edition of his study *modernity and its faces*, first published in 1977 in the United States*.

Within this brief overview of the *Five Face of Modernity*, I do not intend to focus on the interrelations between the modern and representations, perhaps the organizational pattern of the ample research on modernity. Instead, I would rather focus on the issue of *aesthetic experience* which remains fundamental to the critic's judgment of modernity, especially when the author claims that his volume should be read as a contribution to the history of ideas, seen in a genealogical key. Indeed, the cultural tissue, so to say, of modernity, and of its changing faces, originates in a temporal, scientific, religious, political as well as in aesthetic "construct" which should be properly recognized under its altering masks, whenever this would be the case, as for instance when discussing about the *kitsch* or the *aesthetic vanguard*. The aesthetic approach to modernity and to its ensuing stages (modernism, postmodernism) brings in a closer view, within the author's conceptual map, a crucial element of modernity seen in a genealogical key, the role of art. According to Kantian considerations about art and its distinction from nature, genius and the mediation of art, the relationship between game and rational constraints, one cannot debate modernity without underscoring the notion of art. Then, one might follow how "art" acquires in the same genealogical key other conceptual meanings in Nietzsche's view of the "gay" science ("La Gaya Scienza", fragment 356), where living becomes "artistic", or, further on, in the Heideggerian terms of the hermeneutics of art, where the creation of the work of art "ex-poses" a world, and consequently it brings about the "advent of truth". Matei Călinescu did not confine himself however to a genealogical recapitulation of the aesthetic experience, no matter profitable or inviting this would appear, especially nowadays when aesthetics has been marginalized in the curricular academic pro-

jections. Revisiting the issue of modernity underlies actually the aestheticization and partly the ideologization of modernity. Heightening the aesthetic might sound rather esoteric within the righteous, politically correct voices of today, which regard aesthetics as a secret hierarchy of power, either of "the dead white males", cultural colonialism or under other possible recriminations of the "cult of beauty".

It is interesting therefore to learn what the concepts of the modern and modernity meant for our author for a long span of time. In the first part of the essay entitled "Subjective reflections on modernity and reading" written in 2001, Matei Călinescu wonders about the reasons which determined him to choose to study the modern at the end of the "dark years of the 50's", a topic which has eventually turned an overarching theme for him to contemplate. The question is far from being a rhetorical one, since the answer should be easily found in the complex analysis of modernity and modernism, vanguard, decadence, kitsch, postmodernism. However, beyond the conceptual demonstrations there remains a free room to query the unseen or rather, discrete groundswells which determined the critic to go on with his quest for modernity. When asking himself what made him dwell so long in studying the modern and modernity, Matei Călinescu barely insisted on an important component of his career in literary hermeneutics, namely that he was also, so to say, a practitioner of literature. Poet, prose-writer, and naturally, a literary critic and historian, Matei Călinescu shared as a poet or fiction writer the direct experience of reviewing and finding novelty in the "catalogue" of modernity, so much the more in a period when the modern and modernity were completely obliterated by the obscenities of communist propaganda. One should perhaps go back to the symbols of the "captive mind" described by Czeslaw Milosz to grasp the significance of the struggle to guard freedom of thinking, especially when freedom of speech was put into the chains of censorship. It is not only a vivid illustration of how imagination and fiction can save, or at least preserve, individual life in times repression, but also a timely recalling of the Kantian adagio that art cannot exist but within the frame of freedom.

ZYGMUNT BAUMAN

COMUNITATEA

Căutarea siguranței într-o lume nesigură



ARTEL

Matei Călinescu accomplished his career in a renowned North-American university, and undoubtedly American experience was crucial to the accurate gauging of the *aesthetic dimensions* of modernity. Nevertheless the importance of being modern, hence the experience of modernity, either secretly fostered or after a long period taught freely in Romania remained deeply connected to Romanian culture.

Do not hermeneutic experiences mirror actually to life, whereas they deal with texts?

**Five Faces of Modernity: Modernism, Avant-Guard, Decadence, Kitsch*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 1977

Iulia Grad

Zygmunt Bauman Comunitatea. Căutarea siguranței într-o lume nesigură The Community Prahova: Ed. Antet, 2005

Cartea lui Zygmunt Bauman se construiește, după cum sugerează și titlul, în jurul conceptului de comunitate, care desemnează, spune autorul, un lucru ce nu poate să fie decât bun. Background-ul lucrării este constituit de conflictul, inerent ideii de comunitate, dintre securitate și libertate, termeni care se află într-un raport invers proporțional evident.

Bauman începe prin prezentarea obiectului unei eterne nostalgii, comunitatea autentică, în care acționează așa-numitul “cerc cald” sau “înțelegerea de tip comunitar”, care precede toate înțelegerile și neînțelegerile. Comunitatea este “un cuvânt cu sentiment” și întruchipează paradisul pierdut. În starea ei pură, trebuie să îndeplinească trei condiții esențiale: să se distingă clar de alte comunități, să fie mică, astfel încât fiecare să poată vedea pe fiecare, și să fie suficientă sieși. Comunitatea autentică nu are propria conștiință de sine, momentul în care comunitatea vorbește despre comunitate fiind momentul propriei disoluții.

Iulia Grad

Teaching Assitant, Department of Philosophy,
Babes-Bolyai University,
Cluj, Romania
Email: iuliagrad@gmail.com

Key words:

community, liquid modernity,
safety, freedom,
multiculturalism

În prezentarea evoluției termenului comunitate, autorul face o interesantă analiză a ceea ce el numește “coagularea *persoanelor umane* în forța de muncă”, fenomen ce coincide cu războiul declarat comunității. Ruperea comunităților și repartizarea unităților ce o alcătuiau în mulțimi muncitoare este însoțită de fenomenul înlocuirii “realizării” sau a “instinctului de făurar” cu “roboteala”.

Un moment esențial în devenirea mulțimilor muncitoare este abandonarea principiului panopticului și adoptarea “absenței reglementării”, care devine norma unei lumi lichefiate, în care totul se află într-un vârtej și unde nimic nu durează destul de mult încât să poată deveni familiar.

Locuitorul tipic al acestei lumi este, prin definiție, “extrateritorial”, în sensul de extracomunitar. El nu are un loc al lui și trăiește într-o “bulă” izolată de culturile țărilor în care se află. Cosmopolitanismul său este unul “limitat și insular”, deoarece, deși se află mereu în locuri diferite, nu intră în contact cu culturile locurilor respective.

În această lume mișcătoare, lipsită de norme, Bauman identifică două autorități: autoritatea experților și cea a numerelor. Aceste autorități pun bazele “comunității viselor”, care este însă total diferită de “comunitatea de vis”. În spiritul modernității lichide, comunitatea viselor se află mereu sub dominația lui “până la revizuire ulterioare”. Bauman afirmă că, asemeni comunității estetice a lui Kant, “obiectivitatea comunității viselor este dată de țesătura judecăților subiective”.

Comunitatea viselor, furnizată de industria divertismentului, este o “comunitate de ne-apartenență”, un “a-fi-împreună al celor singuri”. Etalarea vieților celebrităților transmite mesajul consolator că instabilitatea poate fi o sursă de fericire. Se realizează astfel, spune Bauman, un *miracol*: se oferă spectatorilor bucuria apartenenței la o comunitate-instant, dar de unică folosință, fără disconfortul *legării*. Rolul de nucleu al acestor comunități poate fi jucat și de idei care “unesc” mai mulți indivizi, precum: spaima de aditivi alimentari, lupta împotriva obezității, a ridurilor, etc.

Un alt simptom al modernității lichide analizat de Bauman este lipsa unei viziuni a priori a “stării finale”, a

scopului urmărit. Standardul este acum *principiul drepturilor omului*, care ghidează singurul lucru care ar putea fi, cu indulgență, asemănat cu un scop, însă cu unul esențialmente nedeterminat, vag, și anume, “experimentarea fără sfârșit a formelor de coabitare acceptabile”. Trebuie menționat faptul că, atunci când vorbește despre principiul drepturilor omului, Bauman se referă la dreptul la recunoaștere. Autorul atrage atenția asupra faptului că principiul drepturilor omului, în jurul căruia se construiește logica “războaielor de recunoaștere”, nu face decât să absolutizeze diferențele și să blocheze dialogul. Cauza principală a acestei situații este identificată de Bauman în “emanciparea problemei recunoașterii de cea a redistribuirii”.

Multiculturalismul este un alt termen care face obiectul unei analize critice foarte interesante. După Bauman, multiculturalismul este un eufemism pentru “noua indiferență la diferență”, este “ideologia sfârșitului ideologiei”, atât timp cât se fundamentează pe dezangajare, ca nouă strategie a puterii și a dominării, și pe reglementare prin exces, două din trăsăturile esențiale ale modernității lichide. Cât timp varietatea culturală este considerată un punct de sosire și nu unul de plecare, multiculturalismul este echivalentul unei lepădări de responsabilitate. Bauman consideră că insecuritatea caracteristică modernității lichide sau, mai bine spus, “securitatea de tipul *fă-o singur!*” transformă *multiculturalismul* în *multicomunitarism*.

Societatea fluidă se retrage din viața individului, care, angoasat și temător datorită lipsei normelor și numărului enorm de opțiuni care îi stau la dispoziție, echivalează siguranța cu *propriul* lui loc, cu “fortăreața” pe care o construiește în jurul lui, ajungând să trăiască într-un “ghetou voluntar”. Indivizii devin “suprafețe” unii pentru alții, iar contactul profund este imposibil.

Tonul destul de grav este îndulcit puțin la sfârșitul cărții, când Bauman propune două sarcini ce ar reveni comunității pentru a contracara patologiile societății atomizate: “egalitatea resurselor necesare pentru a repune soarta indivizilor *de jure* în capacitățile indivizilor *de facto*” și “asigurarea colectivă împotriva incapacităților și nenorocirilor individuale”. “Dacă

Demeter M. Attila

Republikanizmus
Nationalizmus
Nemzeti kisebbségek

este să existe o comunitate într-o lume a indivizilor, spune Bauman, poate să fie doar (și trebuie să fie) o comunitate țesută împreună cu împărtășirea și cu grija mutuală.”

Abordarea incitantă a subiectului, modul în care analiza realizată de Bauman *curge*, stilul său de a scrie, atât de clar și sugestiv, fac din *Comunitatea. Căutarea siguranței într-o lume nesigură* o lectură plăcută și foarte utilă celor interesați de ceea ce autorul numește “modernitatea lichidă” și nu numai lor.

Rigán Lóránd

Attila M. Demeter Republikanizmus, nationalizmus, nemzeti kisebbségek Republicanism, nationalism, national minorities

Pro Philosophia, Cluj, 2005

We know from the perhaps most often cited passage of Aristotle's *Politics* that human beings are by their nature political, but we also tend to understand this claim as a denial of our various modern theories of the primacy of the individual. Now, if political life is a human artifact, the individual must be in some sense complete prior to society, and not emerging naturally, rather like a flower, out of those natural human associations he is born into. But oddly enough, in accepting without question the primacy of the individual, our age seems to commit itself to an ongoing debate with the individual who wants to belong to a certain group as a part of ones very identity and also be politically recognized as such.

Rigan Lorand

Department of Philosophy,
Babes-Bolyai University,
Cluj, Romania

Key words:

homo religiosus, sacred, profane, Puritan mission, American Paradise, morality, Christian America, dislocation, exile, homeland.

In his third book, after having examined two major moments in the history of political thought, and also of the aforementioned debate, the ancient Athens and the French Revolution, Attila M. Demeter offers some good arguments in favor of the individual who does not want to be stripped by contemporary politics from his true political nature that also places him in the linguistically and culturally mediated proximity of the others. To the reader unaccustomed with the specific problems of this part of Europe, three major chapters of the book may seem to be chosen at haphazard. He first writes extensively about the Revolution, and then about two maybe less known Hungarian thinkers, József Eötvös and Artúr Balogh, turning finally to some English-speaking authors like Vernon Van Dyke, Chandran Kukathas or Will Kymlicka. Nevertheless, all of these three major parts of the book are grounded on the same theoretical situation which could be roughly characterized as a recent structural change in politics. Let us start from here with an outline of the author's own diagnosis.

It seems that contrary to some old-fashioned utopian expectations and prophecies, the political debate between various world-views held by different groups of people was not replaced after all by the purely technical problems of administration. On the contrary, instead of this depoliticization of politics something very different has happened: the so-called politics of identity which aiming at public recognition of the particular interests of various groups like feminists, homosexuals, but also national minorities, became a pervasive theme both in our everyday lives and in political theory. With this relatively new phenomenon of the rebirth, or, perhaps more accurately stated, with the ongoing actuality of ideologically grounded politicizing (the politics of self-expression, as one is almost tempted to call it), western political thinkers have also discovered ethnopitics, a major subject of Demeter's book, too. Albeit for his readers belonging like the author himself to an Eastern European national minority this theme is not completely new, his approach to it, anchored mainly in the republican tradition that starts off with Aristotle

and goes on to recent communitarian authors, can fairly be considered innovative.

The first historical part of *Republicanism, nationalism, national minorities* discusses a thesis concerning the genesis of European nationalism, according to which it was the French Revolution that, although internationalist in its character, has given birth to the modern nation as a political entity, because of the fact that the revolutionaries have considered this to be nothing less than the true depositary of political sovereignty – and at the same time, through their politics of linguistic homogenization, they have also given cultural content to this concept. By refusing the principle of political representation and also those intermediary social and political institutions that could express particular group identities and interests, the Jacobin doctrine of national sovereignty implicitly identified, as it is argued here, society and state, and also strongly questioned the very legitimacy of the civil sphere.

Somehow paradoxically, precisely because no “disturbing” authorities or institutions shall intervene between the individual and the state, national levelling and centralization is required, so that people can be “compelled to be free” and, as this kind of revolutionary logic goes, not “subordinate” to their particular group interests. Shortly put, as the author convincingly shows, the historical link between democracy and nationalism is nothing other than the idea of national sovereignty, or even more precisely, the politics of linguistic and cultural assimilation as the practical method of achieving it. Otherwise, that is speaking in several different tongues, an intrinsically communicative and at the same time administratively centralized democracy could not effectively function, at least as it was believed back then.

Of course, the idea of nation, although pragmatically useful, remains up to this point highly artificial, nothing more than a kind of beneficial abstraction towards which it would be very hard to feel any real loyalty, or indeed even to feel anything at all. How will it then fulfill its practical scope? The historical answer to this problem was, as the following chapter goes on to demonstrate, one of the perhaps most subtle tricks ever to be performed by intellectuals: the spiritu-

alization of national essence or, as Isaiah Berlin once defined it, the applying of the organic model to the life of society. This naturalized abstraction became then the official legitimizing doctrine of the nation-state together with its dangerous side-effect of linguistic and cultural assimilation for the national minorities that simultaneously emerged with it. Having reached these preliminary conclusions about the birth of modern European nationalism from the spirit of the French Revolution, the leading question of Demeter M. Attila's book becomes whether this increasingly strong politics of assimilation can be satisfactorily compensated, as it was held by most continental liberals, simply by guaranteeing the individual rights of the people belonging to such minorities.

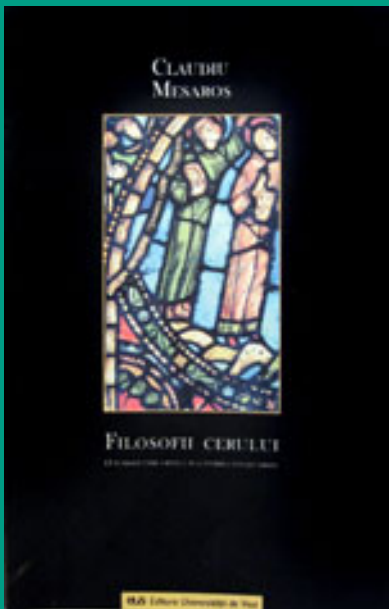
To approach more closely this problem, the middle part of *Republicanism...*, which deals with linguistic nationalism in Eastern-European countries, first examines the ideas of József Eötvös, a liberal theorist and statesman from the 19th century, whose life and writings were devoted to the reform of Hungarian society. As Baron Eötvös believed according to his classical modernist background, we do not have any sound reasons to offer special political recognition for minority groups conserving them hereby „artificially”, because the civilizing progress of humanity will lead anyway to the disappearance of most of them. The mere existence of such communities is not yet a self-value, it can only become this way by serving the ideal of progress.

After the victory of the more narrow-minded linguistic type of nationalism over this kind of “cosmopolite” nationalism, at the end of the First World War, Artúr Balogh, perhaps the most eminent Hungarian jurist of minority rights from the inter-war period, offered a very different liberal solution to the ever disquieting question of minorities. Broadening the principles of liberal thinking he argued that the French tenet of national sovereignty according to which the will of the majority can be taken as standing for the will of the whole could be applied only in ethnically homogeneous states (if there were any such, as we may add). Minority groups should become then a new kind of subject of rights in themselves (although later Balogh, as this chapter also shows, had to considerably

modify his views, considering minority rights more cautiously only a kind of completion to the individual ones, and not collective rights on their own).

Finally, our author offers an encompassing survey of the recent Anglo-Saxon philosophical literature on the subject, importing a veritable tool-kit of arguments supporting collective and cultural rights, while also not neglecting its critics. (In general, one of the major merits of this book is that, far from trying to work out some legitimizing ideology for national minorities and equally free from the temptations of minority nationalist discourse, it is fundamentally unbiased. In other words, it fulfills the central requirement for this genre of being genuine political theorizing, albeit this also can lead to a somehow dilemmatic character, and not just plain lobbying masked as such. And this, though it may sound trivial, is after all no little thing.)

This way, in the closing part of his train of thought, he first reiterates a paradox of the extension of freedom to various identity groups, as it is demanded by the recent politics of identity, namely that it induces a confinement of freedom for other individuals and groups who will have the duty to respect or even actively guarantee it for those demanding. Therefore it seems that personal and/or group identity does not remain nowadays, even (or perhaps *precisely*) in the case of traditionally liberal countries, a matter of negative freedom untouched by politics, as it was traditionally conceived. With this, the line of demarcation between private morality and politics grows increasingly thinner, and the neutrality of the state regarding different world-views also becomes questionable, because neo-liberal identity politics demands from it to legislate in these affairs, too. However, from another point of view, an important deficiency of classical liberal thinking is that it works with a two-level model composed only of the individual and the state, disregarding ethnic minorities and other groups that can be thought of as separate units or entities, and as such subjects of rights and duties just like individuals, *a fortiori* because there are some individual rights that can only be exercised through group membership.



Now, even if against this amendment of our traditional framework it could legitimately be argued that identity groups are after all not stable and homogenous entities, that they represent only a means for the welfare of the individual, and sometimes do serve in practice only the interests of their elites, the fact remains that we also know about several methods of politicizing (encouraging migration, official-language politics etc.) that, albeit being seemingly fair to the individuals and respecting all their rights, nevertheless tend to annihilate cultural and national group identities. In this context, Attila M. Demeter also presents several reservations and dilemmas regarding collective rights (among others: do we not instrumentalize culture, when we try to defend its preservation only as a means for the well-being of the individual; if we do not consider its existence being a self-value, then why should we preserve it, in case that it leads to economical loss; are collective rights not antagonistic with the principle of equality of rights; how can we define the subjects of such collective rights; and not least, what shall we do with non-liberal communities?).

In spite of its acute problem-centeredness, *Republicanism, nationalism, national minorities* almost resembles a book of aporias in the best philosophical tradition, its authors option seems to be fairly clear and pointing towards a republican solution of the problem, i.e. an approach which would recognize the basic Aristotelian truth that our being a part of a community constitutes the very foundation of our human dignity and nature. Thus, he strongly contributes to an authentic *re-politicizing* of politics, helping his favorite thinkers to find their way in the age of nation-states, and concludes his work with a noteworthy apology of republicanism that also could substitute nationalism with patriotism.

Florea Lucaci

Claudiu Mesaros Filosofii cerului The philosophers of the sky above Ed. Universității de Vest, Timișoara, 2005

Recent a apărut în librării o carte cu un titlu captivant, ce sugerează existența unei stări inefabile în istoria gândirii raționale, stare dată de conjuncția paradoxală dintre filosofie și credință, și anume *Filosofii cerului*, semnată de Claudiu Mesaros – un universitar timișorean tânăr și de perspectivă. Este vorba de un tratat de istoria filosofiei medievale, tipărit sub egida Editurii Universității de Vest, în care autorul reușește performanța de a face mai vizibilă importanța patristicii și scolasticii. Nu este greu de înțeles că sinteza unui mileniu chinuit de prejudecăți și erezii, a unor vremuri în care filosofia era considerată fie o ispită diabolică (Tatian, Tertulian), fie un dar dumnezeiesc (Justin Martirul, Athenagora Atenianul, Clement Alexandrinul ș.a.), presupune nu numai erudiție, dar și talentul de a convinge că sub cerul creștinismului gândirii nu i s-a confiscat întru totul libertatea de a se gândi pe sine însăși, respectiv sub umila condiție de *ancilla theologiae* nu s-a înstrăinat de sine. În același timp, consider meritoriu efortul lui Claudiu Mesaros de a aduce în actualitate unele probleme de început ale formării noii para-

Florea Lucaci

Assoc. Profesor, Faculty of Humanist Sciences, Aurel Vlaicu University, Arad, Romania
Author of the books:
Creatie si umanism. O incercare asupra ideii de creatie (1989), *Creatie si fiintare. Un temei in otologia umanului* (2002), *Avatarul ideii de Absolut. De la Kant la filosofia limbajului* (2002), *Propozitii biblice. Interpretari logico-filosofice* (2005).

Key words:

christian beliefs, medieval philosophy, ontology, theology, Claudiu Mesaros

digme culturale, adică într-un context în care implicit construcția noii Europe și doctrina aferentă pare să nege o realitate istorică – lumea creată de creștinism. Așadar, suntem îndreptați să afirmăm că *Filosofii cerului* nu se constituie într-o oglindă a unui trecut, într-un simplu exercițiu didactic, ci este o provocare reală pentru prezent, pentru cei ce gândesc și dau seamă de adevărul discursului în științele umane și în teologie. Vreau să spun că ecoul prejudecăților din perioada patristicii și scolasticii nu s-a stins, că prejudecata este vie și tinde să anuleze libertatea gândirii.

Credința creștină s-a impus ca un ideal al desăvârșirii existenței umane, eliminând treptat un ideal de viață ce s-a conturat în antichitatea greacă. Totuși, paradigma creștină nu s-a impus ca o sentință judecătorească fără drept de apel, ci și într-un mod subtil, adică asimilând și resemnificând în bună parte conceptele filosofiei: *Unul, substanță, ființă, esență, ipostas etc.* Or, acest aspect indică starea de tranziție a omului medieval, așa cum s-a conturat în gândirea patristică și scolastică, și anume ideile sunt doar un intermediar între om și Dumnezeu, adică sunt o expresie a dogmei, un mod de a vorbi despre Dumnezeu. Ei bine, ca expresie a dogmei, ideile filosofiei convertite să lucreze în spiritul creștinismului constituie domeniul de analiză în acest tratat denumit atât de frumos și adevărat *Filosofii cerului*. Inevitabil, autorul s-a confruntat cu prejudecata distincției dintre Occidentul latin și Răsăritul de limbă greacă, mai exact cu opoziția dintre o orientare ce cultivă rațiunea și posibilitatea gândirii existenței divine și o alta ce afirmă sufletul, trăirea mistică. Studiarea aprofundată a gândirii patristice și scolastice scoate în evidență o serie de influențe și atenuează această „schismă teoretică”, chiar dacă referința filosofiei din primele secole creștine este exclusiv teologică.

Domnul Claudiu Mesaros își structurează tratatul de istoria filosofiei medievale în două părți: patristica și scolastica. Întrucât cartea sa are și funcția de manual universitar, autorul introduce în dezbatere o serie de termeni specifici gândirii din era creștină, precizându-le sensul și noua semnificație. Căutarea lui Dumnezeu nu trebuie să fie aroganta afirmare a rațiunii ce posedă totul prin cunoaștere, ci

mai degrabă mântuirea, deci îndumnezeirea omului. În contextul cultural al epocii pare firesc ca filosofii să se raporteze diferit la vechea filosofie, și anume: *polemic*, respingând filosofia, *sincretic*, asimilând filosofia și *conservator*, respingând creștinismul. Tendința finalmente învingătoare a fost „subordonarea filosofiei grecești față de creștinism” (p.17). Pentru a scoate în evidență linia oficială sunt aduse în discuție unele probleme legate de erezii: gnosticismul și maniheismul. Ideea unei sinteze „între credința creștină și moștenirea greacă”, o tendință ce „va rămâne dominantă pe tot parcursul Evului mediu” (p. 29) este ilustrată prin părinții preagustinieni Iustin Martirul, Origen, Grigore de Nyssa, Grigore din Nazians, dar mai ales prin Augustin „dacă ținem seama de faptul că inclusiv platonismul a influențat gândirea medievală prin intermediul lui” (p. 41). Perioada post-augustiniană, identificată prin gândirea lui Pseudo-Dionisie Areopagitul și mai ales prin opera lui Boethius, constituie trecerea la problematica scolasticii, pe care Claudiu Mesaros o tratează cu deosebită rigoare științifică și competență.

Referindu-mă la părinții și scriitorii de limbă greacă, consider că se cuvenea o tratare mai aprofundată, deoarece în opera acestora se analizează prima dată relația om – Dumnezeu, precizându-se diferența dintre ipostazele posibile ale acesteia, și anume cunoașterea intelectuală, pe de o parte, și trăirea mistică, iubirea, pe de altă parte. În acest sens, Grigore de Nyssa în „Marea cuvântare catehetică” admite că omul tinde prin fire (este creat după chipul și asemănarea cu Dumnezeu) la cunoașterea divinității, dar capacitatea cognitivă specific umană este limitată, astfel că Dumnezeu poate fi înțeles numai prin iubire. Mai mult, în lucrarea „Contra grecilor” el discută unele dintre noțiunile preluate din filosofia greacă și folosite la formularea dogmei Sfintei Treimi: *Ființă, esență, Ipostasă*. Cu o pregătire filosofică deosebită este și Grigore din Nazianz care recurge la logica aristotelică în combaterea arianismului, construind argumente raționale. De asemenea, în *Cuvântările* sale se regăsesc într-o formă incipientă argumentul ontologic și argumentul moral. Un nume absent este Ioan Damaschin, ultimul părinte bisericesc,

considerat cu îndreptățire că este cel ce dă o teorie semiotică a icoanei, eliminând astfel falsele probleme teoretice ale idolatriei. Tot el este autorul unei trilogii, intitulată „Izvorul cunoștinței” în care prima parte, sub denumirea „Capitole filosofice” este de fapt un tratat de logică. Așa se explică de ce în „Expunerea exactă a credinței ortodoxe” (partea a treia sau *Dogmatica*) uzează de demonstrația silogistică în capitolele dedicate Fiului și Sfântului Duh.

Cele afirmate mai sus nu sunt observații critice, cât mai ales opinii ce subliniază indirect opțiunea domnului Cludiu Mesaroș pentru filosofii occidentali, a căror operă este mai bine cunoscută și expusă analitic în tratate celebre de istoria filosofiei. Cred totuși că se cuvine să includem patristica orientală ca un capitol consistent în istoria filosofiei, iar în acest sens poate fi invocat argumentul lui Aristotel privind necesitatea de a filosofa din *Protrepticus*.

Scolastica este tratată extins, minuțios și cu acribie de cercetător pe aproape două sute de pagini. În acest context remarcăm studiile bine elaborate despre Anselm de Canterbury, Pierre Abelard, Toma din Aquino și William Ockham. Autorul insistă aici pe modul în care scolastica își construiește discursul filosofic, avansând câteva idei centrale ale platonismului și ale aristotelismului, un discurs însă ce rămâne în cadrul creștinismului. Anselm de Canterbury caută așa-zisele *rationes necessariae* pentru a introduce eficient demonstrația în rezolvarea unor probleme de dogmă. O precizare care-l scoate din posibila ispită invocată ipotetic de Răsăritul ortodox: „a argumenta adevăruri de credință” înseamnă de fapt „a supune rațiunea unui exercițiu de purificare, unei meditații, cu scopul de a lumina minții sale ceea ce Anselm crede deja”(p.163). Celebru este așa-numitul argument ontologic din *Proslogion*, care va face o carieră deosebită în Occident (Descartes, Kant, Plantinga etc). Interesantă este observația lui Cludiu Mesaroș, respectiv că Anselm a arătat că „existența trebuie să fie cuprinsă în conceptul de Dumnezeu pentru ca acesta să aibă sens. Conceptul *analitic* de Dumnezeu nu a extins cunoașterea (cum va spune Kant), ci a făcut explicit conținutul său”(p. 179-180). Prin urmare, obiecția lui Gaunilon (prima în seria

contraargumentelor) cade. Dumnezeu este *temei ontologic*, echivalentul existenței și nu un lucru oarecare.

Despre Pierre Abelard se arată că își propune apărarea credinței cu ajutorul logicii, iar baza acestui demers este teza: *credința nu înseamnă asumarea oarbă a unor propoziții pe care nu le înțelegem* (p. 188). Un rol deosebit îl joacă Abelard în „cearta universalilor”, el afirmând *conceptualismul*, contrar și *realismului* și *nominalismului*. În acest mod el transferă problema din planul ontologic în cel dialectic și al semnificației logice, deci al relației semantice dintre cuvânt și înțelesul pe care îl instituie.

Prin exercițiul analitic al istoricului de profesie sunt trecute scolastica clasică, Toma din Aquino, Bonaventura și William Ockham. Fiind cel mai însemnat gânditor medieval, lui Toma i se acordă un spațiu mare în economia tratatului; sunt prezentate principalele repere biografice și lista celor mai însemnate lucrări. Cum este și firesc, Cludiu Mesaroș se apleacă asupra raportului rațiune – credință, care constituie însăși esența filosofiei tomiste, iar acest raport subsistă ca temei în ontologia sa. El promovează un „aristotelism consecvent”, dar din interpretarea operelor Stagiritului și a comentariilor arabe rezultă că „aristotelismul era inacceptabil din punct de vedere teologic”, astfel că Toma se va angaja „într-o confruntare directă cu averroïștii în scopul obținerii unei înțelegeri echilibrate a textelor și conceptelor”. De aici rezultă că „ontologia lui Toma este una în ordinea cunoașterii” (p. 246 – 247). Evident, ființa este însuși Dumnezeu, adică plenitudinea absolută a existenței, în raport de care creatura este doar posibilă și contingentă. În acest capitol sunt analizate și celebrele argumente tomiste privind existența lui Dumnezeu.

Desigur, și în cazul lui Cludiu Mesaroș o recenzie nu poate spune mai mult decât să semnaleze importanța și originalitatea unei cărți, ingeniozitatea metodologică stilul curat al unui discurs convingător. Nu pot, de asemenea, să nu remarc bibliografia deosebit de bogată care a fost valorificată din plin. Fără îndoială *Filosofii cerului* este un tratat de istorie a filosofiei medievale ce se impune cu necesitate, aici, în lumea pământeană a omului.

Lucian Boia The Scientific Mythology of Communism

Bucharest, Humanitas Publishing House, 2005

At a sincere and unpretentious assessment of *The Scientific Mythology of Communism* we must say that is striking from the very beginning. Its author, Lucian Boia, a renowned Romanian historian, interested mainly in the history of ideas and of the imaginary, but also in the problem of ideologies, proposes us an understanding of historical facts without judging them in moral terms such as *good* or *bad*, *proper* or *improper*. Lucian Boia avoids thus the most frequent misunderstanding in the field of social sciences, and especially the domain of history for decades, - that of transforming every assessment in order to fit a certain ideology. The premises on which the author bases his inquiry regard not as much the fall of communism, but its existence, "its extraordinary capacity of materializing a utopia". The thesis argued for by the entire argumentative system of the book is that communism must be interpreted as a mythology whose essence is given by the spanning of history and from the perspective of the imaginary. The author's approach to communism affiliates in a way to a long interpretative tradition of the question of totalitarianism. This tradition is represented for example by scholars like Eric

Voegelin and Raymond Aron who affirmed that fear and terror cannot explain modern despotisms and that a religious feeling is also needed in order to understand totalitarianism. So, according to these interpretations, there is something that transcends the contingency, the contextual consequences of certain actions, and which characterizes and better explains the totalitarian practice.

What seems to characterise any totalitarian ideology is a certain refuse of history as a chain of possible events, as a denial of any hazardous or spontaneous happening. From this perspective, Lucian Boia's makes use, in his interpretation, of a rather meta-historical method which tries to surprise the trans-historical, firm and settled elements that define certain periods of time. At first sight, the contiguity of terms like mythology and science seems conspicuous. But Lucian Boia's entire book focuses on demonstrating the structural duality of communism. This dual structure comprehends, on the one hand, *mythology* which entails a faith in stable principles which transcend political or social canons and, on the other hand, *science* which usually means a rational and coherent argumentation of a theory and also its verifiable ascertainment. In the following, it becomes necessary to describe the two dimensions which made communism a coherent and, in the beginning, an appealing ideology. As Lucian Boia's analysis regards basically the mythological dimension of the phenomenon, the obscure or more or less hidden mythical elements which are inherited from an entire frame of mind which dominated the 18th and the 19th century, the book argues that communism is based on a *reinterpretation* of some obscure or more or less mythical elements inherited from the dominant frame of mind of the 18th and 19th century. A reinterpretation based only on those elements corresponding to a millenarian perspective. These secularized millenarianisms, as the author himself calls them, are entailed by the crisis of the "old", i.e. bourgeois, societal structures. Social, economical or political crisis intervened in a traditional society, brought along by a linear perspective upon history, finds its solution in building a more resistant new order, or in regaining a primordial, undisturbed, and heavenly one. Their function is to cre-

Codruta Cuceu

Researcher, Gh. Barit Institute, Romanian Academy, Cluj Branch. Translator of Leonard Swidler's *After Absolute* (Romanian edition, 2002). E-mail: codrutaliana@yahoo.com

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Lucian Boia

ate a new, purified society and, as the author demonstrates, even a new world. These millenarianisms have an eschatological attribute too, being situated at the end of history, or even more, being an end of history.

In order to follow the genesis of communist scientific mythology, one should identify and comprehend first the criterions for understanding and judging a system of myths. The Romanian historian's work is quite enlightening in this respect. Some general characteristics of mythology can easily be tracked in the book. The effort to bring the sphere of mythology into a systematic perspective, even if it is not a programmatic or declared purpose of the book, might represent one of the most important theoretical outcomes of the work. Thus, Boia affirms that a certain imperfection of the relationship between theory and reality defines any mythological perspective. From this imperfection emerges the ideal of constructing or inventing an entire universe, fundamentally different. Mythology implies not only a perspective upon the world but also an explanation of the sense of the world and of society, in an exhaustive and judicative form. It represents an extensive system marked by universality and coherence. It represents a diagnosis of a certain state of affairs and it also offers a solution. Some characteristics of mythology such as doctrinaire stiffness and irreversibility of the historical process, that is, the existence of a unique sense of historical becoming are also clearly stated in the book. What is striking about mythology is the fact that it functions like a bond between totally separate levels of society. Thereby, at least in the case of communist, there is a correspondence between economy and mental representations or between the social evolution and the linguistic evolution. Certain nostalgia for unity defines any mythology. The appeal of ideology to mythology is justified by its character of being accessible and not needing, beforehand, a scholarly documentation in order to be understood. The most important issue in communist ideology "is the belief in the capacity of Reason to organize the world in accordance with an implacable logic". Boia names a few types of mythological systems, such as the historical and the political, the socio-economical and the nationalist.

This theoretical overview leads the author then to an analysis of the mythological dimension of communist ideology. Lucian Boia believes that the social and even the political are dominated by the imaginary. Thus he describes communist mythology as a series of contradictions guided by the project of a "global transformation of the world in accordance to a radical scientific methodology". Its main two characteristics are consequently *transformationalism* and *voluntarism*, in other words, man's will to reform the existent order of the world, or even bring a global change.

The author defines communist mythology also as a Philosophy of History. History had to be forced in communism to fit the so called *natural* development of the society. But the only thing that proved to be natural in communism was this pure spiritual or mental construction and the urge to oppressively exercise it because, in fact, he flew against the natural drift of society. Such a structural Philosophy of History had to enjoy an imaginary or mythical historical embedment, because everything from the past had to fit a certain view upon the future. Communist mythology is fluid, having phases of growth and decay. The core of the mythological communism is tracked by the Romanian historian in the work of Marx. He then traces and depicts the main influences brought by the other theoreticians, such as Engels, Lenin and Stalin, who have grounded the communist ideology. The key and magic word of communist mythology is hard-labor. Knowledge and science are only prolongations of labor. If the ideal of reconstructing or at least of restructuring the world rests on its pillars, *myth* and *science*, transforming myth into science by means of anticipation, falsification, simplification or exaggeration, was the main methodology used by communist ideology. Minciurinsim and Marxism answered the methodological need to create a new world. Science came as a warrant of the millenarian dream. For, knowledge tends to explain everything, it is thoroughly controlled, and it is coherent and aims at unifying the differences that characterize separate fields. Thus the connection between mythology and science in the communist ideology becomes apparent. As science is defined by laws and methodology, the communist ideology had to re-



spect these criteria and imposed at all levels the law of “planned development and the law of ceaseless growth of labor productivity”. Science was, on the other hand, judged itself by a scientific criterion and was divided into false science, the traditional science which was a product of class-struggle and real, true and authentic science, the communist science. An opposition described also the relation between the traditional scholars or scientists, with a rather theoretical view upon things, and the new scientists, extracting their knowledge from practical experience and, of course, from labor. The sciences of man had a precarious place between the other sciences, and the intellectuals, if not transformed, then excluded. One by one, the sciences were transformed into ideologies in order to train man in the struggle against nature. One of the most important sciences in the ideal of dominating nature was biology. Nature was considered *bad* and had to be corrected. Space had to become homogeneous, man had to become immortal. And he could become immortal if he controlled the social causes of death, if he changed society. Literature and art had to become scientific, their role being identified with that of transforming people’s minds. The writer became an “engineer of the souls” and had to embark the spirits on the path of pure thought. Linguistics had to create an essential superstructure for all languages which would, eventually, create a unique language. Historiography had to be submitted to communist teleology and history had to serve the interests of the present and of the future. Action, which pertains to the political, was subordinated to the scientific project and the political was substituted with administration and economic management.

A simple review cannot catch the irony and the detachment of an author who had no other choice, along time, along communism, but to develop those attributes as means of spiritual protection and intellectual resistance. Such a detailed radiogram of the communist society is necessary for every proper social economic and political diagnose. Lucian Boia explains thus the inefficiency in applying social, economical and political democratic principles in this “other world” disordered and perverted by communism.

Sebastian Draiman

Theodor Damian Implicațiile spirituale ale teologiei icoanei

Ed. Eikon, Cluj, 2003

Într-o lume în care fenomenul secularizării și al globalizării sunt tot mai prezente, omul contemporan se găsește în ipostaza unui individ abandonat, expus unor multitudini de probleme, care pot fi de natură financiară, morală, dar și spirituală.

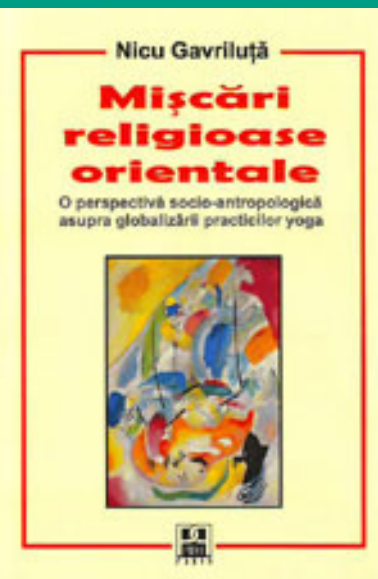
Theodor Damian încearcă să ofere omului contemporan o soluție de ieșire din criza spirituală în care se află. El pleacă de la constatarea că în Occident este tot mai scăzut interesul omului pentru Dumnezeu, și implicit pentru religie și pentru valorile spirituale. Această situație se datorează în primul rând societății de consum în care omul devine un “epifenomen al economiei”. La capătul unei radiografii a Occidentului, autorul indică o soluție de salvare a omului post-modern. Această soluție presupune o reîntoarcere a omului la vechile valori religioase (creștine), mai precis o reîntoarcere la Dumnezeu. Omul are nevoie de o nouă sensibilitate la ideea de Dumnezeu. Iar în acest sens, teologia trebuie să rostească din

Sebastian Draiman

M.A. in Culture and
Communication, Department of
Philosophy, Babes-Bolyai
University, Cluj, Romania

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spirituality, Theodor
Damian



nou vechile concepte într-un mod mult mai semnificativ, trebuie să “reinventeze” relația omului cu Dumnezeu și a comuniunii interumane. Din partea omului, trebuie să ne așteptăm să re-învețe să aprecieze mai mult planul spiritual decât cel material.

O cale de a îndruma omul spre o relație autentică cu divinitatea este icoana. În viziunea autorului, ea este imagine, iar imaginea este mișcare. Icoana nu explică, ea doar indică o realitate care se află “dincolo” și care trebuie văzută. A vedea o realitate dincolo de o alta, prin altă realitate este contemplare, iar contemplarea aduce omul la spiritual și îl leagă de el. Icoana, așa cum este înțeleasă în ortodoxie, îl ajută pe om să conștientizeze că el este chipul lui Dumnezeu, îi amintește că este deiform și îi reamintește că este “locuit de Dumnezeu”.

Pentru a înțelege cât mai bine validitatea și realismul rolului pe care icoana îl poate avea în societatea contemporană este necesar, ne spune autorul, să vedem care sunt rădăcinile teologice și semnificațiile actuale ale icoanei. Spre sfârșitul primei părți, Theodor Damian face o scurtă istorie a icoanei și a discuțiilor teologice purtate în jurul ei, evidențiind temeiurile sale biblice și cele hristologice. Temeiurile biblice ale icoanei sunt, în viziunea autorului, o prezență încă din Vechiul Testament, o întreagă suită de imagini prefigurând imaginea lui Iisus Hristos.

Cea de-a doua parte a lucrării dorește să indice propriu-zis implicațiile spirituale ale icoanei asupra omului contemporan. Cu ajutorul icoanei, omul zilelor noastre poate participa la viața divină datorită faptului că pe lângă dimensiunea estetică, ea are și o dimensiune liturgică și eshatologică.

Cartea părintelui Damian se adresează deopotrivă minții și sufletului. Ea este erudită și duhovnicească în același timp. Un merit special al volumului de față este faptul că ne propune să acceptăm că icoana este acea “pilulă” miraculoasă de care are nevoie omul contemporan pentru a se “vindeca” de “criza” provocată de post-modernitate. În lucrarea sa remarcabilă, Theodor Damian se diferențiază de ceilalți autori care cercetează icoana prin această încercare de a oferi icoana ca o soluție a ieșirii din „criză” a omului societății contemporane.

Cristian Țiple

Nicu Gavriluță *Mișcări religioase orientale. O perspectivă socio-antropologică asupra globalizării practicilor yoga*

Ed. Provopress, Cluj-Napoca, 2006

Nicu Gavriluță este conferențiar la catedra de sociologie a Facultății de Filosofie din cadrul Universității „Al. I. Cuza”, unde predă, printre altele, un curs de istoria și sociologia religiilor, iar în paralel, coordonează și *Seminarul de Cercetare Interdisciplinară a Religiilor și Ideologiilor*, filiala Iași. Până în prezent a mai publicat *Mentalități și ritualuri magico-religioase* (Ed. Polirom, Iași, 1998), *Culianu, jocurile minții și lumile multidimensionale*, (Ed. Polirom, Iași, 2000), *Imaginarul social al tranziției românești*, (Ed. Dacia, Cluj-Napoca, 2001), *Fractalii și timpul social*, (Ed. Dacia, Cluj-Napoca, 2003) și *Hermeneutica simbolului religios*, (Ed. Fundației Axis, Iași, 2003).

Cristian Țiple

Department of Philosophy,
Babes-Bolyai University,
Cluj, Romania

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Cea mai recentă lucrare a universitarului ieșean, *Mișcări religioase orientale. O perspectivă socio-antropologică asupra globalizării practicilor yoga*, se dorește a fi o prezentare a analizelor asupra „fenomenului yoga” întreprinse de exegeți ca Jean Filliozat, Brian Rennie, Sergiu Al. George, Ioan Petru Culianu și, în mod special, Mircea Eliade (p. 234).

Primul capitol, intitulat *Noile mișcări religioase* conține o serie de distincții conceptuale, începând cu distincția preluată de la sociologul Ronald Inglehart, între *valori ale supraviețuirii* și *valori ale stării de bine*. Rolul acestei distincții este, în cazul de față, acela de a da posibilitatea introducerii yogăi în sfera activităților relaționate *valorilor stării de bine*, împreună cu toate celelalte *noi mișcări religioase*. Pentru a înlătura orice nuanță de valorizare negativă, cercetătorul religiilor și ideologiilor Nicu Gavriluță optează pentru înlocuirea folosirii termenilor, care au primit prea multe conotații negative, de secte și dominațiuni, între care face unele distincții pertinente binevenite, cu cel de practici religioase. Nu este, în opinia noastră, cu totul justificată această alegere. Pentru că ar fi preferabil să preluăm unele concepte orientale, cum ar fi cel de darsana, sakha, și altele asemenea, pentru a nu continua să ne lovim iar și iar de aceleași întrebări: Zenul este o religie? Buddhismul este, oare, o ideologie? Yoga este o filosofie, o mitologie, sau o religie? și întrebările pot continua. Sunt prezentate în continuare cauzele apariției noilor mișcări religioase, dintre care amintim: nevoia unei identități culturale proprii, (re)construcția identității personale, criza bisericilor creștine, fascinația inițierii personale, nevoia unui lider charismatic, fascinația Indiei, frustrarea și revanșa victimelor persecuțiilor ecleziastice.

Am putea spune că cele mai multe dintre cauzele amintite ar reprezenta mai degrabă motivele generale ale adeziunii unui individ la orice fel de grup, nu neapărat religios. Pe un astfel de traiect interogativ, următoarea problemă pe care ne-o va lămuri cercetarea „socio-antropologică” ar fi cauza, sau cauzele religiei în sine. De fapt, adevărata întrebare a lui Nicu Gavriluță credem că este : de ce creștinismul nu mai este pe placul tuturor? Dar a fost el vreodată? Da, într-adevăr, există o criză a Bisericii. Ne putem întreba: de ce? Pentru că și-a pierdut autoritatea prin secularizare, sau din alte motive?

Acest fapt este neesențial aici, să nu uităm că acum există și libertatea de conștiință, care, coroborată cu globalizarea informației, cu noile traduceri, cu facilitarea accesului la internet în ultimii zece ani, au deschis calea către cunoașterea și a altor perspective religioase. Pur și simplu, cu trecerea timpului, va dispărea, credem, vechiul obicei de a deveni credincios prin naștere. Un asiatic nu și-ar pune o astfel de întrebare, cel puțin în zilele noastre. Vedeți dumneavoastră, un buddhist nu a fost ars niciodată pe rug fiindcă a negat autoritatea scripturilor vedice. Orientalii și-au afirmat libertatea de conștiință chiar în perioada în care compilarea Vedelor era în mare parte terminată, fie prin negarea acestora, fie prin șiretlicul upanișadelor – interpretarea. Socrate urma, după două secole, să fie condamnat pentru necinstirea zeilor cetății. În ceea ce privește elementul de noutate, din sintagma *noi mișcări religioase* avem unele observații. Suntem de părere că aceasta nu se potrivește când ne referim la Yoga. Întrucât noutatea este percepută doar de receptorul ideilor orientale, idei de altfel mult mai vechi decât creștinismul, și după cum Eliade presupune, ale cărui analize sunt prezentate începând cu capitolul al doilea, posibil preariene.

Cu cel de-al doilea capitol lucrarea devine interesantă: sunt prezentate aici diferite *Tipuri de exegeză ale practicilor yoga*. În următoarele două capitole, intitulate *Yoga mitologie, religie sau filosofie* și, respectiv, *Structura sistemului yoga*, aflăm o bună prezentare și analiză detaliată a elementelor din „filosofia” și *fiziologia mistică* yoga, conform sistemului Sâmkhya-yoga* al lui Patañjali, bazate pe lucrările lui Mircea Eliade pe acest subiect, dar și pe cursul lui Satyânanda Paramahansa ținut de acesta la Bihar School of Yoga, și tradus în românește de Walter Fotescu. Capitolul V, care se numește *Yoga în buddhism, tantrism, alchimie și șamanism* mai conține, pe lângă ceea ce aflăm din titlu, ceea ce autorul numește *versiuni populare și desacralizate ale noului buddhism* sub forma zen-ului muncitoresc, biofeedback-ul, nazi yoga, antrenamentul autogen și vipassana. Urmează apoi un scurt capitol dedicat *versiunilor literare ale practicilor yoga*. Aici regăsim unele experiențe yoghine ale tânărului Eliade ilustrate în nuvelele *Secretul doctorului Honigberger* și *Nopti la Serampore*.

În ultimul capitol este prezentată, ca studiu de caz, Mișcarea de Integrare în Absolut. Acest ultim capitol, ba chiar și primul, am spune noi, ar fi putut foarte bine să lipsească din această lucrare și totuși, poate chiar cu un alt titlu, ea să își păstreze coerența. Dacă în cazul Mișcării de integrare în Absolut (MISA) există unele elemente creștine (prezența icoanelor, rugăciunea inimii, ș.a.), precum și pretensele legitimații științifice (teoria *string*-urilor, ideea unei vibrații cosmice fără existența unui element concret, material, care să vibreze, preluată de la fizicianul a cărui lucrare, *Taofizica*, este cunoscută tuturor adeptilor *noii ere*, F. Capra, sau alte elemente ale fizicii cuantice), nu putem vorbi de un sincretism evident creștin-hindus, ci doar de o superficială influență reciprocă. În raport cu teosofiile contemporane, nici ele atât de noi pe cât cred adeptii *noii ere*, MISA este doar o școală a Shivaismului, unul dintre curențele teiste avându-l pe Shiva ca zeu suprem, a ceea ce doar noi, occidentalii, numim *hinduismul* (care nu poate fi privit ca un sistem unitar, cum este, într-o anumită măsură, creștinismul) deci, în clasificarea lui Patañjali, o *Bhakti Yoga*, adică o religie/disciplină spirituală devoțională, bazată, mai pregnant decât alte mișcări (filosofice, ar spune unii, luând *Vedanta* ca exemplu) pe un set de practici corporale și psiho-mentale.

În momentul în care am dispune de o prezentare clară și sistematică a doctrinei MISA, probabil încă în formare, un cercetător al acesteia ar putea începe un studiu comparativ cu celelalte forme ale shivaismului: *Ūaiva Siddhanta* din sudul Indiei, cu cele două diviziuni fondate de Saint Tirumular, respectiv Meykanda Devar, *Siddha Siddhanta* din nord, *Śaivismul Vira* în India centrală, *Ūvādvaita* în sudul Indiei, *Śaivismul* din Kashmir (numit Pratyabhijna) și, în sfârșit, *Pasupata*. Se observă că mai mult decât a admite existența, în cadrul hinduismului, a trei diferite religii, vișnuismul, șaktismul și shivaismul, indienii înșiși consideră că aceste diviziuni ale shivaismului nu sunt cauzate numai de faptul că adeptii acestor școli vorbesc limbi diferite, mai precis, nu sunt separați doar geografic, ci au credințe pe alocuri divergente. Ca atare, această organizație -MISA- nu poate fi cu ușurință încadrată nici în sfera mișcărilor New Age, nici într-una din

cele șase clasice *darsana*. Dar sistemul de credințe ale acesteia coroborat cu toate practicile adiacente, poate fi numit, fără nici o reținere, religie. În opinia noastră, nu credem că se poate vorbi de o așa-zisă yoga autentică, observație preluată și de autor la finalul lucrării când afirmă: „*ele* [formele de yoga] *sunt la fel de adevărate*”(p. 241) și de aceea ne întrebăm ce vrea să însemne sintagma „veritabila spiritualitate”, și de ce este privită cu mai multă considerație Patañjali-Yoga, de altfel, mai apropiată de Sâmkya, pe când shivaismul practicat de elevii lui Bivolaru este calificat drept variantă comercială a yoga, cu o nuanță vizibilă de malițiozitate. Ce va spune Nicu Gavriluță despre Sahaja Yoga, a cărei conducătoare, declarată încarnarea tuturor zeilor, are o avere de foarte multe milioane de dolari strânsă doar prin donații, cotizații și taxe de tot felul.

Acest capitol ar fi putut fi publicat ca un studiu separat, pentru familiarizarea publicului cu ceea ce reprezintă MISA, și nu ca școală de yoga, ci ca religie. Deși lectura acestei lucrări ne-a lăsat impresia că Nicu Gavriluță nu ar avea o atitudine constantă și neutră față de yoga, autorul ieșean afirmă că „ciocnirea civilizațiilor (în sensul dat expresiei de Huntington) poate fi atenuată, în cazul de față, prin „autentica înțelegere și veritabila acceptare a alterității yoghine”. Iar această acceptare autorul o vede posibilă prin aplicarea *modelului binaro-fractal* propus de Culianu, considerând yoga ca un *fractal în spațiul Hilbert* (spațiul Hilbert ar fi, pentru yoga, „*ansamblul ținuturilor istorico-simbolice unde, sub o formă sau alta, yoga este astăzi prezentă*”). Fractalul yoga având ca axiome următoarele elemente: a) Există yoga; b) Yoga asigură eliberarea spiritului c) Yoga este o tehnică spirituală prezentă în mai multe culturi (p. 240).

Nu putem încheia fără a sublinia că cercetare propusă de Nicu Gavriluță trebuie apreciată cu conștiința dificultății inerente unui demers ce tinde să depășească o abordare europocentristă a fenomenului filosofico-religios.

*Trebuie subliniat faptul că Yoga și Sâmkya-yoga sunt două *darsane* (concepții filosofico-religioase) distincte