

# **BRUKENTHALIA**

**Romanian Cultural History Review  
Supplement of Brukenthal. Acta Musei**

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**Romanian Cultural History Review**  
*Supplement of Brukenthal. Acta Musei*

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No. 3



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## **A. STUDIES**





# Considerations about the Sumerian-Akkadian Nether World

Mircea-Sever ROMAN

Student at Babeş-Bolyai University

College of International Relationships and European Studies

E-mail: michaelroman7@yahoo.com

**Abstract.** The foundations of the European and American Judeo-Christian civilizations are to be found in the Ancient Near East or, more precisely, in the Sumerian-Akkadian world-view. The Eastern *Weltanschauung* migrated to Europe – and influenced it greatly – via commerce, military conquests and cultural exchanges. Part of this *Weltanschauung* was the eschatology, which can be identified in the discourse of the Easterners about the nether world and in their thanatological rituals. Inferno of the Sumerian-Akkadians is the ‘forefather’ of all Infernos from the Ancient Near East and, accordingly, of the Judeo-Christian hell. Studying the way the Sumerians would fancy the nether world can be used as a basis for studying other infernos. The essay will also take into consideration the infernal gods and the demonic spirits and, since the ancients believed in a hereafter, the paper also presents life after death, as the Sumerian-Akkadians would imagine it.

**Key words:** Ancient Near East, hell, infernal gods, demonic spirits

## Introduction

This essay will attempt to build a bridge in time, a bridge that goes from us, the modern people to an extinct *Weltanschauung*: the Sumerian-Akkadian world-view. We will focus on the nether world, as the Mesopotamians used to fancy it. Yet, our essay will not start with a discussion on the topic properly, but will cast some light on the human soul: as Lucian Boia said, in the human mental structure there is a conviction that

The material body of the human being is doubled by an independent and immaterial element (double, spirit, soul, etc.) (which – our note) continues somehow its existence after death. Indestructible and deathless, the ‘double’ settles in the realm that is (...) closer and open to the world of the living (the cult of the ancestors at the primitive communities) (...). It lives the diminished life of a shadow, no matter what the merits or the previous sins were (the classic Inferno) (...). Between the life of the living and that of the dead, the delimitation has been never absolute; there are gates that allow the passing of some chosen ones to the other side (...). But the spirits may be among us, they may manifest themselves and be contacted, faith perpetuated from ancient times until the modern spiritualism (Boia 2000, 30-31).

The historian cited above is not mistaken: the existing conceptions of inferno in all civilizations and which have evolved with each one of them prove him right, as Georges Minois wrote (Minois 1998, 7).

This essay is going to present some considerations about the Sumerian-Akkadian nether world, known in the thought, culture and civilization history. The essay is going to approach the Sumerian-Akkadian pandemonium – deities and infernal spirits – and will deal with life in Inferno as the ancients would see it.

First of all, in order to discuss about the Mesopotamian Inferno or Netherworld, it has to be situated from the cosmological perspective. It is useful to know that in Mesopotamian thought, in an undistinguished manner, cosmogony was interlaced with theogony but, nevertheless, we can not talk about a ‘cosmo-theogony’: when the deities appeared, they did personify the material universe, but were not its constitutive parts (Banu 1967, 66).

In the Mesopotamian religiosity, the Universe was created by the heavenly god An and the chthonic goddess Ki, which were born embraced, representing the ‘masculine element’ and the ‘feminine element’. Together, they form the visible Cosmos, An-Ki <sup>(1)</sup>, with an ovoid shape, surrounded by the cosmic ocean, as showed in cosmographic images. The cosmogonic tradition from Nippur differs from the one in Eridu, claiming that the rest of the great gods have been born thanks to the unity of these primeval gods (Pritchard *et alii* 2011, 64).

In this Cosmos there is the earthly ocean that borders the earth, which is like a boat turned over. At the end of the Earth there are some

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<sup>(1)</sup> In Egypt, the primal Sky-Earth was made of Nut and Geb.

mountains that support the sky and that, probably, through the bottom of the earthly ocean, are united with the earth. Underneath this world there is an abyss in which the nether world is placed, Inferno.

As far as the names of the Sumerian-Akkadian nether world, as elements that clarify partially the manner in which Mesopotamians were representing Inferno, they will be dealt with at the point that discusses Inferno properly.

We will now take a look at the way Sumerian-Akkadians would represent their divinities which populated the nether world, its description and the way of life of the humans there.

### **The Infernal Gods**

#### *The Goddess Ereshkigal*

In the Sumerian-Akkadian Pantheon, the goddess Ereshkigal was the daughter of the Moon God, Nanna(r)/ Suen and of the goddess Ningal. When she was little, this solar deity was kidnapped by the dragon Kur and taken to the nether world, enthroned there as queen <sup>(1)</sup> and becoming thus the 'Lady of the great country'. She is a 'cruel, unfair and merciless queen, not knowing mercy or love. In the conception of the entire Mesopotamia, she is frightful to men and gods alike' (Kernbach 1989, 171).

She married Gugal-ana, the 'Bull of An (Sky)'. When the king-hero Gilgamesh refused queen's Inanna advances, Gugal-ana was sent to punish him, but Gilgamesh and Enkidu killed him and dismembered him, and Ereshkigal became a widow.

She is represented in the presence of lions and owls <sup>(2)</sup>.

#### *The God Nergal/ Irkalla Represented as the Celestial God*

The god Nergal is one of the children of the celestial couple Enlil – Ninlil, being represented as a powerful, handsome man with a strange mien. Initially, this god was a celestial one, patron of midday, of the summer solstice, of heat and solar fire. He also personified pestilence, destruction and war.

Later, the Akkadians named him Irkalla, Inferno, and the Assyrians Erra. The general of his army was Ishum. His cult is centred in the

town of Cutha (Walton 2006, 337), and his representative star was Mars.

#### *Wedding in Hell and 'the Downward Elevation'*

The Sumerian mythology talks about a wedding in Hell (Pritchard *et alii* 2011, 83-92) which took place in the following circumstances: the gods organised a feast where Ereshkigal was invited, but Inferno deity did not attend it. We are not aware of her reasons – probably photophobia, conceit or hatred - but she did send Namtar, her vizier, to the feast.

When Namtar arrived at the feast, the gods showed him due honour, but god Nergal failed to do this on purpose, thus offending Namtar. We do not know the reason for Nergal's behaviour – was it because the goddess had not come in person and sent someone else? Victor Kernbach speculates on this subject:

Although in Mesopotamian myths there were certain rigorously formal reports between the celestial and infernal gods, based on mutual respect and ceremonial politeness, nevertheless, this time the other gods become mad and send, as retaliations against Ereshkigal's sister Nergal, the god of war (...) (Kernbach 1989, 171).

Is it possible that Nergal had the secret intention to conquer the realm of darkness and chose to offend the infernal emissary in order to be sent by the other gods to the Inferno, where he was to explain his behaviour? Anyway, the gods sent Nergal to the Inferno, and the canny god Enki taught Nergal how to act so that he would not remain captive there.

Therefore, on being sent to Ereshkigal, he took 14 of his soldiers and descended into the Inferno, starting a methodical and carefully planned war that even a modern soldier would be proud to wage. Victor Kernbach continues to recount:

...at the first gate he sets 'the shining flash'; at the second, 'the exhausting fever'; at the third, 'the destroying flame'; at the fourth, 'the guard' etc., and nobody opposes him, not even Namtar, the demon of the plague, who is most faithful to his goddess; it is exactly he who opens the bolts to Nergal, and the warrior god pulls the goddess by her hair and drags her down off the throne. When he is about to cut her head off, she asks him to wait till she tells him about an essential proposal; amazed by the unexpected humility of the goddess, Nergal accepts to listen to her and he is asked to marry her and be given all of hell as dowry. Since he likes the domain and suddenly falls in love with the goddess, Nergal kisses her and sits down on the throne next to her, becoming a co-proprietor and king of the nether world, and the only god who, after

<sup>(1)</sup> See <http://www.demonicpedia.com/demons/ereshkigal/> accessed on March, 24, 2013.

<sup>(2)</sup> See <http://www.goddessaday.com/mesopotamian/ereshkigal/> and <http://www.babylon-rising.com/ereshkigal.html> accessed on March, 24, 2013.

descending into Hell, has succeeded in staying alive (Kernbach, 1989, 418).

Therefore, Ereshkigal puts an end to her widowhood by marrying Nergal, who is her uncle, Nanna(r)/Suen's brother. Thus, the celestial god Nergal becomes the infernal god, ruler of the Netherworld together with Ereshkigal the goddess, who, nevertheless, has a superior status. In this way, the god is ascended in function, promoted to the position of king, but placed in the lowest regions of the Earth, thus benefiting from what I think fit to call a 'downward elevation'.

We may say that in the Ereshkigal's marriage with Nergal, the active forces of pestilence, destruction and war are unified with more passive forces of death (Holland, 2010, 162). It is worth mentioning that this myth is the only love story that takes place in the dead realm and has a happy ending for the protagonists <sup>(1)</sup>.

#### *Namtar, the Angel of Death*

Namtar is the vizier of Ereshkigal the goddess. The name of this god (*dingir*) is translated as 'fate', and he is the demonic god of pestilence. Later, in Semitic mythology, he appears as the angel of death. Namtar was the herald of the goddess and the concocter of rules. He is said to be surrounded by demons (Kernbach 1989, 413) <sup>(2)</sup>.

#### *Ningishzida and Dumuzi, the Celestial and Infernal Dragon-Gods*

We are to present now some intriguing gods that show similar features to Satan, the biblical serpent: the god Ninigishzida, Ningishzida or Gizzida, and the god Dumuzi.

The god Ningishzida is the patron of the settlement of Gishbanda, near the city-state Ur. We do not know precisely who his parents were: it is possible that his father was Ereshkigal <sup>(3)</sup> or Ninazu <sup>(4)</sup>, and his mother was Ningir(id)da <sup>(5)</sup>, while his wife was (Nin)Azimua, a name

translated as 'Lady of the Flawlessly Grown Branch' <sup>(6)</sup>.

The name Ningishzida is translated as 'Lord of the Productive/ Steadfast Tree' (Alexander *et alii* 2003, 736-739). But when we talk about any tree, we need to include in the picture its long, complicated roots, penetrating deep into the earth. Probably due to this root system a system of connections with the underworld was established, symbolic of infernal character of god Ningishzida... According to the myth of *Gilgamesh, Enkidu and the Nether World* <sup>(7)</sup>, Ningishzida, the snake immune to incantations, is curled among the roots of the World Tree, the tree placed in the centre of the Universe, the *axis mundi*. In this shape of a big snake, dragon or basilisk curled among the roots of the World Tree, he is a *god of vitality* (Chevalier, Gheerbrant 1995, 299) <sup>(8)</sup>: <sup>(8)</sup>: he has the power to extract life from the ground, he renders nature fruitful and he may heal people. Actually, there is a famous character who claimed that he had been healed by the god Ningishzida, namely Gudea, the governor of Lagash in the 21<sup>st</sup> century B.C.E.

He was considered a ruler in the netherworld and the throne-bearer of the earth (Alexander *et alii* 2003, 736-739).

Ningishzida, the dragon or the serpent-god was sometimes also represented as a bull, the symbol of force and fertility.

The dragon Ningishzida copulates with Zertur or Sirtur, whose name means 'young maiden' or perhaps 'virgin' (Albright, 1967, 193). The virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Dumu-zid-abzu, the 'Faithful Son of the Underworld Ocean (of fresh water)'. This son is also named Dumuzi, the 'Righteous Young Man'.

Ningishzida and Dumuzi are considered gods of the vegetation that sprouts from the earth, and they are also the pair of guardians to the gates of Heaven (Kernbach 1989, 205, Pritchard 2011, 75). Thus, Ningishzida, the serpent-god and 'Lord of the Productive/ Steadfast Tree', given his stick as the *axis mundi*

<sup>(1)</sup> <http://www.gatewaystobabylon.com/religion/nergalereshkigal2000.htm> accessed on 26.3.2013.

<sup>(2)</sup> See also <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/376937/Mesopotamian-religion/68267/Myths#ref559313> accessed on 26.3.2013.

<sup>(3)</sup> Ereshkigal was the goddess of the Inferno, a feminine divinity, but the Sumerian deities could be androgynous and bisexual.

<sup>(4)</sup> 'A *balbale* to Ningishzida A', line 36, on <http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=t.4.19.1#> accessed on March, 26, 2013.

<sup>(5)</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>(6)</sup> <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/415722/Ningishzida> and <http://www.sacred-texts.com/ane/sum/sum07.htm>, accessed on March, 26, 2013.

<sup>(7)</sup> <http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=t.1.8.1.4#> accessed on March, 27, 2013.

<sup>(8)</sup> Appealing to the Chaldean and Arabic language, René Guénon proves our point: 'Chaldeans had a single word for life and snake'; *snake symbolism is tied up to the very idea of life; in Arabic, snake is el-nayyah, and life el-hayat*.

and his quality of gatekeeper, was later taken over by other cultures: for example, in Greek mythology, he was valued as Hermes, while his stick was called the Caduceus. The fact that Ningishzida was a gatekeeper was also conveyed in one of the functions Hermes had, that of *proopylaios*, 'gatekeeper'<sup>1</sup>.

In his shape of gatekeeper, god Ningishzida prefigures god *Janus bifrons*, the two-faced Janus, the bifacial god from Heaven, who opens and closes the gates of prayers that people address to gods, but who is also present in Inferno, permitting or refusing access there.

Therefore, the reptilian character of Ningishzida, the serpent-god, is obvious, but Dumuzi is no different: a liturgical title given to Dumuzi is *Ama-ushumgal-anna*, where *ama* means 'mother', *ushumgal* means 'big snake, dragon', and *anna* has its root in *an*, the heaven. *Ama-ushumgal-anna* is translated as 'Mother-Python of Heaven' (Albright 1967, 193). In late Sumerian liturgies Dumuzi was homologated as *Sataran* – 'The Serpent Goddess'.

In later literary works Ningishzida fades in the background; a lot is dedicated to Dumuzi in his character of healer, as well as divine shepherd, but also a mortal masculine representative of fertility.

Later, Dumuzi passes into other cultures, integrally or in several forms, being named Tammuz in Mesopotamia, Osiris in Egypt, Adonis in Syria and the later Hellenist world, Attis in Asia Minor, Dionysus in the Hellenist world, Bacchus and maybe Janus in the Roman world. For example, in the Bible, in the book of Ezekiel, 8:14, the paganised Israelites worship him in the annual ritual named *taklimtu*.

This tendency of myths to cluster around selected figures is clearly due to the dramatic quality of the cycles in question, which tended to spread and to oust or to absorb all rivals (Albright 1967, 195).

### The Demonic Spirits

In this part of the essay I will discuss the Sumerian-Akkadian pandemonium, *i.e.*, the demons in whose existence and actions the inhabitants of the Mesopotamian basin believed.

As the gods would have a certain hierarchy, so would the demons, but although a far less accurate one.

Essentially, the demons were inferior to the gods. Yet, in an imperfect, unclear way, these beings would share in the divine and, even if in their quality they were inferior to the gods, still they were superior to the human beings.

In the Sumerian thought the demons or the spirits (in Sumerian, *udug* (<sup>2</sup>); Akkadian, *utukku*) would be divided into evil demons, *edimmu* or *ekimmu*, which were the greatest majority of the demons, and *šēdu*, good spirits, willing to help people after having instituted personal covenants with them.

### *Edimmu/ Ekimmu, the 'Divine' Bad Demons*

In their greatest majority, the demons were evil beings. They would dwell in Galla/ Irkalla and, when coming onto Earth, they would act cruelly. They knew nothing about compassion and no offering would stop them from accomplishing their mission. For instance, this is what is written about them in the poem called 'Dumuzids dream'

Those who come for the king are a motley crew,  
Who know not food,  
Who know not drink,  
Who eat no sprinkled flour,  
Who drink no poured water,  
Who accept no pleasant gifts,  
Who do not enjoy a wife's embraces,  
Who never kiss dear little children,  
Who never chew sharp-tasting garlic,  
Who eat no fish,  
Who eat no leeks (<sup>3</sup>).

### *The Arch-Demon Kur/ Asag*

Among many other characters, the Sumerian-Akkadian mythology speaks about the demon Kur. His name is translated by 'mountain', but the semantic field of this noun overlaps partially with that of the word *ki-gal*, 'the great below'. He dwells in Hell, which is the region immediately below the primordial sweet waters.

The myths would present him as a demonic winged dragon that is very similar to the way the apocalyptic dragon is seen in the popular variant of Christianity.

He is the patron of all illnesses and sickness in the world. He dries up wells and covers the earth with sores into which it squirts

(<sup>1</sup>) See A. L. Frothingham, *Babylonian Origin of Hermes the Snake-God, and of the Caduceus I*, on <http://www.jstor.org/stable/497115> accessed on 29.3.2013.

(<sup>2</sup>) [http://texts.00.gs/Utukku\\_Lemnitu,\\_1-7.htm](http://texts.00.gs/Utukku_Lemnitu,_1-7.htm), accessed on 29.3.2013.

(<sup>3</sup>) 'Dumuzid's dream', <http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=t.1.4.3#>, accessed on 29.3.2013.

poison <sup>(1)</sup> and mates with mountains which beget demons of stone.

This arch-demon is malevolent: he kidnaps Ereshkigal, and he and his progeny attack the pantheon. He is opposed either by the god Enki <sup>(2)</sup>, or by the goddess Inanna, or, most often, by Ninurta, the god of war <sup>(3)</sup>, who defeats the dragon by hitting him with the enchanted cudgel and with his flashlights and thunders.

Kur will be called more often Asag (in Akkadian, Asakku).

From the standpoint of the diffusion of the myths, the war of the god Ninurta against the arch-demon Kur is a replica of the war the younger gods had waged against Abzu, the primeval god. Thus, the initial war passed on into the myth about the war of the god Ninurta against the arch-demon Kur and later it spread, as Samuel Noah Kramer wrote, 'to almost all peoples and into all ages' <sup>(4)</sup>: it is possible that these are the roots of the conception about the earthly divinities attacking the celestial gods, and the titanomachy that follows. Later on, in *Enuma Elish*, the well-known Babylonian epic of creation, Ninurta will be identified with the god Marduk, the valiant champion who comes to rescue the gods under attack, and while Kur, the dragon, will be replaced by the hideous Tiamat.

The Greeks have also taken over this myth: in his *Theogony*, Hesiod spoke about the Titans waging war against the celestial gods and about Zeus from Heaven hurling his lightning and bolts against the giants <sup>(5)</sup>, while in the Christianised paganism we see Saint George slaying the dragon.

Concerning the motif of the beautiful maiden abducted but rescued by a hero who slays the dragon, it appears later replicated in myths <sup>(6)</sup>, fairy-tales <sup>(7)</sup> and medieval epics <sup>(8)</sup>.

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<sup>(1)</sup> <http://www.pantheon.org/areas/mythology/middle-east/mesopotamian/articles.html> accessed in 29.3.2013.

<sup>(2)</sup> Later on, this god will pass in the Greek pantheon as the god Poseidon.

<sup>(3)</sup> <http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=t.1.6.2#> and <http://strangeworldofmystery.blogspot.ro/009/04/anzu-first-dragon-in-mythology.html>, accessed in 30.3.2013.

<sup>(4)</sup> <http://www.sacred-texts.com/ane/sum/sum08.htm>, accessed in 30.3.2013.

<sup>(5)</sup> See Hesiod, *Theogony*, ll. 383-403 and 687-712 at <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/348/348-h/348-h.htm>, accessed in 31.3.2013.

<sup>(6)</sup> For instance, the abduction of Proserpina/Persephone by Pluto. Here, though, the god is not slain, but we do see a myth of fertility.

### *Anunnaki, the Infernal Administrative Divinities*

In the nether world Galla/Irkalla there were some more divine demons: the seven Anunnaki. They were 'royal offspring', 'secondary divinities, artisans consecrated to construction and destruction, working by order and having no initiative of their own' (Kernbach 1989, 35). It seems that initially these divinities belonged to heaven, for their name contains the particle An(u), 'sky', but later, somehow, they became gods of the Underworld (Holland 2010, 113).

In the beginning Anunnaki, the inferior gods, would toil for the higher gods but after men were created and put to work, they were set free.

Yet, they do have some administrative functions: they govern the first of the three judgement rooms from the Ekalgina palace (Daniel, Acsan 1981, 68) in the nether world, checking the lists so that access is permitted only to those who are dead, buried and taught about the rules of the region (Walton, 2006, 318, 328).

### **Other Infernal Gods**

Other infernal gods are Neti, the chief of the guardians of the gates of the netherworld (Daniel, Acsan 1981, 124), Alû, who has neither mouth, nor ears, is androgynous and strikes people in the chest suffocating them <sup>(9)</sup>, and Ninki, Endukugga, Nindukugga, Enmul, Ninmul, relatives of the god Enlil (Daniel, Acsan 1981, 125).

### *The bird Zu/ Anzu(d)/ Imdugud*

This is a winged creature, probably a lion-headed eagle. It is a divine storm-bird or a thunder-bird <sup>(10)</sup>.

Here it is what a myth says about it:

(Anzu) often gazed at Duranki's god, father of the gods,

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<sup>(7)</sup> The Greeks would tell about Hercules or Perseus slaying the dragon.

<sup>(8)</sup> From this point of view, it would be interesting to study the possible connections between the abduction of Ereshkigal by a dragon that will end up being slain and the seduction of Eve in the Garden of Eden by the serpent (*Genesis*, 3) who, in the *Book of Revelation* 12 and 20, is shown as ὁ δράκων ὁ μέγας (the great dragon) and ὁ ὄφις ὁ ἀρχαῖος (the serpent of old) and who, finally, will be hurled in the lake of fire and brimstone.

<sup>(9)</sup> [http://texts.00.gs/Utukku\\_Lemnuta\\_8-16.htm](http://texts.00.gs/Utukku_Lemnuta_8-16.htm), accessed on 29.3.2013.

<sup>(10)</sup> <http://www.pantheon.org/articles/z/zu.html>, accessed on 30.3.2013.

And fixed his purpose, to usurp the Ellil-power.  
 'I shall take the god's Tablet of Destinies for myself  
 And control the orders for all the gods  
 And shall possess the throne and be master of rites  
 I shall direct everyone of the Igigi!' <sup>(1)</sup>

Thus, the winged creature managed to steal the Tablets of Destiny from the god Enlil, the crown of sovereignty <sup>(2)</sup> and the *mes*, i.e., the divine attributes. We can guess that afterwards it proclaimed itself the master of the Universe. The god Ninurta accepts to go and search for the bird, finds its hiding place in the mountain Sabu and, helped by Ninkasi, the goddess of wine, despite great hardships, the god succeeds in defeating the bird and re-establishing the troubled cosmic order (Daniel, 1983, 160).

Much later on, the supernatural bird would be evoked at the Babylonian New Year feasts (*Akitum*). It remains the symbol of the divinities defeated by the restored gods (Kernbach 1989, 35).

Despite all these, the bird Anzu or Imdugud would also play a beneficent role, protecting the homes and the sanctuaries.

Its physical aspect survived till our days in the shape of the griffins of legends and fairy-tales.

Another myth, *Gilgamesh, Enkidu and the Nether World*, says that the goddess Inanna planted in her sacred luxuriant garden a *halub* tree – maybe a kind of willow – and after it grew and the goddess wanted to cut it off, she could not, for...

At its roots, a snake immune to incantations made itself a nest.  
 In its branches, the Anzud bird settled its young.  
 In its trunk, the phantom maid built herself a dwelling,  
 The maid who laughs with a joyful heart <sup>(3)</sup>.  
<sup>(3)</sup>.

<sup>(1)</sup> Stephanie Dalley, *Myths from Mesopotamia: Creation, the Flood, Gilgamesh, and Others*, on [http://books.google.ro/books?id=7ERp\\_y\\_w1nIC&pg=PA203&dq=anzu+babylonian&redir\\_esc=y#v=onepage&q=anzu%20babylonian&f=false](http://books.google.ro/books?id=7ERp_y_w1nIC&pg=PA203&dq=anzu+babylonian&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q=anzu%20babylonian&f=false), accessed on 30.3.2013.

<sup>(2)</sup> Was the crown actually a halo?

<sup>(3)</sup> *Gilgamesh, Enkidu and the Nether World*, ll. 42-45, at <http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=t.1.8.1.4#> accessed on 29.3.2013.

This fact is notable exactly for its lack of uniqueness: as Joseph Campbell says, the mythological figure of the Cosmic Tree or the Tree of Life, with the an eagle at its summit and a serpent at its root (adding some more elements constituting together a cultural pattern) appears in other mythologies, as well: in Egypt, India, China, as well as in the late periods of the higher civilizations of Maya-Aztec and Peruvian (Campbell 1991, 212).

### 'Circumstantial' Evil Demons

In addition to the 'divine' evil demons mentioned above, there were some other demons which I call 'circumstantial': these were spirits of the dead who became evil because of the circumstances they died in: some of them were not buried with the proper liturgy; others were not buried at all, or were spirits of very evil people. These could be rather sedentary, preferring the dark, unoccupied corners, the ruins, the graveyards, dwelling in any place that inspires terror or at least fear. They could 'go to and fro on earth and walk back and forth on it' <sup>(4)</sup>, 'going through dry places, seeking rest and finding none' <sup>(5)</sup>, wandering fretfully in the tenebrous deserts (Moscati 1982, 55) and would vindicate their fate by attacking people, by terrifying them and pushing them into disastrous situations (Moscati 1975, 46).

### The Manifestations and the Looks of the Demons

How do the demons manifest themselves and what do they look like? They would manifest themselves by the roaring of the wind and by thunders, by voices of wild, scary beasts and they would look...terrifying and diverse: the Sumero-Akkadians would represent the demons as having human bodies and heads of animals or a combination of members belonging to different animals.

'Here is, for example, the demon that brings the head-ache, which was much feared' writes Sabatino Moscati, the Italian archaeologist and linguist:

The head-ache comes from Hell...  
 It has the head of a demon,  
 The shape of a whirlwind,  
 The aspect of the darkened sky,  
 The face as the deep shade of the woods,  
 Its hand is a snare, its foot a trap...

<sup>(4)</sup> *The Holy Bible: Job*, 1:7.

<sup>(5)</sup> *The Holy Bible: the Gospel according to Matthew*, 12:43.

It boils the members,  
 Troubles them, wastes the body,  
 It is an evil that crushes the members as an  
 earthen vessel...  
 It grounds the strong one as if he were a  
 reed,  
 It brings the mighty one to nothing as if he  
 were an ox. (Moscati 1975, 47)

We also present another text, *Incantation against the Demonic Lamashtu*; the authors Constantin Daniel and Ion Acsan suggest this incantation was written by the old Babylonians and not by the Sumerians we deal with, but the literature, the faiths and the institutions were very fluid in those times, so it could have been written by the Sumerians and has since spilled over into the Babylonian literature:

The god Anum created her, the divine Ea  
 made her grow;  
 Her face is as of a she-dog, Enlil destined  
 her;  
 Her hands are dried, extremely long fingers;  
 Very sharp nails, ugly elbows;  
 She comes in by stealth, sneaks through the  
 crack of the door;  
 Slinking in, she kills the baby;  
 She turns around his belly seven times...  
 (Daniel, Acsan 1981, 47) <sup>(1)</sup>.

In a Universe in which all things were predestined according to the 'Tablets of destinies' that the supreme god Enlil would write down at each *Akitu* or New Year, in which all things had their place and the world itself had a certain course (a linearity interwoven with circularity as we will see in another essay), were the demons allowed to attack and harm anyone, anyhow and anyway they wanted to?...

No, in a Universe based on the concept of cosmic homology, of correspondent worlds, the demons were allowed to harass just the people who committed sins! Both in the *Dumuzid's dream* <sup>(2)</sup>, and in the Sumerian version of the *Descent of Ishtar to the Nether World* (Pritchard, 2011, 77-82), the demons were supernatural beings acting by order of the gods in order to do good or evil, as divine agents!

But...the problem was that all people had sins! Before committing sins, man was still a

sinner: 'Behold, I was brought fourth in iniquity, And in sin my mother conceived me' was not Psalm 51:5, but was the actual Sumerian view about man: according to Jean Deshayes, in Sumer it was believed that '*It never happened that a mother would bring forth a sinless child*' (Deshayes 1976, 57) <sup>(3)</sup>.

And, on top of the fact that man was born a sinner, he would sin, too <sup>(4)</sup>.

The action that opens more directly the doors to the demons is, of course, the sin. It can be of most diverse natures: not observing a religious ritual is placed beside theft and assassination, and this reflects the unity in faith that we noticed as being characteristic to Mesopotamian thought: in their conception, ritual guilt and moral guilt are the same thing. (Moscati 1975, 47).

Moreover, in the Sumerian-Akkadian thought system it was believed that it was not only the disrespect shown to a religious ritual that brings about the attack from a demon, but other 'minor' offences as well: getting in contact with an impure being that defiles a man by contaminating him, or any other mistake, regardless of how small it would be. In this case, the person gets sick or poor or suffers and this negative situation is solved only by using magic, which we intend to treat in a different work.

### Life after Death and the Nether World

We reached another interesting point in our study that will couple of necessity the discourse about the spirits of the dead and life after death with the Nether World.

John H. Walton tells us that in Sumerian this nether world was named IRI.GAL, *i.e.*, 'The Great City', or Galla, and later Kigallu (Kernbach 1981, 282) or Inferno. The Akkadians named it Irkallu or Irkalla, Arallu, meaning the 'The land of no return' <sup>(5)</sup>.

The same scholar makes an eloquent commentary about the spirits of the dead, their trip to the nether world and their dwelling in the a city of lapis lazuli, surrounded by seven walls and in the palace Ekalgina:

<sup>(3)</sup> The underlining belongs to the author who admits that 'the Biblical conception of the original sin has been nowhere expressed as clearly as in the book of Genesis.'

<sup>(4)</sup> Certainly, man was not a sinner because he would sin, but he would sin because he was a sinner...

<sup>(5)</sup> See [http://whiterosesgarden.com/Nature\\_of\\_Evil/Underworld/UNDR\\_Deities/UNDR-D\\_mesopotamian\\_region/UNDR\\_reshkigal\\_sumeria.htm](http://whiterosesgarden.com/Nature_of_Evil/Underworld/UNDR_Deities/UNDR-D_mesopotamian_region/UNDR_reshkigal_sumeria.htm) accessed on 29.3.2013.

<sup>(1)</sup> See also [http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/to\\_pic/328457/Lamashtu](http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/to_pic/328457/Lamashtu) accessed in March, 29, 2013.

<sup>(2)</sup> <http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=t.1.4.3#>, accessed in 30.3.2013.

In Mesopotamia, the netherworld was ruled by the gods, particularly by the queen, Ereshkigal, and her consort, Nergal. The Anunnaki gods also helped administer the netherworld. Both politically and architecturally it was construed as a city (...). Seven walls, each with its own gate, surrounded the city. Before passing these, the deceased had to cross the demon-infested steppe land and the river Hubur (...). After enduring all of these trials, what one encountered hardly made it seem worth the effort.

To the house whose entrants are bereft of light,  
Where dust is their sustenance and clay their food.  
They see no light but dwell in the darkness,  
They are clothed like birds in wings for garments,  
And dust has gathered on the door and bolt.  
(...).

This description and others like it are based on observations concerning the grave and the corpse. After death, while the body decayed, the phantom 'joined the countless multitude of other spectres, assembled there since the beginning of time and forever to lead a gloomy and mournful existence that was suggested by the rigid and pensive cadaver, as well as the fabulous image of a Below of black night, of heavy silence, and of endless, weighty sleep.' (...)

Many texts parallel the existence of the dead in the netherworld to those that sleep (...), which suggests that in a semiconscious state their discomforts are set aside. By other accounts, however, the aura of despair is somewhat mitigated as the afterlife is characterized as in some ways parallel to life on earth. For example, the sun is said to pass through the netherworld after it sets in the land of the living as it moves back to the east to rise again the next morning. This suggests that the darkness of the netherworld is therefore dispelled, if only briefly, in regular intervals (...). The barely tolerable conditions could be mitigated by continued attention from those who remained in the land of the living. This premise was the foundation of the cult of the dead... (Walton 2006, 318-319).

To say this briefly, we will use the words of Georges Minois: 'The darkness and the dust are the two characteristic elements of the Mesopotamian hell, in which the winged souls

are wandering, flying at random and feeding on dirt' (Minois 1998, 15).

Let us add some more discomfort to the general picture:

'The river of the nether world produces no water, no water is drunk from it.  
{(1 ms. adds:) Why should you sail?}  
The fields of the nether world produce no grain, no flour is eaten from it.  
{(1 ms. adds:) Why should you sail?}  
The sheep of the nether world produce no wool, no cloth is woven from it. {(1 ms. adds:) Why should you sail?} <sup>(1)</sup>.

We bring now into discussion a Sumerian text that presents dramatically the description we made above of the netherworld:

They <sup>(2)</sup> hugged and kissed. They wearied each other with questions:

'Did you see the order of the nether world?  
If only you would tell me, my friend, if only you would tell me!'  
'If I tell you the order of the nether world, sit down and weep!  
I shall sit down and weep!  
(...), which your heart rejoiced to touch, is (...), worms infest it like an old garment (?); like (...) of (?) a crevice, it is full of dust.'  
'Alas!' he said and sat down in the dust <sup>(3)</sup>.  
'Did you see (...)?'  
'His food is set apart, his water is set apart, he eats the food offered (?) to him, he drinks the water offered (?) to him.'  
(1 ms. adds: 'Did you see him who was eaten by a lion?'  
'He cries bitterly 'O my hands! O my legs!'  
'Did you see him who fell down from the roof?'  
'They cannot (...) his bones.'  
'Did you see the leprous man?'  
'He twitches like an ox as the worms eat at him.'  
'Did you see him who fell in battle?'  
'I saw him.'  
'How does he fare?'

<sup>(1)</sup> *Ninjicida's journey to the nether world*, ll. 29-31, at <http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=t.1.7.3&charenc=j#> accessed on March, 30, 2013.

<sup>(2)</sup> *I. e.*, Gilgamesh who invoked the spirit of Enkidu from the Netherworld.

<sup>(3)</sup> *Gilgamesh, Enkidu and the nether world*, ll. 243-253, at <http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/section1/tr1814.htm>, accessed in March, 30, 2013.



'His father and mother are not there to hold his head, and his wife weeps.'

'Did you see the spirit of him who has no funerary offerings?'

'I saw him.'

'How does he fare?'

'He eats the scraps and the crumbs ..... tossed out in the street.' <sup>(1)</sup>.

Needless to say, the images are susceptible of inducing depression. What does relieve the despair somewhat is the fact that, as Tammi J. Schneider notices, the goddess Ereshkigal, the queen of the vast region, also weeps for those who stepped on this domain (Schneider 2011, 49), and that families are kept together.

### Conclusions

Before we bid farewell to the Mesopotamian nether world, we deem it appropriate to record few conclusions.

The author of this essay presented glimpses of the Mesopotamian nether world as the Sumerian-Akkadians used to fantasize about it: a gloomy, sorrowful domain, with horrible, desperate apparitions. From our point of view, it is clear that the Sumerian-Akkadian myths would sometimes contradict themselves and some other times they would be hilarious but still the ancients did believe them. As Georges Minois said, a nether world would reflect the collective fears of the society that imagined it. The hell we examined, though, is different from other famous hells – for instance, from the Christian hell – because the former will eventually receive all the people, not only those who have been sentenced to it because of evils committed in their earthly life.

Yet, since equilibrium and objectivity are virtues to be cultivated, a future essay will present the Sumerian-Akkadian Paradise. Thus, we will pass from darkness to light and we will ascend from Hell to Heavens.

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**1. REPREZENTARE  
BABILONIANĂ  
A UNIVERSULUI**

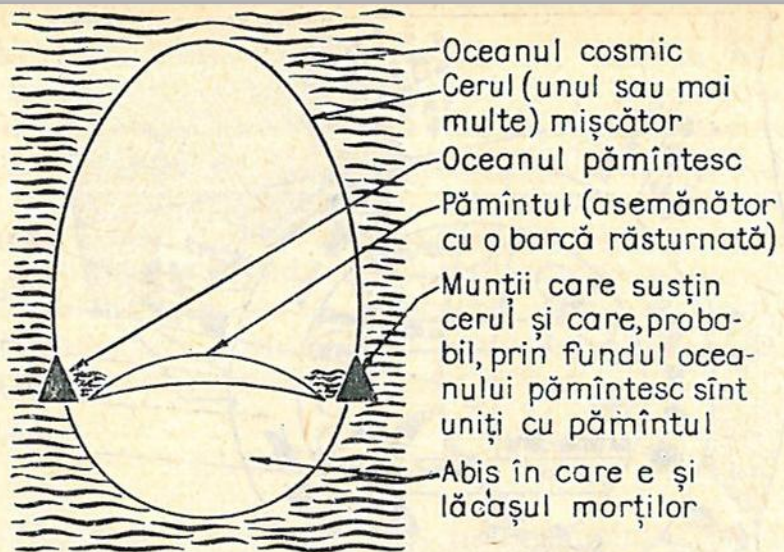


Fig.1. Babylonian representation of the universe

Source: Banu 1967, 65.

# Slavic and Greek-Roman Mythology, Comparative Mythology

Mihai DRAGNEA

PhD Student, University of Bucharest

E-mail: terra\_mater\_2007@yahoo.com

**Abstract.** Mythology (μυθολογία), as a field of scientific research, is a set of stories, myths in Greek meaning ‘story’ or ‘legend’ and logos ‘word’. Usually, the myths are works of literature. The term mythology may include all the myths of religion or culture. Throughout history, these stories have circulated as works of literature, folk tales (ballads, odes, songs, songs of bravery) or based on historical sources written at different ruler's courts or monasteries.

In this paper I will present a number of similarities between Greek and Roman deities and the Slavic ones, basing my research as much as possible on the information provided by an etymological analysis, a description of the deity as well as rituals, offerings, sacrifices and celebrations dedicated to the deities. As a main source for Slavic deities, I used a compilation of medieval and religious texts written in the Kievan Rus' by monk Nestor, called the *Russian Primary Chronicle* or *Nestor's Chronicle*. This script presents Russian history and Kievan Rus between 850-1110 years, written in Kiev during Iziaslav Sviatopolk the second's (Grand Prince of Kiev 1093-1113) reign. The Chronicle is German-Scandinavian inspired, since the Prince Sviatopolk's (the principality's ruler) policy was pro-Scandinavian. Also, I could list following volumes: Dictionary of Slavic mythology by Ilie Danilov and Slavic mythology by Sorin Paliga. In addition to these works, information about Slavic mythology can be found in the following books: History of religious beliefs and ideas by Mircea Eliade, Slavic mythology by Anca Ionescu Irina, Dictionary of General Mythology by Victor Kernbach and Teodor Eugen Sorin, Linguistics and Archaeology of the early Slavs and Another view of the Lower Danube by Sorin Paliga. The remaining materials are presented in the bibliography. In Greek mythology, Homer and Hesiod are the main narrative sources. As reference materials I will use the following volume: *Sources for Greek Religion* de David G. Rice & John E. Stambaugh and the book Dictionary of Roman-Greek mythology: gods, heroes, myths by Zoe Petre, Alexandra Lițu, Cătălin Pavel Cristian Olariu, Florica Mihaș-Bohîlțea, Alexandra Târlea.

**Key words:** Slavic mythology, Greek mythology, Roman mythology, Paganism, Kievan Rus'

## Comparative mythology

At the head of the Slavic pantheon, is ‘Supreme God’, ‘The higher’ or God (Бог, Bog), the generic name for the supreme deity for Slavs ‘the rich’, ‘the powerful’. It should be noted however, that this name is just an epithet that could be attributed to several gods, depending on the hierarchy (eg Greater Perun, Svarog the Greater). This term has Indo-European origins being also found in the ancient Iranians language, as the *bay*, a word which means ‘god’ and represents a ‘god’ who is offering, gracious, generous and strong. Procopius and Helmold tells us that the Slavs belief system is hierarchical, subordinating other gods to the Supreme God. At Helmold the function of ‘supreme god’ of the Baltic Slavs tribes is occupied by Svantevit and for the Eastern Slavs, Perun. Linguists believe that the word ‘*bogat*’ is derived from this ancient Indo-European root <sup>(1)</sup>.

The term refers specifically to the god Perun. About Zeus we discover that he is given the royal honor as ‘the one who divides wealth among people’ and ‘the one who watches over mortals’ <sup>(2)</sup>. When they pray to God, the Slavs invoke him by the name of Bog which is not the same as the Judeo-Christian Jehovah. Under this term of Bog, the old Slavs made reference to the god Perun. The term of Zeus, in terms of etymology, defines and ranks his generation on the top level of the Greek pantheon. Zeus is accompanied by the appellation *Dyaus pitar-Zeus pater* from Sanskrit translated to ‘heavenly Father’ <sup>(3)</sup>. The same situation is met in Roman mythology, where Jupiter has the appellation *Iovis pater-Deus pater*, symbolizing absolute power over men and gods as ‘heavenly Father’ <sup>(4)</sup>. Like Zeus, Jupiter and Perun, he is described

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<sup>(1)</sup> Sorin Paliga 2008, 29.

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<sup>(2)</sup> Victor Kernbach 1996, 68.

<sup>(3)</sup> *Idem* 1983, 776.

<sup>(4)</sup> *Idem* 1996, 317.

as the god of thunder <sup>(1)</sup>, lightning and eternal fire (*Ignis aeternus*), showing their absolute power over men and gods alike. Perun was depicted as a man with an imposing stature, with hair as silver (the silver head) and a golden mustache <sup>(2)</sup>, also berring on himself a hammer, a war axe and a bow, which drew arrows made of lightning. The same vengeful representation characterizes Zeus <sup>(3)</sup>. In *Titanomahia*, Zeus descends from Olympus and begins to throw lightning accompanied by thunder against the Titans and Giants <sup>(4)</sup>. He has the nickname *Keraunos* (named after the arcadian word for lightning) <sup>(5)</sup>. In Hesiod's *Theogony*, Zeus is introduced as handsome, strong and sturdy <sup>(6)</sup>, just like Perun. Jupiter has the nickname *Fulgur* which is known as 'lightning master' or *Summanus* 'nocturnal lightning source'.<sup>7</sup> Perun is known as 'the one who brings the rain' or 'the one who brings the clouds', essential for natural fertilization <sup>(8)</sup>. The same attribute is given to Zeus, 'the bringer of clouds' in Hesiod's *Theogony* <sup>(9)</sup>. In Roman mythology, Jupiter's nickname is *Elicius* which means 'rain producer' or Vernus 'the spring rain god' <sup>(10)</sup>. Any covenant of the people or any form of oath which was done in the name of Perun <sup>(11)</sup>, just as in Greek mythology, where Homer tells us in the *Iliad* that the vows were made in the name of Zeus <sup>(12)</sup>.

Human sacrifices are in both parties. In Nestor's Chronicle we learn that Vladimir, Prince of the Kievan Rus, after raising more pagan idols in Kiev offered humans as sacrifice to the gods. Nestor tells us that the Russians even sacrificed their own children <sup>(13)</sup>. Testimonies about human sacrifices among the ancient Greeks are in the works of Xenophon *Anabasis* (vol.VI) that, according to prophetic oracle of Delfii, two people were slaughtered on the altar in honor of Zeus <sup>(14)</sup>. Thursday was considered dedicated to Perun. And, there's

Perun's day celebrated on 21 June <sup>(15)</sup>. In the case of Jupiter, under the appellation of *Summanus*, has a ceremony dedicated on June 20 in his temple <sup>(16)</sup>. After Perun's victory against the enemy (probably Veles) the waters of the world are set free and rain starts pouring. In Greek mythology, Zeus has the *Eleutherios* epithet, which would translate as 'liberator' <sup>(17)</sup> that took the sky to himself, giving the waters to his brother Poseidon and the earth to Hades. Among the Slavonic chronicles we find that the oak is Perun's holy tree, which is similar to the Greek mythology, where the choice location of a temple to Zeus was conditioned by an oak, which is said to have the nest of a black dove <sup>(18)</sup>.

That the oak was considered the sacred tree of Zeus we find out from Athenaeus in the work *Deipnosophists* (book XI), where a certain Lykaïos, priest of Zeus, is dedicating a sacrifice to the god, using an oak <sup>(19)</sup>. Procopius of Caesarea tells us that the Russians, reaching Constantinople, on the island of St. George, have worshiped an enormous oak to which they offered sacrifices. In Ukraine, in Zaporozhja (Запоріжжя), an oak tree is photographed being 6 m wide and a few centuries old. Researchers support the idea that it is a sacred oak. An old tradition says that once with the first spring thunder one must lean back on an oak to prevent back pains. The ox is Perun's sacred animal, being used to plough fields by the ancient Slavs.

In the late sixth century Byzantine Procopius of Caesarea in his work, *The fights with the Goths*, wrote about the Slavs, wrote <sup>(20)</sup>: 'They believe that only the god himself, the creator of lightning, is lord of all and they bring oxen to sacrifice ...'.

In Greek mythology, *Bouphônia* 'the killing of the bull' is a ritual of supreme sacrifice. During the annual celebration *Bouphônia* an ox was sacrificed, which was then stuffed and yoked to a plow. The priest fled, and the knife was thrown into the sea <sup>(21)</sup>. This ritual took place on the Acropolis, at the shrine of *Zeus Polieus* <sup>(22)</sup>. It is known that cattle were the equivalent of wealth in archaic societies such as

<sup>(1)</sup> Tamara Kondratieva 2000, 34.

<sup>(2)</sup> *Cronica lui Nestor* 1935, 80.

<sup>(3)</sup> Roger. D. Woodard, 89.

<sup>(4)</sup> Victor Kernbach 1996, 275.

<sup>(5)</sup> *Idem* 1983, 777.

<sup>(6)</sup> N. A. Kun 1964, 10.

<sup>(7)</sup> Victor Kernbach 1983, 317.

<sup>(8)</sup> Ilie Danilov 2007, 185-186.

<sup>(9)</sup> Victor Kernbach 1983, 276.

<sup>(10)</sup> *Ibidem* 317.

<sup>(11)</sup> *Cronica lui Nestor* 1935, 50.

<sup>(12)</sup> David G. Rice, John E. Stambaugh 2009, 85.

<sup>(13)</sup> *Cronica lui Nestor* 1935, 80.

<sup>(14)</sup> David G. Rice, John E. Stambaugh 2009, 84.

<sup>(15)</sup> Gavrilov, D.A., Nagovitsyn A.E., 2002, 94.

<sup>(16)</sup> Zoe Petre, Alexandra Lițu, Cătălin Pavel (eds.) 2001, 248.

<sup>(17)</sup> N. A. Kun 1964, 13.

<sup>(18)</sup> Zoe Petre *et alii* (eds.) 2001, 375.

<sup>(19)</sup> David G. Rice, John E. Stambaugh 2009, 101-102.

<sup>(20)</sup> Eugenio R. Luján 105-106

<sup>(21)</sup> Zoe Petre *et alii* (eds.) 2001, 94.

<sup>(22)</sup> *Ibidem* 374.

the Indo-Europeans. It is said that the man who died struck by lightning, was considered fortunate, being called to heaven by the god Perun, who would forgive all of his mortal sins. This can also be found in Greek mythology, where according to a divine punishment, Semele is struck with lightning by Zeus <sup>(1)</sup>. After the Christianization of the Slavs, the cult of Perun was associated with that of the Holy Prophet Ilie, the one who 'Rode madly with a chariot of fire through the sky' and punished his enemies with lightning <sup>(2)</sup>. In Roman mythology, Jupiter descends from the Capitol in a chariot drawn by four horses <sup>(3)</sup>.

The next god as importance in Slavic mythology is Veles (Велес, Weles in Polish), who was also called Volos (Волосъ) <sup>(4)</sup>. To better understand the domestic character of God we must remove the root skot which means 'domestic animals' or 'cattle', especially in its negative meaning. With the migration of Indo-Europeans, the word 'skoy' was synonymous with wealth and abundance, being very well represented in Rig Veda. By the Middle Ages, the Russians have the word 'skot' meaning 'home' but also 'wealth', 'fortune' or 'money'. For the Slavs, he was the god who brings wealth and prosperity <sup>(5)</sup>, considered 'the god of herds' <sup>(6)</sup> and animals <sup>(7)</sup>. Veles is also the god protector of farmers, people were worshipping him to gain an increase in farm yields <sup>(8)</sup>. In Greek mythology, Hermes the Arcadian appears as a pastoral god, protector of flocks and herds <sup>(9)</sup>. Also Hermes brings luck to merchants dividing money and wealth among people.<sup>10</sup> Mercury is also the patron of merchants in Roman mythology <sup>(11)</sup>.

A.N.Veselovskii believes that the name of Veles is related to the ancient Slavic cult of the dead, that of the deceased soul. He does an etimological parallel between Slavs and Baltic tribes by the Lithuanian term 'welis: which means 'dead' or 'welci' which would mean 'dead souls'. A Lithuanian version of Veles is Velinas, which is found in the Baltic culture as the creator of reptiles, black birds (raven, crow)

and wolves, just as Odin, where he is surrounded by fighters' souls' einherjar. The link between birds and wolves is primordial, symbolizing death and liaising between the two worlds: the earthly and after death. The wolf symbolizes the struggle and courage and the raven symbolizes wisdom. A celebration of the dead in Lithuanian mythology is called Velia. Velos word (plural Velia 'feast of the dead') derives from the Vails 'dead souls'. The divinity named Veliona is invited to take part in the 'dead feast' (alms) from an old Lithuanian ritual. If we were to admit that Veliona appears as a goddess in Lithuanian mythology, closely linked to that of the Slavs, this theory could be correct <sup>(12)</sup>. Veles appears to us as a god of water, with a htonic character dealing with scams, being the bitter enemy of Perun (see Loki and Thor) but also as a wizard. Some Russian historians studying ancient Slavic mythology believe that the universal role of Veles is the 'bond' between the world of the living and the world of the dead, with a role of guiding souls <sup>(13)</sup>. In ancient Greek world, Hermes was the messenger of the gods and his role was to guide the souls of men who had to reach the underground kingdom of Hades <sup>(14)</sup>. Mercury of the Romans was also a guide for the souls of those who arrived in the underground world of Pluto <sup>(15)</sup>.

Before Vladimir cristianized the Russian people, the seven statues of the primordial gods of Eastern Slavs mythology, were found in large urban centers of the Kievan Rus', especially in Kiev. Interestingly, the statue of Veles is one of the seven who are not on the sacred hill of Kiev, but somewhere in the plain, close to the market. From here was concluded that Veles was also a patron of trade, protector of merchants <sup>(16)</sup>. The Greek's, Hermes also appears as a protector of trade and traders worldwide <sup>(17)</sup>. In Roman mythology, Mercury is presented as the god of commerce, patron of merchants and thieves. Veles was considered the 'god of poetry' as an attribute for the value of its intellectual explanation. Hermes was considered the 'patron of writing' and had a holiday dedicated to him: *Hermania*, giving him an intellectual tone <sup>(18)</sup>.

Hors God (Chors, in the Iranian Scythians Khursun language) represents the Sun <sup>(19)</sup>. His

<sup>(1)</sup> *Ibidem* 138.

<sup>(2)</sup> B.A. Rybakov 1981, 272

<sup>(3)</sup> Sir James George Frazer 1922, 152.

<sup>(4)</sup> Sorin Paliga, Eugen S.Teodor 2009, 219.

<sup>(5)</sup> Ilie Danilov 2007, 251.

<sup>(6)</sup> *Cronica lui Nestor* 1935, 50.

<sup>(7)</sup> *Ibidem* 77.

<sup>(8)</sup> Ilie Danilov 2007, 253.

<sup>(9)</sup> Victor Kernbach 1983, 264.

<sup>(10)</sup> N. A. Kun 1964, 45.

<sup>(11)</sup> Zoe Petre *et alii* (eds.) 2001, 252.

<sup>(12)</sup> Algirdas Julien Greimas 1997, 57-58

<sup>(13)</sup> Ilie Danilov 2007, 252.

<sup>(14)</sup> Victor Kernbach 1983, 265.

<sup>(15)</sup> Zoe Petre *et alii* (eds.) 2001, 253.

<sup>(16)</sup> Victor Kernbach 1983, 729.

<sup>(17)</sup> *Ibidem* 205.

<sup>(18)</sup> *Ibidem* 265.

<sup>(19)</sup> Ilie Danilov 2007, 106.

name is recorded in the Chronicle of Nestor. Meaning of the word is 'moving', 'respect', 'ongoing'. Iranian xorsed means 'sun', hence the name of a Persian dynast Khores<sup>(1)</sup> which has the same meaning 'sun' <sup>(2)</sup>. Hors appears as a young beautiful, with golden hair, curled <sup>(3)</sup>. The name can mean god and 'shine' in Persian *xurset* 'sun shining' or 'grandeur' and can be a divine model to follow for any pre-Christian Slavic world dynast. Hors was the god of sunlight, the yellow solar disk.<sup>4</sup> Available sunlight and the name of god are played by many words *horoshii* (good), *pohoroshet* '(to improve)', *prihoroshivatisya* (to arrange, to adorn, dress style), and *horovod* (dance), *horom* (in chorus). In many nations, *cuvânul horo* means 'gold record', 'circle' or ritual dances, urano-solar nature. Hence the name in a circle dance called the *hora*. Even the town of Korsun wear Horsun last name in honor of the god of sunlight. It is possible that region Kherson Herson, (Херсон) in Ukraine today, bear the name of god.

In Greek mythology, Apollo is the representative of generation seconds Olympians appears as a god of sunlight, which is assigned the symbol of the purity of sunlight, Phoibos.<sup>5</sup> By the description of Apollo 'the golden haired' we understand the divine emanation or sunlight.<sup>6</sup> The protective character of the god confirms that Apolon is a deity positive to help people in need. After killing the dragon Python, Apollo buried the corpse of the monster in the place that would be built later famous oracle at Delphi, where people were prophesied the wishes of Zeus, father of Apollo <sup>(7)</sup>. It is said that the god Hors is defeated by the Black God, but he revives, being worshiped by the ancient Slavs as a god of healing, survival, triumph against diseases and weakness, considered a 'master herbs.' So the god is presented as a wise medicine man. Of Apollon we learn that one of her states is Apollo Medicus <sup>(8)</sup>, the physician.

Dažbog (Dazhbog, Dazbog, Dazhdbog, Dabog, Dajbog, Dadzboğ, Dadžboğ) is another important god, worshiped by the time of Prince Vladimir ruler of the Kievan Rus <sup>(9)</sup>. Dažbog

appears under the name of Radegast in the case of the Baltic Slavs. He is a solar god <sup>(10)</sup> representing fertility, male power <sup>(11)</sup> and is considered the ancestor of the slavs. This is confirmed by the apostle of Pskov, in the XIV century. As a common element, the Greek Helios, we have solar deity status <sup>(12)</sup>. Helios appears as a solar, pre-Olympian god, having an image of a young beautiful and powerful symbol of fertility <sup>(13)</sup>. The slavs believed Dažbog ran across the sky in a war chariot drawn by four beautiful white horses with golden wings. Sunlight came from the solar fire shield, which Dažbog always bears with him. At night, Dažbog wanders the sky from East to West illuminating the earth with his divine glory. Twice a day, morning and evening, he crosses the great ocean with a boat pulled by some geese, wild ducks and swans. Therefore the old Slavs gave a special power to charms in the shape of a duck with horse head. They believed that Dažbog (Sun) will help them wherever they are in the Old World or the Dark World. In the times of pagan Russia, killing a Swan was forbidden on the grounds that it is a sacred animal. In Greek mythology, Helios crosses the sky daily in a chariot drawn by four horses: Pyroeis, Eous, Aethon and Phlegon <sup>(14)</sup>. Of Apollon, we learn that he traveled to Delphi and Hyperborea in his chariot drawn by snow white swans <sup>(15)</sup>. Vladimir Toporov believes that the Khors (Khorsun) epithet is an Iranian version and that Dažbog is the Slavic or Slavicized version. Dažbog can be compared by some people with Apollo, representing the power of the fruits and solar heat. Russian historian Boris Ryabakov believes that Hors is the god of the sun and that Dažbog would only be the solar power of Hors.

Stribog (Stribozh, Strzybog, Стрибор) is the god and also the spirit of wind, storm <sup>(16)</sup>, air, ice, cold and the sky, having a divine, Uranian character. After the old Slavic tradition, he would be the 'father of the eight wind directions.' He is linking the Sky (Realm of the Gods) and the Earth (Land of Men) and his own destiny defines the link between the two worlds. Some historians believe that the origin of Stribog's name is related to the old Slavic word 'strga' meaning to scatter 'or' stretch '. The

<sup>(1)</sup> The old Persian name of the latin version Cyrus was Kūruš-Khores.

<sup>(2)</sup> B.A. Rybakov 1981, 280-281.

<sup>(3)</sup> Ilie Danilov 2007, 106.

<sup>(4)</sup> Victor Kernbach 1983, 275.

<sup>(5)</sup> *Ibidem* 61

<sup>(6)</sup> N. A. Kun 1964, 27.

<sup>(7)</sup> *Ibidem* 29.

<sup>(8)</sup> Victor Kernbach 1996, 242.

<sup>(9)</sup> Anca Irina Ionescu 2000, 92.

<sup>(10)</sup> Sorin Paliga, Eugen S.Teodor 2009, 220.

<sup>(11)</sup> Anca Irina Ionescu 2000, 93.

<sup>(12)</sup> Zoe Petre *et alii* (eds.) 2001, 193.

<sup>(13)</sup> Victor Kernbach 1983, 258.

<sup>(14)</sup> Bernard Evslin, Ned Hoopes 1966, 71.

<sup>(15)</sup> N. A. Kun 1964, 31.

<sup>(16)</sup> Victor Kernbach 1983, 656.

Explanatory Dictionary of the Live Great Russian Language by Vladimir Dal, we find the words *Stryj* (strâi) – ‘paternal uncle’ and *Stryt* ‘(Strât)’ where *stryvat* means ‘to stretch’, ‘to destroy’. Moreover, there are other words that have the same root with the word *stribog* – *stremlitelnyi* (fast), *bystryi* (fast), *strela* (arrow), *prostranstvo* (transparency) and *strah* (fear). The word can also be explained by *Strîi-Bog* or *Starîi-Bog* (God of the Old); also, the old Russian radical *Strega* meaning ‘older’ <sup>(1)</sup>. After the old Slavic legend, the wind has several grandchildren and sons, represented in the form of lower winds <sup>(2)</sup>:

- Posvist (higher wind, the storm god),
- Podoga (hot wind, light, god good season),
- Podaga (hot wind, alluring, living in deserts, in the South)
- West-wind (a bit dry at times ‘angry’, but it’s mostly gentle)
- Siverko (North wind, bears from the Arctic cold, very rough),
- East-wind (is of a sudden, mysterious and evil).

We establish a connection between these cardinal winds and their corresponding deities of Greek mythology. So titanida Eos (Aurora in Roman mythology), wife of the titan Astraios (father winds) gave birth to the four winds (Ανεμοι-Anemoi):

- Notos (south wind, Auster at Romans)
- Zephir (the West Wind, the Roman Favonius)
- Boreas (north wind, the Romans Aquilo)
- Eurus (east wind, the Romans Vulturus).

Mokoš (Мокошь, Mokoş) is the only female deity of primordial gods of the seven series of the eastern Slavs. In the Slavic pantheon in the time of Vladimir she appears as the only goddess <sup>(3)</sup>. The goddess is worshiped for good harvests, and is considered the protector of the household, bringing harmony between family members, through love, wisdom and temperance establishing a balance essential for a happy home. In the Greek mythology, Hera (Juno to the Romans), under the appellation *Telea*, fulfills marriage and virginity prior to legitimate marriage, wearing at Hermione the epiclesa *Parthenos* (Virgin) <sup>(4)</sup>. In Roman mythology, Jupiter’s wife is Juno also named Queen of Heaven (Regina Ivno), protector of

women, patron goddess of wives and mothers (Juno Matrona) <sup>(5)</sup>.

Mokoş is ‘the goddess who spins wool’ often represented with anthropomorphic deformities (large head and long arms) <sup>(6)</sup>. She protects, respects and legislates women’s work, especially handmade objects. In Olympia, where the temple of Zeus and Hera is situated, once every four years, with the large opening celebrations dedicated to Zeus, Hera celebrates women in response to the great celebration of the Olympics which were exclusively male. She receives a cow as a sacrifice and her statue is dressed with a new peplos woven by 14 married women <sup>(7)</sup>. Mokoş is ‘the one who toil fate’ or ‘the one who knotted fate’, meaning she is a goddess of fate and destiny <sup>(8)</sup>. Among the Greeks, Hera also has the power to bind and unbind marriages <sup>(9)</sup>.

Svarog (Сварог, Polish Swaróg) is the god of fire <sup>(10)</sup>, a solar deity, which is represented by heavenly light (Sun Eternal) <sup>(11)</sup>, in a cyclic form, the symbol of the Slavonic swastika, known as Коловрат (Kolovrat). It seems that the God had a specific fire-worshipping cult, representing a spirit as eternal fire <sup>(12)</sup>. Fire symbolizes eternal flame immortal spirit with a purifying. Svarog represents the hearth fire people <sup>(13)</sup> who help prepare food, vital for human existence and material-fire in the furnace where weapons and tools are manufactured <sup>(14)</sup>. This is similar to the Greek Hephaestus or Vulcan of the Romans. In Greek mythology, Hephaestus is called ‘blacksmith’, the absolute symbol of metallurgy <sup>(15)</sup>. In his honor, the island of Lemnos, is dedicated to this god, once a year all fires were extinguished without being lit during sacrifices. Then, a ship brought ‘the new fire’ from the island Pelosi to ignite the fire in the hearths and furnaces <sup>(16)</sup>. In Roman mythology, Vulcan is also called *Mulciber* (blacksmith of the gods) <sup>(17)</sup>.

Another female deity in Slavic mythology is Lada. She appears as a goddess of love and

<sup>(5)</sup> Florence Noiville 2006, 9.

<sup>(6)</sup> Anca Irina Ionescu 2000, 100.

<sup>(7)</sup> Zoe Petre *et alii* (eds.) 2001, 196.

<sup>(8)</sup> Sorin Paliga, Eugen S.Teodor 2009, 221.

<sup>(9)</sup> Zoe Petre *et alii* (eds.) 2001, 196.

<sup>(10)</sup> Sorin Paliga, Eugen S.Teodor 2009, 222.

<sup>(11)</sup> Victor Kernbach 1983, 659.

<sup>(12)</sup> Anca Irina Ionescu 2000, 104.

<sup>(13)</sup> Ilie Danilov 2007, 227.

<sup>(14)</sup> Anca Irina Ionescu 2000, 105.

<sup>(15)</sup> Victor Kernbach 1983, 222.

<sup>(16)</sup> *Ibidem* 223.

<sup>(17)</sup> Zoe Petre *et alii* (eds.) 2001, 366.

<sup>(1)</sup> Ilie Danilov 2007, 224.

<sup>(2)</sup> *Ibidem* 225.

<sup>(3)</sup> Ilie Danilov 2007, 16.

<sup>(4)</sup> Zoe Petre *et alii* 2001, 195.



summer, harvests, protector of lovers, couples, marriage and families, women and children. The goddess is depicted as a woman in the prime of life, full-bodied, mature symbol of motherhood. As etymology, *LAD* in Czech means 'harmony', 'understanding', 'order'. *Ladny* means 'graceful', 'cute' *LAD* in Polish means 'order', 'Polity' *ladny* 'beautiful', 'cute' <sup>(1)</sup>. In Russian folk songs, pre-Christian Slavic mythology lyrical relics, the name of the goddess of love, marriage and marital harmony, became a common noun to mean 'close', 'love' is used as a diminutive epithet for *jena* 'wife', 'woman'. *Lado* its male counterpart means 'devoted spouse' <sup>(2)</sup>. The Greek Aphrodite appears as a goddess of beauty, love, attraction and sexuality <sup>(3)</sup>. As Pandemos, Aphrodite is the guarantee of public tasks and protector of peaceful relations between citizens <sup>(4)</sup>. She planted love in the hearts of all gods and men. She is represented as a tall woman, slender, with delicate features, with a wave of golden hair, placed as crown on her glamorous head. The goddess is the embodiment of divine beauty and eternal youth <sup>(5)</sup>. Aphrodite gives happiness to those who serve with faith. A certain Pygmalion brings to the goddess an offering of a white heifer with horns covered with gold, asking Aphrodite to give him a beautiful wife as the statue made by him <sup>(6)</sup>. Among the Romans, Venus is the goddess of vegetation and fertility, with the same attributes as Aphrodite <sup>(7)</sup>.

*Iarilo* (Ярило, Јарило; *Jaryło* Polish, Croatian: *Jura*, *Juraj*, Serbian: Ђорђе 'George') is the god of light and spring storms, which embodies the fertilizing power of *Perun*. It is the symbol of spring heat, being represented as a young impetuous like the storms of spring, dominated by his erotic passions. He roams the sky riding a white horse, wearing a white robe. The head has a braided wreath of spring flowers. Etymologically, the radical *iar* in the Slavic languages, means 'male power', 'virility' <sup>(8)</sup>. His counterpart in Greek mythology, *Eros* (*Cupido* in Roman mythology), personifies a desire born of chaos, symbolizing maddening love and carnal pleasures <sup>(9)</sup>. The son of Aphrodite, he is the messenger of his mother.

*Eros* appears as a child frisky, cheerful, cunning but cruel sometimes. He flies on his golden wings, sending arrows bearing joy and happiness <sup>(10)</sup>.

### Conslusions

I would like to say that in this paper I tried to show as much as the documents I have allowed me to present common elements between the pre-Christian Slavic pantheon's main deities and their correspondents in the Greco-Roman mythology. You can see the common elements in the three Indo-European belief systems: Slavic, Greek and Roman. On a religious level, we can say that Slavs had a similar mythological Greek or Roman polytheism because of the lack of information the only accurate sources are the medieval chronicles, which in turn contain data either reduced or altered because the information is influenced by the Christian propaganda used by the authors. One should not confuse some mythological or religious system, with some popular traditions, even if these traditions can be a set of popular beliefs. Restoring a religious pantheon based on traditions and popular sources may have a different result from the same pantheon reconstruction based on historical sources, whether using chronicles or any other literary documents. But we admit that on the popular level, some pagan religious traditions and customs have survived. At present, we can not build a Slavic pantheon in Greek and Roman pantheon model, but rather a 'barbaric' one, similar to the Scandinavian, Baltic and Celtic. This is possible due to the common Indo-European elements that define a unique character and unity of religions found among the Aryan peoples. Due to a relatively lower level of development of the Nordic Europeans, the Greeks and Romans of the south, and because of their cruel Christianization campaigns, data on the 'mythology' of the Slavic, Scandinavian, Baltic and Celtic, peoples is reduced. It is important to note that all Nordic peoples (Germanic, Celtic, Baltic, Prussian, Slavs and Thracians) had a developmental focus of popular culture in a, rural, rustic 'barbaric' style to developing what the Greco-Roman produced on a literary, architectural, social development axis where the engine was represented by the cities. This can be demonstrated by several theories. One of them is the fact that the Slavs, like the Nordic peoples, drank mead an alcoholic drink made from

<sup>(1)</sup> Ilie Danilov 2007, 137.

<sup>(2)</sup> *Ibidem* 138.

<sup>(3)</sup> Zoe Petre *et alii* (eds.) 2001, 33.

<sup>(4)</sup> *Ibidem* 36.

<sup>(5)</sup> N. A. Kun 1964, 51.

<sup>(6)</sup> *Ibidem*, 54.

<sup>(7)</sup> Victor Kernbach 1983, 730.

<sup>(8)</sup> Ilie Danilov 2007, 110.

<sup>(9)</sup> Victor Kernbach 1983, 197.

<sup>(10)</sup> N. A. Kun 1964, 59.

fermented honey and called it medovukha. Another theory is the belief in a supreme god of the Slavs who owns sky and controls lightning (Perun). This is present in almost all Indo-European beliefs. The Germans have it on Thor and Donar, the Celts and Gauls have Taranis or Ambisagrus, Loucetios, in the Balkan the Thracians have Zibelthiurdos, in Dacia – Gebeleizis, in Albania – Perëndi, Perkūnas in the case of the Lithuanians, Latvians have Pērkons, Prussians have Perkūns, the Hittites have Teshub, the Romans have Jupiter and the Greeks have Zeus. In the Greco-Roman, Indo-European character of Zeus/Jupiter was outlined in an archaic time, long before the birth of ‘civilization’ being heavily influenced by the ‘barbarian’ neighbors.

Another key feature of the Indo-European religion is the policefalia of some deities. The existence of policefalia in Slavic religion, where they have the Triglav and Svantevit confirms that the Slavs had an Indo-European religion. Like the god Svantevit, whose idol was represented with four heads suggesting the four cardinal points and could read the future, so was the god Janus in the Roman mythology, and Typhon and Hecate in the Greek one, Brahma in Hinduism, or the giant Þrúðgelmir in the Scandinavian mythology. Human sacrifice is another common feature of Indo-Europeans. The Slavs, along with the deceased, sacrificed his wife if he was a peasant or a slave if he was a noble.

The ancient Slavic language was founded on a Balto-Slavic background with elements from western Iran, Thracian-Dacian and German. For example, the South Slavs use archaic Romanian words of Thracian origin. This pattern of linguistic interferences is applied even in the religious plan. The hypothesis of work mentioned can help to distinguish the local Slavic deities from the foreign ones. As an explanation, we can say that the name and significance of local deities of the Slavs can be ‘translated’ through the usual terms of the modern Slavic languages.

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# Examining the Status of the Noble Women in 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> Century Banat

**Ligia BOLDEA**

PhD, Researcher, Muzeul Banatului Montan, Reșița  
E-mail: ligiaboldea@yahoo.com

**Abstract.** Examining the image of the noble woman in Banat in the Middle Ages may appear from the very beginning as a failed attempt, as the scarcity of the references and the dominantly patrimonial subject that excluded the woman's presence from the beginning, all confine such a historiographic approach to serious limits. We aim however to show to what extent we could render the woman's status in medieval Banat, starting from a concrete example of a noble family history in the 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> c. town of Caransebeș, the family of Simon of Caransebeș. The medieval female imagery in Banat in the period we aim to introspect is grounded exclusively on the documents of the time, the only ones that can bring to light a possible unsubstantial subject in the absence of more, different, reference sources. We focused the research on the 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> centuries for a very good reason: after a long 'silence' in the office documents of the previous centuries, the presence of the noble woman in Banat begins to appear in documents of a probative value, if not in a dramatic manner at least in one enough to sketch some feminine portraits that can suggest some evolutionary characters we might consider to be extrapolated to the level of the social universe of that time. It is a vivid image of a component of the Romanian society in Banat in the late Middle Ages period, a case study that can offer more facets to be analyzed by the historiographic research; these may lead to define an interesting typology that has to be integrated to the social elites of Banat picture.

**Key words:** Medieval Banat, noble elites, ownership structures, woman's image, inheritance rights

## Some General Reference Points

Examining the image of the noble woman in Banat in the Middle Ages may appear from the very beginning as a failed attempt, as the scarcity of the references and the dominantly patrimonial subject that excluded the woman's presence from the beginning, all confine such a historiographic approach to serious limits. The feminine presence – especially the individualized one – is almost entirely absent in the 14<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup> century documents; the main cases refer to somebody's wife or widow, daughter or sister. During the Middle Ages, the noble woman's existence is in fact intrinsically connected to her family and she never appears out of the familial parental nucleus or of that one she enters through a matrimonial alliance.

In other words, marriage played a social role of a distinct importance within the nobles' life, and that was the same for any of the social structures. Through the matrimonial institution and the rules that determined the alliances, the medieval society managed its future, seeking to perpetuate itself through the preservation of the existing structures. The marriage rituals were

thus constituted to regulate a good allotment of women in the men's milieu, to discipline the male contest around them in order to make official and socialise the procreation. By designating the fathers, those rituals added a new filiation to the maternal one – the only certain one. Those regalements gave the women's children, to the same extent, the statute of inheritors and inheritress with ancestors, name and several rights (Duby 1997, 20).

A serious confinement in sketching the feminine profile in the period we focus on is generated by the fact that the children's parentage was, as a rule, documented only by the recording of the father's name; only in the case of children from different marriages, the same mother descent (*frateres uterinus*) was mentioned, but in general she was almost never named. For the daily activities, housekeeping or managing the family goods and inter-familial relations the reference sources are by far the most laconic. It is impossible to restore the place and role the noble woman had in medieval Banat, on the basis of sure detailed elements. We can certainly use the analogies within the general medieval area or the neighbor areas that

could have been better represented in documents, but the truth is that there are only few concrete elements to ground such an interpretation. The woman's position and role in Banat medieval society were, without doubt, much more complex, and all the above appreciations belong to our perception, not to the real situation. Unfortunately we do not possess today those material references to certify this assertion. In the 14<sup>th</sup>–15<sup>th</sup> century Banat, the patrimonial system was re-set on the new Angevin law in fact, that associated the inheritance rights to the written acts (Pleșia 1987, 197; Pop 1991, 22; Drăgan 2000, 125; Feneșan 2007, 15-16). But those acts were always emitted in favor of male owners and of their male descendants. Consequently, the woman's presence had no chance to be mentioned in those documents; as the latter represented the main part of the written sources, the result was a dense semidarkness surrounding the image of the noble woman.

We may mention in the same time that women were not mentioned in the land transactions or inheritance on the primary position, had no legal identity, and, so much the less, they did not practice one of the main noble tasks: the military service. In fact, one of the reasons to exclude women from the right of inheritance was couched as following: 'women and girls don't become inured and cannot serve with arms under color and fight against the enemies (*mulieras autem et puellae armis militare cum hostibusque decertare non solent neque possunt*)' (*apud* Pascu 1986, 19). Economic reasons can also be mentioned here, as the general interest was in ownership units' production and ability to serve the state authorities. The nobles' estates were protected too from an excessive division by promoting the general rule of male principle relating to succession; especially that the nobles from the Hungarian kingdom did not know the primogeniture so that all the inheritors had equal rights, in contrasts with the Western feudal law (Pop 1997, 51). In spite of its restrictive character, that succession basic rule did not entirely neglect the girls' inheritance rights, the so-named *quarta puellaris* (*Tripartitum* P. I., tit. 88, 89, 90; *Istoria dreptului românesc* 1980, 530). According to that rule, the excluded from the real estate inheritance girls were entitled to ¼ of the inheritance value in money by being dowered by their parents or by their brothers after the parents' death. What is interesting is that often they were given parts of the estate for dowry, by law trespassing, probably like a

pledge until the real inheritors could pay the full amount of money. But it seems that the Romanian law in practice at that time gave the inheritors and inheritress' equal inheritance rights relating to the whole parental ownership. Therefore, they might assert that the Romanian women's inheritance rights followed the Romanian law, in competition with the noble rights (Drăgan 2000, 205-206).

Since the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century and during the 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> century we may notice in the existing documents a certain shift concerning the woman's presence in society and, by that, in the documents. First of all, the need to preserve the real estate within the family in the case of *defectum seminis* determined the Hungarian royalty to admit a concept like *praefectio* at the level of noble elites, through which the inheritance rights were transferred to daughters; in order to equally and legally access the parents' ownership, daughters became men from the legal point of view. Moreover, we might assert that through this inheritance rights transfer to women, the male principle - which dominated the kingdom in terms of a succession rule - was harmonized with the Romanian law in which the female succession was also allowed. Such a procedure was always undertaken with the king's agreement, previously asked by a nobleman. Acts of similar nature seem to have been expanded in Banat as well, a concrete example being the case of the well known family Fiat of Armeniș<sup>(1)</sup> (Țigău 1996, 33; Boldea 2002, 237). The documents went as far as to mention that certain possessions were to be obtained and owned by Banat elite's members with the inheritance right both for male and female descendants; one of the first concrete document in such a case is dated 1458 and certified that the succession right within the noble family of Bizerea of Caransebeș was incumbent both upon sons and daughters<sup>(2)</sup> (Hurmuzaki 1894, II/4, 56; Feneșan 1981, 38). We have not found such a mention in the case of

(<sup>1</sup>) According to the documents after the delicate situation of the family in the first years of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, when one of its members had been accused of homicide and menaced with the right of desherence, his brother redeemed those parts of estate which could have been alienated from the familial patrimony, and asked the king Vladislaus II the right to transfer his possessions both to his male and female descendants.

(<sup>2</sup>) It was about an estate uniting between the two nobles, Nicolae of Bizerea and Iacob of Racovița, in order to protect their possessions from possible alienation in the case of *defectum seminis*.

other families – as the Mâtנים or the Măciș – as they had a rich male descent and probably the women's right of inheritance opening was useless. A better individualization of the female figures is also to be noticed, as they were named and escape therefore from the former semidarkness, and so we might see their true presence within the communities they are living in. They appear in front of the judge bench, fighting for their inheritance rights; also, they were named by their fathers as the main inheritresses; they took part in land transactions too (acquisitions, pledging, and sales); they wrote wills concerning their personal goods (even real estates - some of them - that were bought during their marriage or widowhood); they also protected their minor children against their relatives' trials to eliminate them from the inheritance; they raised objections to vesting of possession; they expressed their religious options (by adhering, for instance, to the tertiary Catholic orders or making donations to abbeys).

#### **Female Noble Portraits – The Women in Simon of Caransebeș's Family**

We aim to show to what extent we could render the woman's status in medieval Banat, starting from a concrete example of a noble family history in the 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> c. town of Caransebeș, the family of Simon of Caransebeș.

It is a case study strictly grounded on the reference data we have examined. We presume that such a case may be extrapolated and enriched according to other sources and examples. A first notice is that we refer to a noble family of Caransebeș, Romanian, in our opinion. That opinion is grounded on the Romanian milieu of the majority that family lived in, on matrimonial alliances exclusively with other Romanian noble families from Banat or Hațeg (Mătneanu, Găman, Domșa or Băcuț), and also on the obstinate reiteration of the same first names, evincing no inclination towards Magyarization, although the Romanian elites from Banat had passed the previous centuries from the Orthodox faith to Catholicism. The family was also representative for the 'new' noble functions that had proliferated in the Eastern Banat since the 15<sup>th</sup> century (Costea 2005, 149-150; Boldea 2010, 82-83; Drăgan 2011, 277); some of its members were attested repeatedly as castellans, mayors, noble judges or jury men of Caransebeș, an almost full range of local dignities. It is an eloquent proof of that family active involvement in the social-economic and political-legal daily activities of the town; it also proves its

privileged statute, its obvious respectability, its scholarship and wealth that were intrinsically supposed by such functions. But on the other hand, according to its 13 ownerships that formed the stable nucleus of its real estate (leaving out of account the temporary or random possessions of some of its members), the nobles Simon of Caransebeș family did not rank among the great estates owners in Banat of Caransebeș and Lugoj, being outrun by other families such as Fiat, Găman-Bizerea, Jojica or Vaida, which possessed through time tens of estates within the county of Severin or outside it.

An interesting page of that family's history was written by the noble ladies Elisabeta and Ana Simon, both of them, the aunt and the niece, being descendants of someone named Nicolae Simon. Their way to set in vantage ground in the family and their marriage to representatives of the known and influent family of the Mătneanu, as well as their way to administrate their own estates make a conclusive example of how the patterns and social coercions concerning women began to relax: the noble woman became more and more visible and active within the economy and social life of her family; such a fact surely brought about a certain movement freedom, almost inexistent in the documents referring to the previous centuries.

An extremely interesting figure in that family was Elisabeta Simon's, Nicolae Simon's daughter and sister of Ioan Simon jr., the last one having repeatedly been a castellan of Caransebeș between 1585 and 1590 (Pesty 1877-1878, I, 322-323). The first mention of her name in the documents is dated the 18<sup>th</sup> of July 1544 (Pesty 1883, 34), the date when, together with her brothers she took part in the acquisition of no less than 13 estates in the district of Caransebeș; those possessions made the real estate basis of his family. What calls our attention to her presence within that real estate transaction is the fact that Elisabeta was named in the context as a young girl (*puella*) <sup>(1)</sup> unlike her brothers who certainly were adults at the time. Her presence in that real estate transaction awakens in fact a double interest: firstly, we speak about a woman, and especially about one

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<sup>(1)</sup> According to the civil law on the noble woman's right (*jus feminem*), at that time the legitimate age of a woman was of 12 years, when she could decide on certain juridical actions. For the maturity or the perfect age (*aetas perfecta*) the age of 16 was taken into consideration, the moment the woman got thorough rights (*Tripartitum*, P I, tit. 111)

who had not come of age (we may estimate her age at that moment as that of 12-16); secondly, both her brothers and cousins accepted her as an equal part within the transaction; it is a fact that supports the opinion that women in the Simon family were the object of a special consideration, an almost equal one to that of the family male part, and that opinion is certified by supplementary data; it is a fact less explicitly present in the time references, and so we presume it to be generated by some personal affinities. We dare making such an appreciation in defiance of the fact that cold, technical language of the documents lets out almost none of the testimonies on these figures' affective and emotional character. Given her family position in the town of Caransebeș<sup>(1)</sup>, Elisabeta Simon made an extremely good match to one of the important representatives of the town nobility, Francisc Mâtneanu, who is attested between 1548 and 1585 (Pesty 1883, 41, 115). He was the best situated member of Mâtneanu family in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, as having been for many years the castellan of Caransebeș (1561-1563 and 1571-1572) (Pesty 1877-1878, III, 298; Pesty 1883, 90); it was a difficult time of the power centers re-setting in that area after the virulent conflicts between Habsburgs and the Ottomans from the middle of the century and the town of Caransebeș and the town of Lugoj option for the Ottoman suzerainty within the Principality of Transylvania. Unfortunately, their marriage did not have inheritors or inheritresses, so in 1585, after Francisc Mâtneanu's death the question of his relatives' successional rights was open in front of the local authorities, concerning his share of the real estate of the Mâtneanus.

The widowhood was an unhappy situation for any woman of that time due to her precarious social, legal and economic status. According to that time law, a widow without children had the right on the whole estate of her husband – if he had not left a will – as long as she remained unmarried (Magina 2011, 286). Probably, the soundness of her marriage, the stateliness of her husband's functions, as well as that one given by her own family's members justified Elisabeta to come into conflict with her husband's relatives concerning his inheritance which was a considerable part of the Mâtneanus' ownership. The litigations series began on the 8<sup>th</sup>

of June 1585 (Pesty 1883, 73), when the members of the family's three branches – Mâtneanu, Fărcaș and Groza-Țeicu – came before the castellans of Caransebeș to ask for their shares of the estates from the villages of Măru, Mâtnic, *Belien*, *Morencz*, Ohaba, Sacu, and Cernota vesting of possession, and also from Măru, Mâtnic, *Belien*, *Morencz*, Ohaba, Sacu and Zgribest predia (county of Severin, district of Caransebeș), all of them having remained after Francisc Mâtneanu's death without descendants. The widow opposed to such a requirement and asked to keep those possessions as long as she bore her husband's name. After only three days, on the 11<sup>th</sup> of June 1585 (Feneșan 1981, 70), the situation got complicated as Baltazar Zagyvai with a princely letter, vesting of possession, came at Morencz to pass their possession in his own name and in the name of his relatives. The document dated the 11<sup>th</sup> of June rounded the previous one, namely that not only the dead Francisc Mâtneanu's possession were in question but also those ones of Mihail Mâtneanu, who probably died at the same time, without descendants. In the second place, the vesting of possession generated two impediments: one belonged to noble Ladislau Bratovan who opposed for Mihail Mâtneanu's shares; the other one was raised by Lupu Mâtneanu (who initially belonged to the common familial interests) in his own name, both for Francisc Mâtneanu' and Mihail Mâtneanu's inheritances. Lupu Mâtneanu was married at that time to Ana Simon, Elisabeta Simon's niece. In accordance with the time usage, the opponent parts that were constituted on that day had to appear after 15 days before the prince and he had to decide on the cause. We have no data on the princely judgement solution concerning the division of the inheritance among the representatives of the family Mâtneanu. It seems that Elisabeta Simon was allowed to keep her ownership on her former husband's possessions until the end of her life (Pesty 1877-1878, II, 4).

Elisabeta Simon's will from the 6<sup>th</sup> of June 1599 – written in the presence of several Romanian nobles from Caransebeș –, is extremely suggestive in what concerns the wealth of a noble woman at that time, and also her right to dispose of her own goods. First of all, it is worth mentioning an aspect: by her will the noble lady disposed also of the goods that had remained from her husband, to an equal extend with the ones she gathered along her life. The main beneficiaries were Lupu Mâtneanu, her niece Ana Simon and the latter's children

(<sup>1</sup>) Her uncle Gheorghe Simon was a *judex primarius* of Caransebeș, as her cousin from father, Ioan Simon senior also was, while her brother, as we have seen, was a castellan of the town.

from the marriage to Lupu Mătniceanu, as well as Ioan Simon's sons (we presume the last one to have been her brother). She bequeathed Lupu Mătniceanu the shares of the estates in the villages of Sacu, Mătnic, *Morencz*, Cernota, Ohaba, Ruginos, Măru and *Zgribest* – that had belonged to Francisc Mătniceanu (in fact, they were parts of the family Mătnic's land possessions that were now directed towards a unique inheritor, the other branches of the family being excluded). He also inherited the glade, the hay fields and the cultivated fields around *Morencz*, which had been probably bought by the will's author, as well as the amount of 6 thalers. Elisabeta Simon proved to be very generous with her own family: she left Ana Simon and her sons the mills in Măru and *Morencz* that had been built at her expense (Pesty 1877-1878, II, 5), half of the kitchen gardens and an amount of money; Gabriel Mătniceanu, Lupu Mătniceanu's son with Ana Simon, was given a silver sword ordered by her former husband; Magdalena Mătniceanu, also Lupu's and Ana's daughter, was given a golden silver goblet and a silver glass; Ioan Simon's sons were given a hay field at Racovița, as well as the cattle, grains and money that would remain after her death. In the same way a certain Francisc Lazăr was also given the lands the will specifies to be his proper share. Francisc Fodor was given a house in Caransebeș near to his own dwelling. We may note that in her way, Elisabeta Simon proved to have been a good manager of her husband's estate, but also of her own, that she increased it along her life and disposed of which by will after her death, with a distinct fondness to her own family to which she would let the main part of her estate.

Another female figure in the family, whose historical portrait may be sketched was Ana Simon, Mihai Simon's daughter and Ioan Simon junior's and Elisabeta Simon's niece. Through marriage she also entered the numerous and influential family of the Mătniceanus, and we may ask if that marriage was not in fact facilitated by the previous marriage of her aunt Elisabeta within the same family. She had several sons and daughters, but only the names of Gabriel, Ioan and Magdalena were recorded in the documents of the time. The documents present her as an active and tenacious woman who did not hesitate to appear repeatedly before the judge bench when she was to protect both the rights from her parental inheritance, and her children's rights as successors of Mătniceanu's estate. From her youth she faced the issue of inheritance when, on the 27<sup>th</sup> of November 1582,

after the death of her father, Mihail Simon, and following a previous understanding between that one and his brother, Ioan Simon junior (the young girl's uncle) she would be given a part of villages Domașnea, Cornea, Cănicea, Cornereva, Bogăltin and Zăguzeni; but Ioan Simon did not do such a thing and kept the goods under his ownership (Feneșan 1981, 65; Costea 2005, 106, 111). It calls our attention the fact that those possessions were not part of the land patrimony of Simon family being joined possessions of the families Vaida, Moise and Fodor, who disputed them for decades (Țigău 2008, 205). We do not know yet how Ana Simon's father got the possession of some parts of those estates. It is certain however that they belonged to his own estate, so he thought to have the right to leave to his daughter that legacy, and his brother Ioan Simon agreed at least as long as Mihail Simon was alive. After Mihail Simon's death the uncle refused to honour the understanding and kept for himself the respective parts of estates he had no right on. Ana Simon's case was brought to court in 1582 and two years later it would be re-brought with Lupu Mătniceanu, her husband's support, a fact that certainly improved the legal argumentation. So, on the 1<sup>st</sup> of May 1584 (Feneșan 1981, 66; Costea 2007, 107), Prince Sigismund Báthory of Somlío asked several noblemen from Caransebeș to look for Ioan Simon junior and admonish him for his refusal to hand over to the plaintiff the parts of the parental inheritance, and asking him either to submit the princely will or to come to the Court in order to clarify the situation. Although we do not know the final decision of that lawsuit, we presume an amiable understanding between Ana Simon and her uncle, as on the 11<sup>th</sup> of March 1590 (Veress 1931, 210-211) the two, together with Elisabeta (Ersilia) Simon and other representatives of Vaida and Jojica families summoned before the judge the nobles Francisc, Petru and Pavel Măcicaș for the estate they had in the county of Hunedoara, but the document does not mention the possessions in question. For being a complex cause, the families of Simon, Vaida and Jojica ascertained it to Ioan Boronkai to whom they agreed, if they succeeded, to yield 1/3 from their share from the gained estates; if not, they would be under no obligation to him.

At the end of the century, we find Ana Simon as the main beneficiary of her aunt Elisabeta Simon's will, together with her husband Lupu Mătniceanu; from her aunt, she personally and her sons would receive several mills at Măru and Morenț, kitchen gardens,



precious objects and money, she and Mihail Fodor's wife being obliged to support the author of the will until the end of her life. Her husband, in his turn, also received a great part of Mătniceanu's estate for which he would repeatedly appear in court the following years, pleading against his collateral relatives (Boldea 2011, 262-264). After Lupu Mătniceanu death, we notice that Ana Simon assumed the charge of preserving the inheritance rights of her sons, Gabriel and Ioan Mătniceanu, and so, on the 21<sup>st</sup> of August 1624 (Pesty 1883, 280), she opposed the princely decision through which the so-called 'Zagyvai parts' of the Mătniceanus' estate had to be attributed to Francisc Groza, called *Farkassi* of Sacu. It seems that Ana Simon's opposition stood no chance at the given moment, those 'Zagyvai parts' remaining in Francisc Groza's ownership. It is the last piece of information on that descendant of Simon family, a representative of the noble women in Caransebeș at the turn of the 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> c. that deserves to be remembered in order to sketch a more veridical picture of the noble woman's role within the late Middle Ages society in Banat.

Another Ana Simon, a paternal cousin of the above mentioned woman, was also among the remarkable representatives of that family. She is mentioned in the documents especially for her marriages, to husbands from noticeable families in Banat of Caransebeș and Lugoj or the county of Hunedoara, a current experience among the noble elites of that time, who were so interested in preserving their privileged status (Rusu 1997, 30). Her first marriage was to Ladislau Găman, a member of the influential family of Bizerea-Găman of Caransebeș with whom she had only two daughters, Margareta and Sara (Țigău 2000, 47), the last one being married at her turn in the same old family of the Măcicășeștis. After her first husband death, she did not hesitate to appear in court on the 30<sup>th</sup> of June 1622 (Feneșan 1981, 150) against her relative, Nicolae Găman who asked her to give him back an amount of 60 forints that her husband had borrowed from him. Never growing shy, Ana Simon put four of Nicolae Găman's serfs on trial, accusing them of acts of violence for which she was entitled to ask as much as the death penalty. Finally, due to some good people's agency, they reached an amiable agreement, the two parts renouncing their charges and claim for compensation. In 1622 Ana Simon became a widow and married Ștefan Lada, a former *judex nobilium* at Totești, district of Hațeg; some years later she became again a

widow at the age of 68 (Pesty 1877-1878, I, 475), and that is the last datum on her.

## Conclusions

The medieval female imagery in Banat in the period we aim to introspect is grounded exclusively on the documents of the time, the only ones that can bring to light a possible unsubstantial subject in the absence of more, different, reference sources. We focused the research on the 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> centuries for a very good reason: after a long 'silence' in the office documents of the previous centuries, the presence of the noble woman in Banat begins to appear in documents of a probative value, if not in a dramatic manner at least in one enough to sketch some feminine portraits that can suggest some evolutionary characters we might consider to be extrapolated to the level of the social universe of that time.

Firstly, based on that particular case of Simon of Caransebeș's family, we can remark that the women in the noble family assembly played a more active and better defined role comparing with other familial nuclei. So, they took part in real estate transactions on equal positions with the family male representatives, they inherited lands – not only the dowry and dowry goods –, were able to write their wills or appear in court for their rights or in front of local or central competent *fora*. It is a vivid image of a component of the Romanian society in Banat from the late Middle Ages, a case study that can offer more facets to be analyzed by the historiographic research; these may lead to define an interesting typology that has to be integrated to the larger picture of Banat social elites. Secondly, the documentary data show doubtlessly that the noble women of the time owned lands, gardens, hay fields, houses, money, serfs, animals, jewels, and precious clothes – possessions that proceeded from the dowry given by a noble father or from their lifelong acquisitions, following their marriages, their sale contracts, or from the pledges they made. There are not few the cases in which the documents stipulate that certain goods were obtained by the noble ladies from their own revenues, and in many cases that they were bought during their widowhood. Such a reality may show that during their marriage the management of the family estate might have belonged to women as well, although the men in the family were more visible in the documents. In fact, all the three noble ladies in the family of Simon of Caransebeș – despite their good matches within the local society that

undoubtedly provided them with a consistent material and moral support – had to face widowhood and fight for their rights and – when the case – for their children's. They proved an enterprising and dynamic nature, that made them able to battle their own way within an exclusively male world, and so they became models for other women of their time. However, in the absence of some pertinent sources, it is hard to evaluate to which extent that model spread within the social milieu of the period.

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# The Influence of Italian Masters toward the Masques of Inigo Jones (17<sup>th</sup> Century)

Mihaela TIVDĂ

PhD Student, University of Bucharest – University Of Architecture and Urbanism ‘Ion Mincu’  
Center of Excellence in Image Studies (C.E.S.I.), Bucharest, Romania,  
E-mail: mihaelativda@yahoo.com

**Abstract.** This study underlines the important influence of the Italian masters toward the work of the English scene designer and architect, Inigo Jones (1573-1652). Being considered a ‘*Vitruvius Britannicus*’ of his time, Jones ‘revolutionized’ the British architecture and theatre during Stuart dynasty thanks to his brilliant mind which absorbed like a sponge all the new artistic theories. Inigo Jones had inexhaustible resources thanks to his creative genius and that is why he is considered to be the ‘first English classical architect’, closely connected to the Italian space, who introduced new aesthetic and philosophical standards in the English culture from the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

**Key words:** Inigo Jones, classical architecture, perspective stage, scenographia, masques, Italy

## The new ‘*Vitruvius Britannicus*’

Born in London in 1573, in a humble Welsh family, Inigo Jones (Figure 1) will become the first English architect, painter, engineer and scene designer from the seventeenth century. The impact of his work, as well as that of Ben Jonson, is extremely strong on English mentalities and art.

His theoretical writings were inspired by the works of the Italian architect Andrea Palladio (1518 -1580) and his theatrical scenery and buildings were influenced by Vitruvian theories regarding the proportion and symmetry rules.

The first 30 years of his life are unclear due to the lack of accurate data and information preserved. However, we know for sure that his early career started as ‘a picture maker’, in 1603 but, in the absence of any official documents, we can easily say that Inigo Jones was an autodidact, as Ben Jonson and Shakespeare were before him. Inigo Jones himself says that: ‘being naturally inclined in my younger years to study the arts of design I passed into foreign parts to converse with the great masters thereof in Italy, where I applied myself to search out the ruins of those ancient buildings which, in despite of time itself and the violence of barbarians, are yet remaining. Having satisfied myself in these, and returning to my native country, I applied my mind more particularly to the study of architecture’ (James Lees-Milne 1953, 20).

The influence of the Italian classical school of architecture may be seen from the

beginning of his career. On his notes from the *Roman sketch* his motto was based on a neo-stoic belief: ‘Basta quel che contenta’ (‘That which contents is sufficient’). However, after improving his artistic qualities, he adopted another saying, from Petrarch’s *Trionfo d’Amore*: ‘Altro diletto che imparare non trovo’ (‘I find no other delight than in learning’) (Chaney 2006, 20).

It is well-known that during his lifetime Inigo Jones made three journeys in Italy (from 1595-1603, 1609 and 1613-1615) which completely changed his way of thinking and working. On his first journey, in Venice and Firenze, he meets Bernardo Buontalenti (1531-1608) an Italian painter, architect and scene designer from the Medici court. From now on, he acquires and assimilates many design techniques from this Italian artist and also from other masters such as Palladio, Scamozzi and Serlio.

But, the true change and ‘cultural revolution’ take place on his final journey to Italy, from 1612-1615, when he joins Earl Arundel and his wife in a great ‘giro d’Italia’ ‘as art commentator and guide’ because, like the English Ambassador in Venice, Sir Dudley Carleton wrote, Inigo was very useful to Lord Arundel ‘by reason of his language and experience of these parts’ (Barefoot 1993, 73).

In his copy book of Palladio’s *Quattro Libri dell’Architettura*, and in his *Roman Sheck* (Figure 2), Jones noted numerous observations regarding the buildings, temples and antiquities he studied in Italy. He had a main interest in the

classical and also the neoclassical schools of architecture.

In Milan, Turin, Venice, Vicenza, Naples and Rome he found inspiration for his future buildings and other architectural works from home, especially for Saint Paul's Cathedral, being inspired by The Baths of Diocletian and Basilica of Maxentius from Rome. Also, being in Rome, Jones studied very well the Roman Forum and the surrounding ruins (for e.g. Santa Francesca Romana, Arch of Constantine – used as a model for his future Temple Bar in London, Temple of Antoninus and Faustina), Basilica Santa Maria Maggiore, Lateran Palace and San Giovanni Lateran, The Pantheon, Bramante's tempietto in Saint Peter in Montorio, the Villa of Pope Julius III and the ancient Roman way, Via Appia. In Naples he studied the Italian Palazzi of the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century and it is possible that the buildings analyzed here inspired him for Whitehall Palace from England. Moreover, 'it was in Veneto and Emilia Romagna that Jones would have found the architectural tradition developed by Bramante, Serlio, Giulio Romano, Palladio, Scamozzi, in Verona Michele Sanmicheli, at its strongest' (Worsley 2007, 25). Venice was at that point an important European cultural center, although it was always half a century behind the rest of the Italy in its development. Among all his visits abroad Jones 'brought back the simplicity of design' (Barefoot 1993, 79) and the 'revolution' that he started is not just in architecture but also in theatre where 'he invented the great picture frame proscenium opening, which has, with the drop scene and movable stage ornaments, persisted from his day to ours' (Ramsey 1924, 25).

In all Inigo's work we can see clearly a connection with the classical architecture 'based on the primacy of Antiquity, as interpreted principally by Vitruvius, and on the classical orders of architecture as development by Alberti, Bramante, Raphael and a sequence of other architects including in particular Giulio Romano and Sebastiano Serlio. Though this canonical tradition was epitomized by Palladio, in particular his *Quattro Libri dell'Architettura* (...)' (Giles Worsley 2007, 1).

Also, other source of inspiration for Jones was Constantino de Servi, a Florentine painter and artist who also visited London in 1613, and who produced the scenery for the *Somerset Masque* of Thomas Campion.

More likely Inigo's talent as a great architect reaches its peak in 1622 when he finishes the new building for the Banqueting

House, a new hall dedicated to the court masques. His architectural talent among Rubens's painted ceiling is just another element that emphasizes the divine monarchy theory and a tribute to King James I, presented in his apotheosis, like an ancient Roman emperor. Rubens's paintings are three main canvasses which depict *The Union of the Crowns*, the *Apotheosis of King James I* (Figure 3) and *The Peaceful Reign of James I*.

His impressive collection of architectural books and scene designs includes works as: Philibert de l'Orme's *Le premier tome de l'architecture* (1569), *Regole delli cinque ordini d'architettura*, of Giacomo Barozzi da Vignola, from 1607 and Giorgio Vasari's *Delle vite de' piu eccellenti pittori, scultori et architettori* (1568).

We also know that he bought a copy of Scamozzi's book, *L'idea della architettura universale*, from 1617, and that he made annotations on the margin, like in the case of Palladio's work. This means that he seriously studied the theoretical foundation and after that he developed his own style. He 'educated himself' about architecture in all this time and it is interesting that in his buildings, as in his designs for the masque shows, he emphasized Vitruvius theories about the principles of harmonic beauty, symmetry and proportions.

As we are going to see further in this study, it was a common practice in Renaissance and Baroque time for most of the European architects to design not just buildings, but also stage sets for the theatre spectacles. Today's main type of architectural drawings was defined by Vitruvius. *Scenographia*, as it was described by him, will be accomplished only in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries by masters from the Italian and French courts like: Salviati, Jaques Callot, Stefano della Bella, Serlio, Buontalenti, Parmigiano, Scamozzi, Alfonso and Giulio Parigi (main scenery artists from the court of the Grand Dukes of Tuscany). All this, among the book of Cesare Ripa were Inigo's sources of inspiration and borrowing. That is why in his work we can find all the new and fundamental elements from the Italian Baroque stagecraft: the curtain and the *arch scène*, the prospective scene, *scena ductilis*, *machina versatilis*, the illumination of the scene etc (Folena 1969, 8).

All the English masques from 1605 to 1640 included a large stage with a proscenium and perspective scenery, a practice influenced by the European fashion at that time. But from all these works Nicolla Sabbatini's *Practica di fabricar scene e machine ne'teatr* from 1638 is

clearly the most important treaty for Inigo Jones's stagecraft designs. Serlio believed, like Jones, that the stage machinery had the role 'to evoke wonder in the minds of spectators and, above all, as a way of expressing the magnificence of monarch' (Strong 1984, 156).

After his last visit in Italy, in 1615, he succeeded Simon Basil as *Surveyor of the King's Work* and practically he begins his career as a true architect. In his only six buildings that survived in England, we can clearly see that his 'architecture was not based simply on the use of the orders but on the graduated application of classical ornament to buildings whose essential design is based on symmetry and order. The degree of ornament was depended on the particular purpose of the specific building, that is, on the fundamental classical belief in propriety or decorum' (Worsley 2007, 72).

From 1615 to the end of his life, Jones was more and more aware of his role and profession and declared: 'But I am truly / Architectonicus Professor, rather/That is (as one would say) an architect' (Ramsey 1929, 11).

Starting from this theoretical foundation, Inigo Jones, armed with his copy-books of Palladio and Serlio's works, will create a new artistic gender, based on the visual and performing arts, establishing an organic union of music, dance and drama: the court masques. These artistic influences appeared first in Italy and then were adopted in France and later in England. They had all the necessary elements to create a court spectacle: pastoral, classical and mythological motives, scene design and new and complex stage machinery. (Guardamagna, Anzi 2002, 135). The English massively 'imported' from the two different examples, and managed to generate, despite all the accusations of plagiarism, an original and innovative artistic genre. The masque remains a mixture of the English tradition and the foreign influences, especially the Italian ones.

### *Revolutionizing the English theatre*

The origins of the English masques come from a very distant past, recalling the old pagan rites of agriculture from the Greek, Roman, Celtic and Teutonic cults. With this opportunity the evil spirits were banished by the disguising and masks that people wore. In the Middle Ages the ritual is more clearly defined and takes a theatrical form, being called 'carnival' and preserving two different functions until the Renaissance age: a political and a moral one. (Guardamagna, Anzi 2002, 131). Also, in the medieval times, the tradition of mask theatre has

also a religious significance: the mask reminding of the golden one worn by God and the archangels in the medieval mysteries.

The word *masque* appears only in the 17<sup>th</sup> century and it is the French word given by Ben Jonson. At their beginnings, the English black masks worn by the Tudor actors were called 'guizard' or 'visor' which signified *mask*. They were an amateur production, involving the royal household and the nobility in which music and dancing played a more important part than the text. Only after their development in the Renaissance Italy, at the court of Lorenzo de Medici, these spectacles became more elaborated, resembling more to the spectacular *mascarade* (*masquerade*) and the French *ballet-comique*. The Tudor's *masks* are considerably less elaborated but they keep the same structure as the later masques. 'The masque and its physical setting were designed to work together in creating an effect of royal splendor and generosity' (Astington 1999, 114).

After returning from Italy in 1605, Inigo Jones introduced the mobile setting, first used at the Oxford University (cast decoration in the form of a rotating screen in Italian manner (*Histoire de la Musique, vol. I: Des origines a Jean – Sébastien Bach*, 1960, 1749). However, the first masque performed at the Stuart court was Ben Jonson's *Masque of Blackness* from 1605 and the last one, William Davenant's *Salmacita Spolia*, from January 1640 (this masque reveals a naïve idealism of king Charles I about his absolute and divine powers). The initiative of these complex theatrical shows belongs to consort Queen, Anne of Denmark (patroness and protector of Jacobean court culture, the one who adopted a cosmopolitan and extravagant lifestyle). She will instruct Ben Jonson and Inigo Jones to organize a spectacle in 1605, which introduced some 'moving scenes' and new scene 'machineries', like the moving sea. The word had an Italian origin, 'macchina' and in some texts we find it like 'engine' or 'machine': 'scenes and machines were the two basic elements in the presentation of a theatrical performance during the early 17<sup>th</sup> century' (Nicoll 1938, 60).

In these court festivities, public access was strictly forbidden, unlike the Elizabethan era, and the shows were entirely sponsored by the king himself, who became the main patron of the artists. The hall where the shows were performed was arranged like a local theatre, and the stage played a key part in the whole quasi-dramatic fiction. Usually, most of the English masques were presented in the Banqueting

House, at Whitehall Palace, were the main royal ceremonies and celebrations took place. There were also cases in which the masques were hosted by some English nobleman (like the show *The Gypsies Metamorphosed*, from 1623, offered by the Duke of Buckingham in King's James honour) but the exceptions were very few because the king's court showed a true monopoly over the masques spectacles. 'The banqueting houses were particularly favoured for the masques which became a feature of Stuart court life, no doubt because they offered plenty of space for the special demands of these entertainments, which called for a dancing-floor in front of a scenic stage which was commonly quite large' (Astington 1999, 53). This style influenced Jones from the Palladio's *frons scenae* in *Teatro Olimpico* from Vicenza. (Figure 4)

Therefore, the new artistic genre that arose in Europe in 17<sup>th</sup> century needs a new physical space to develop: 'festivals were now removed into the confines of the palace in the form of the spectacular court masques staged in temporary theatres erected in *great sale des fêtes* we know as the Banqueting House (...) In 1637 a separate Masque Room was erected, forerunner surely, had the monarchy survived, of a permanent court theater of the type established in Florence in 1586' (Strong 1984, 154). As a stage designer Jones sought to improve himself constantly and he managed to create some ingenious machines which amazed the audience every time, thanks to his engineering talents.

From 1605 to 1640 he produced more than 30 masques and show designs and as a proof of his impressive work we have his 450 drawings and sketches.

What was new and really 'revolutionary' for the history of the English theatre was the *perspective stage*.

The ancient Greeks were the first who put into practice the principles of perspective scenes, early in the fifth century BC. They also invented the term *skenographia* (that means scene painting, the art of portraying objects or scenes in perspective) which will become the technical term for any artwork executed in perspective. The perspective applied to the space of the theatre supports the concept of a privileged optical point placed in the middle of the room, where the king was situated. Anna Anzi says, quoting Roy Strong that the king sees perfectly the show, being in the same time the centre of the masque (Guardamagna, Anzi, 2002, 135). The Italian works regarding the practice of perspective sceneries that Inigo Jones may read

and was inspired by, were Sebastiano Serlio's *Il Secondo Libro di Prospettiva*, from 1545, Daniele Barbaro's *La Pratica della Prospettiva*, published in 1559, in Venice, Giovanibattista Giraldo Cinthio, with his work from 1554, *Discorso sulle tragedie*, and Leone de'Sommi's book, *Quattro dialoghi in materia di rappresentazioni sceniche*, 1556-1561. They theorized about the scenic space and their ideas revolutionized the world of theatre. That is how we can explain the fact that in the English masque we find traces of the Aristotelian theory, which were assimilated as well by the Italian artists.

In his book entitled *De Architectura*, dedicated to the Roman emperor Augustus, Vitruvius speaks about the Greeks and Roman theatres, establishing the rules for the construction of a typical Roman theatre, the model being the one of Marcellus from Rome (Figure 5).

The most important Italian entertainment from the 16<sup>th</sup> century that obviously inspired Jones was the Florentine Intermezzi from 1589, at the Medici court (in Uffizi Theatre), entitled *La Pellegrina* (Figure 6). Honoring the marriage between the Grand Duke Ferdinand I and Christine of Lorraine, the six entertainments performed with this occasion were staged 'in a large room that was approximately three times as long as it was wide. The stage was raised above the auditorium floor to which it was connected by an oval stair' (Weil 1983, 10).

The designs were made by Buontalenti and the text was written by Girolamo Bargagli. We know from the sources that Inigo Jones copied them in 1611 because his drawings for sets and costumes from the masque are sometimes borrowed consistently from the Italian and French designs (Figure 7). In *The Masque of Hymenaei*, from 1605, he includes another borrowed idea from the Italian sources (probably from *Le Nozze degli dei* from 1637), the one of the microcosms: Jones designs a huge globe that spins. But not all the stage drawings of Inigo Jones are borrowed from Italy or France. In D'Avenant's masque, *Britannia Triumphans*, 'he showed beyond the perspective of a street of houses a view of London' (Yates 1969, 173) and this is not the only example that it had been recorded.

Another strong connection with the Italian culture is the one regarding the old British tradition about the king's descending from the Trojans, in Brutus's person. This links very well with Jones's attempt to connect this theory with the Stonehenge's architecture. Commissioned by

the King James I, in 1620, to discover the mystery of Stonehenge, Jones develops a version according to which Stonehenge monument is an ancient Roman temple dedicated to Caelus, the celestial divinity. With his theory he tries to underline two main issues: the fact that the British are the true descendants of the Romans and the second, that the king could be associated with that celestial god, Caelus, and worship like a Sun-God, reminding about the heliocentric politic of *Masque of Blackness*, from 1605. King James's triumphal entering in London in March 1604 restores the ancient principle of harmony and proportion through a series of triumphal arches dedicated to the new king which were directly inspired by the triumphal arches created to the archduke Albert and infant Isabella in 1566, in Antwerp (Harris, Orgel, Strong, 197, p. 24).

The heliocentric theory of the infinite universe is also reflected and underlined in English masques. Another influence from Italy is Giordano Bruno's philosophy. In her article entitled *Giordano Bruno and the Stuart Court Masque* from 1995, Hillary Gatti says that there is a close connection between the English masque and the works of Giordano Bruno. In *De triplici minimo*, from 1589, he gives importance to the British monarchy by making references to the future James I. It is possible that Bruno inspired himself in *De gli eroici furori*, from the *Ballet comique de la Royne* by Balthasar de Beaujoyeulx, from 1581, when he visited Henry III's court in Paris. This entertainment was more an English masque than a *ballet* and inspired Bruno's later works when he presents the monarch as a divinity. His presence in the Jacobean and Caroline masques appears first in *Thety's Festival*, by Samuel Daniel, continuing with *Masque of Blackness*, *Masque of Beauty* and *Love's Triumph through Callipolis*, performed later, in 1631. Bruno perceived the infinite universe like an unbounded ocean and we find the heliocentric theme of the infinite universe in the mentioned masques too (Gatti 1995, 816). Inigo creates with this occasion wonderful machinery which is moving and also rotating scenes that convey the 'sea' or the 'ocean' from which the masquers reveal themselves, in front of their divine and 'centred' monarch. Giordano Bruno's philosophy is a revelation of the divine truth sent by God only to the 'chosen' ones. The masques 'speaks' about his infinite universe and his heliocentric view ('an infinite ocean of divine life') but even so, Ben Jonson has a sceptical position. In 1620 he writes a satirical masque, *News from the New*

*World Discovered in the Moon*, regarding the theory of the infinite universe. But Jonson placed the centre of the Masque in England itself, and his monarch is the Sun whose rays never set. So, he unintentionally contributes to the theory of the 'heliocentric' monarchy.

#### *The visual element from the court spectacles*

As we have already mentioned, a crucial spatial principle of the court theatres from the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries is closely connected with the principle of perspective and says that 'the royal seat should directly face the stage, and hence both state and stage were aligned on the central axis of the chamber. The truly important matter about the stage's being «in the middle of the hall» was that it should be in the center of the sovereign's view. He or she should also be able to hear well' (Astington 1999, 95). In other words, the monarch should have to be visible to his audience.

From this point of view, the masque requires a religious, aesthetic and political stratification and it also creates a new culture by changing the language (creating a new way of understanding facts for the audience) and also the space (constructing not just an imaginative but also a physical one by constructing such halls like the Banqueting House at Whitehall). Moreover, as we already underlined before, the king's position plays an important role too: *single-centered*, he is surrounded by a homogeneous mass. This location in space as monarch, and central point of view creates a relationship of power. So, what use has this kind of 'device'? The masque emphasizes the central role played by the king and manipulates public thinking. Then, the centrality of the monarch emphasizes both positive (placed to the center) and negative (placed to the periphery) values through the *masque – antimasque* dichotomy.

'First and foremost the masque was a statement made visually by means of engineering. Every stage picture Inigo Jones presented was a symbol composed of a composite series of hieroglyphs' (Strong 1984, 156) and this means that the audience was forced to decipher and to understand the new 'language' of these court entertainments.

This study aimed at investigating the cultural and artistic context of the success of Inigo Jones as English architect and scene designer. The role of the masque is a special one in the court culture of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries and the 'cultural revolution' from this period, after Jones' Italian and French 'tours', represents a crucial moment in Britain's cultural and



artistic history. With a brilliant mind which absorbed all the new theories like a sponge, Inigo Jones had inexhaustible resources thanks to his creative genius. Imagining an illusory kingdom, for his monarchs through his court spectacles, Inigo Jones offered a safety and comfort utopia where James I and Charles I become ideal kings, loving and nourishing fathers for their subjects, despite the realities of civil war. However, Inigo Jones changed 'the course of British architecture from the prodigious eclecticism of the Elizabethans and Jacobeans to a respect for the principles of order, grandeur, and harmony, derived from classical and Renaissance examples' (Higgot 1990, 1).

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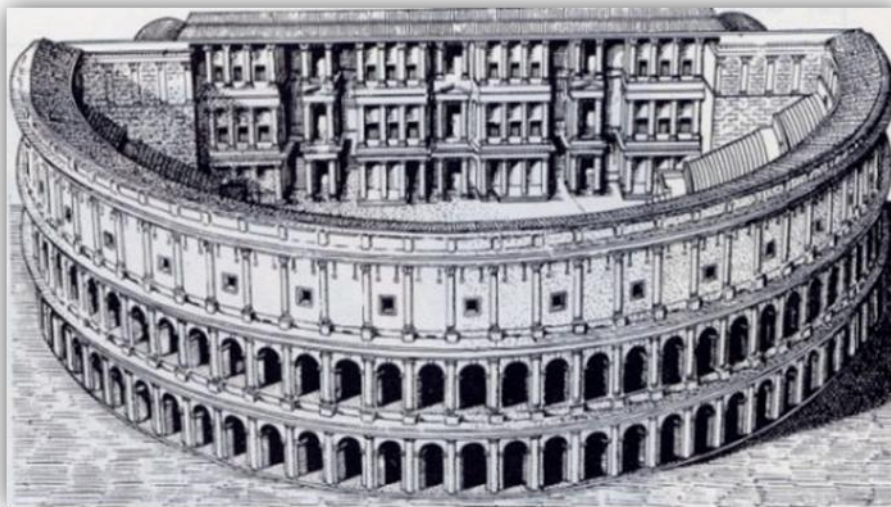
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# How to Convert Privileges into Rights? The Modern Romanian Elite Genesis during 19<sup>th</sup> Century

Dragoş SDROBIŞ

PhD Candidate 'George Bariţiu' Institute of History, Cluj-Napoca, Romania

E-mail: dragossdrobis@yahoo.com

**Abstract.** Tackling the elite's theme represented both a modern and modernizing orientation for the post-communist Romanian historiography. But, as many other 'conceptual loans', the *elite* concept embodied for many Romanian historians the very idea of modernity, neglecting the ingénue meaning of the term. If we choose to analyze the genealogy of this concept, we will find out that the *elite-masses* binomial was first used by the Italian sociologists Gaetano Mosca and Vilfredo Pareto in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, the peak of the philosophy of history. For the Italian sociologists this binomial was conceived as a way to find out a *law of history*. Thus, the elite concept was designed to reflect the evolution of the relationship between power and the powerless, whatever the age.

Through this concept it is possible to figure out the reasons that determined the old Romanian elite to establish a modern state. For landlords (boyars or nobles) a Romanian modern state should become a mechanism to reinforce the old attributes of power. One of the strongest mechanisms to inoculate such a new social order was education, with its social model, the intellectual.

**Key words:** modern Romania, elite, social change, education, intellectual

The critical cultural discourse, main characteristic of the present multiculturalism, imposes renunciation to cultural *elitism*. By this way, the approach of any subject which refers to any form of superiority – both in past and present – is presently regarded with skepticism and even harshly criticized. The Marxist paradigm was among the most important ideological currents that proposed to attenuate the role of the elite by reshaping the morphology of history around the concepts of *class fight* and *social class*. Nowadays, the neo-Marxism is accompanied by multiculturalism, a principle that wants to found ethno cultural groups' relationships from equal positions (Constant 2000, 15-16). In this manner, the new history promoted by multiculturalism imposed a new research discourse through which the societies should be the atoms that must be studied by the historians. 'The elitism refers to a research tradition dedicated almost exclusively to social origins and to the relationships between those who occupied privileged social positions, taking into consideration the reputational aspects of the Power. Instead, pluralism depicts a research program which prefers the study of the decisions and their real consequences, focusing on the decisional mechanisms' (Scott 2001, 12). This would be the reason why the elite subject was on the second place for such a long time and was seen as a form of scientific research that no longer corresponded to the new social requests.

Despite this discourse that denies any form of superiority, the egalitarianism as ideological purpose was finally banished in the utopia land. Two centuries from the proclamation of the 'equality' during the French Revolution, what remained as a political purpose in the postmodern society is the assurance of the equality of rights and the equality of chances for all human beings.

This essay proposes to depict the evolution of the binomial elite-masses from the point of view of a new concept, that of social change and also of social promotion. Originated in the sociological field and utilized especially by the social and cultural history, the prevalence of the social change idea converted the concept of continuity into an overcome one. The appeal to the change became the matrix for the past reinterpretation. Nevertheless, the approach of the changes that occurred in the Romanian society during the 19<sup>th</sup> century can be summarized in a single line from the novel *The Leopard* by Giuseppe Tomasi di Lampedusa, in which an aristocrat seemed to be convinced that 'If we want things to stay as they are, things will have to change'. The adaptation to the new context – as revealed by this phrase – leads to the same purpose: the continuity of the idea of class or family. In order to explain the process of social change the concept of generation begins to become more important: 'the generation in decline, the generation that is in charge and the

generation that aspires to take control – all this have reactions provoked by some traumatized historical events, events that tends to accelerate and to catalyze social change’ (Burke 1999, 185). In other words, the ‘modernization’ appears rather as a consolidation process of the achieved power by the old elite and as a way of creating a new societal discourse that justifies the maintenance of power in the hands of the same aristocracy. Briefly, it is about the famous theory formulated by Titu Maiorescu, that of *forms without fundament*, a paradigm around which Romanian’s cultural and social models were created. What level of degree had this *forms* for the Romanian society *fundaments*?, to this question I shall try to find an answer.

### **The elites: origin of a concept**

The genealogy of the idea of elite is, at least, an artifact related to the idea of modern democracy, a mechanism through which historians, sociologists and anthropologists tried to reveal the essence of the politics: achieving power. Two Italian sociologists were those who theorized this sociological system of elites in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Considering that modern democracy is just an appearance and criticizing the Marxist model that reduced history to the idea of class struggle, Gaetano Mosca and Vilfredo Pareto stated that the past represents variations of the same theme: masses and elites. This is the reason Gaetano Mosca imposed a new scheme for interpreting political systems that are in fact constituted by two recurrent elements: governors and governed. The firsts represent a minority no matter the political system and they build their superiority especially through organizational capacity and concerted action, that ‘always triumphs over a disorganized majority, which has neither will, nor impulse, nor action in common’ (Gaetano Moscaapud Scott 2007, 121). Of course, as any dominant group, the elite need a mechanism in order to legitimate the acquirer of the power, to justify superiority. In other words, the elite need a *political formula*, a concept launched by Mosca in 1884. Through this we should understand that ‘in all countries that reaches even a mediocre level of culture, the leading class justifies the power that is grounded on a faith that, in a certain age and for a certain people, is largely accepted’ (Gaetano Moscaapud Coenen-Hunther 2007, 69). In addition, this political formula is related to a political mechanism: the state. And, due to the fact that modernity is governed by the ideal of

egalitarianism, the democratic state becomes the desirable political formula.

The Pareto and Mosca’s ideas seem to be very different from the Marxist sociology. For Pareto ‘there is no serious reason the superiority of the ruling minorities to come to an end, and the faith in establishing a social order that should abolish any differences between dominants and dominated is just a social utopia’ (Coenen-Hunther 2007, 53). No matter the political system, the idea of society itself requires a minority that is obliged to rule the social, political and economic establishment. In this respect, I must point that the difference between the Marxist approach and Pareto elitist vision is rather a met theoretical one: for the Marxists history is perceived as progress and as a theological phenomenon, while for the Italian sociologist history – if, indeed, it is governed by any rule – circumscribes the idea of cycles. For Pareto, the only aspect that can be ameliorate is ‘the way in which the elite gains the power’ (Coenen-Hunther 2007, 53). This is why the mechanism to assure *legitimacy* becomes more important. And in modern times *legitimacy* resumes itself to the alternative *preeminence* or *excellence*.

### **From Classes *Dirigeante* to Noblesse d’État. Elites Consecration through Education**

*‘The hatred for the upper class is the involuntary homage brought by the lower class. In all this surrounding land [...] there is no face that shows nothing but the dark respect of fear and slavery’.* (Charles Dickens, *A Tale of Two Cities*)

*‘Qu’est-ce que une élite? C’est un petit bataillon des âmes vouées à une noble cause, la défendant énergiquement d’après les règles d’une sage organisation et cherchant à entraîner la foule dans la voie de bien’.* (Louis Razuc, *L’élite, son rôle et sa formation*)

Modernization means social mobility, a process that conferred a new polysemy to the notion of elite, the two excerpts from above being illustrative for the identity changes that occurred. For the middle age, a society of ranks, the Dickens’ statement reveals how elites were perceived, because in those times elite was in fact a political elite. *Dirigeants* were those beneficiaries of the administrative functions offered by the European monarchs in order to organize the state. In exchange, the modern elite calls for other modalities that should reinforce their power claims by imposing a new social ideal, a model that had to correspond to the

democratic ideals of the society. This new social ideal, build by the education process, will be that of the merit. In other words, *preeminence was supposed to be replaced by excellence*. Meritocracy became in fact the mechanism for implementing the social mobility.

Charles Christophe described how intellectual elite succeeded through meritocracy to gain the power in the Third French Republic (Charle, 1987). Although this principle of meritocracy was firstly launched during the Great French Revolution, only the Third French Republic (since 1870) was the one to demarche the process of social renovation (Charle, 1990, 11). This is another reason why we may state that revolution, as a concept, launches and reinforces the illusion of a dramatic and quick change, when, in fact, these changes take place gradually. Regarding the problem of elite, the French historian considers that the old aristocracy built its privileges by manipulating the economic, social and cultural capital (Charle 1987, 28). The economic capital assures in fact the monopole of the political power due to the poll tax vote system that splits the people in two distinct categories: electors – those that designate the power – and eligible – those that can aspire to power. More than this, the economic capital, as a family inheritance, perpetuates the access to a potent social network and, by this, to public functions. This is, in fact, how economic capital turns into a social one. The lack of economic capital – concludes the French historian – means the instauration of meritocracy. It becomes obvious that the cultural capital becomes crucial. And the only way to acquire cultural capital is education (Charle 1987, 28).

### **The Romanian Case. The Modernity: an Imported Exigency?**

For the Romanian space, the absence of an adequate social and economic structure limited modernization to an institutional process. In fact, the eradication of some material and institutional gaps was seen as the bottleneck of the modernization process. Another cliché of the Romanian historiography states that ‘the European integration was the ultimate political goal of the Romanian political class and so the modernization. In fact, the main goal of the Romanian elite was always the power – and not the westernization. It is the internal competition for the domination resources the element that, actually, provoked the European integration phenomenon. This is the reason why modernization and westernization were, as a

matter of fact, modalities in order to maintain power, but not goals for itself. As, for instance, sometimes simultaneously, an ideological resource was the anti-Occidentalism or the rural idealization’ (Lazăr 2002, 85).

The 19<sup>th</sup> century is for the Romanian case the confrontation the old boyars, holders of important economic capital and the new state boyars, bureaucrats, dependents on the financial resources of the state. Initially, the landlords considered the absence of an autonomous state a source of insecurity that could very easily affect its economic capital. The wars, the territorial concessions from the 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries led to the necessity of building a modern state. Nevertheless, the Adrianople Treaty (1829), with its favorable terms for the landlords could not be considered an advantage for the reign institution and, in extension, for the state. This is because the economic resources still remained an advantage of the landlords, while the state had no economic power. The primary source of conflict between the old boyars, the economic independent one, and the new elite, a state dependent one in its way to the economic resources traces down to this very moment. Because the state had no economic resources, the clash will be leaded against those who continued to refuse in conceding their power to the state. It is about the great landlords, that for a long time were not obliged to contribute to the state budget, a proof of its power in the Romanian states. Meanwhile, during 19<sup>th</sup> century, the new bureaucratic nobility had allied with the state in this struggle against the privileged nobility, a nobility still refractory to the idea of state recovery budget on its opulence. From this economic point of view we can explain the delineation of those two political poles from the 19<sup>th</sup> century: the conservatism, as an expression of the great landlords that refused any reforms that could affect the rural property, and liberalism, which desire was to implement modernization and a central system for controlling the economic resources, too. Thus viewed, the modernization is no longer an opposition between landlords and bourgeoisie, but an opposition between landlords – representative for the private sphere – and the state bureaucracy (Lazăr 2002, 94-96).

This is way the sociologist Marius Lazăr concludes that modernization in the Romanian space was a superficial phenomenon, unable to create and launch mechanisms for recruiting a new elite; actually, modernization remained a way for developing the old aristocracy control of the state, but certainly not a process founded on



a real social mobility. 'For the Romanian elite, political modernization represented the shift from a domination system based on the influence networks of some aristocratic families, to a bureaucratic foundation and institutional autonomy system. This phenomenon was led [...] by the same aristocratic elite, that rapidly learned to reconvert and conserve the old influential status in the new modern socio-political matrix' (Lazăr 2002, 93).

The same idea is formulated by Daniel Barbu, too, but with a distinct amendment: the elites perceived modernization as a power over the words (Barbu 2001, 264). Revealing the lack of bourgeoisie values from the Romanian society (like labor, family, economy, ethic, authority or scientific spirit), the historian reached the conclusion that modernization was missing the western vision of this phenomenon, that consisted in producing, distributing and consuming wealth. With no socio-economic foundation, modernization itself became just a discursive phenomenon: 'The modernity was not perceived as a culture of experience, grounded on the economy dynamics and social foresight, but as a culture of discourse in which the present was set on the History values and obeyed to the European democratic model irradiance' (Barbu 2001, 264). The modernization, in fact the import of some western institutions specific to a Nation-State, ends up as a way of converting the power prerogatives, a power easily to exercise through political discourse mediation. The politics is not a future projection, instead it becomes the way of rediscovering Romanian modernity in the past. This is the reason why in discursive practice of the Romanian politicians it is easily to encounter the appeal to the History, necessary in order to look for and even to invent those seeds of modernization in the Romanian space. In this manner, modernization became a natural stage in the developing of the Romanian state, certainly not an ideological import that could affect the background. This history and politics pendant will end up into a nationalistic discourse, reinventing the past. Meanwhile, it was a way to escape the major challenge: how to install a democratic, modern and liberal regime into a space with no civic culture, bourgeoisie values and free will exercise. Modernization in the Romanian space was unable to assure the consensus around the idea of state and to reinforce social solidarities. Without these two characteristics, the image of the modern Romanian state was one of a parallel-state to the society interests, an incapable state to represent the idea of social justice.

### **Meritocracy in the Romanian Space – the Old Exploiters and the New Ones**

The 1848 revolution was in fact an elite revolution, instead of a mass revolution. In the 1848 Romanian society the language of the elite was so different from that of the peasants to misunderstanding; a society far away from the idea of modernity, and through this, from the principle of meritocracy. The reason found by Ștefan Cazimir to explain the failure of this revolution was the lack of a transition period, necessary to blur the differences. Cazimir interprets the changes occurred in clothing at the beginning of a fragile, but irreversible phenomenon. The *German* fashion or the *French* one brought in The Romanian Principalities by the boyars' sons is the sign of a paradoxical situation, although they intended to spread an egalitarian state of mind. So, if those who wanted to promote socially adopted rapidly the new attire, instead, the traditional boyars strove not to resemble with the new *Dinu Pățurică* social typology. But, eventually, an insidious effect of the fashion was that it obliged all individuals to obey in front of the changes, because in 19<sup>th</sup> century fashion was a mechanism of dialogue and of social recognition. Trying not to adapt could become social reclusion. Although the 1830-1860 period was represented as a period in which old boyars with oriental clothes coexisted along with the young boyars dressed in trousers and frock coats, we should remark the great deal of concessions made by the old generation in the favor of the new one. In fact, it was a roles' shift synthesized with accuracy by Vasile Alecsandri: 'We should be fair and we should respectfully kneel in front of our parents' memory. Although through their way of life our parents seemed to be part of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, they had a sublime merit. They allowed a century of progress and of regeneration in their country, the 19<sup>th</sup> century, brought from abroad by their children' <sup>(1)</sup>. When

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(<sup>1</sup>) Apud (Cazimir 2006, 65): 'Să fim drepti și să ne închinăm cu respect și recunoștință dinaintea memoriei părinților. Ei prin traiul lor păreau a face parte din secolul XVI, dar au avut meritul sublim de a introduce în patria lor un secol de progres și de regenerare, secolul XIX, adus din străinătate prin copiii lor). This transition period analyzed by Cazimir reflects the changes occurred in language, too. It is a situation described in a very plastic manner by the author: 'A lot of old things are *still* existing, but their fate is already doomed. The new things are *already* existing, but haven't triumphed *yet*' (Multe lucruri vechi mai

the old boyars realized that the new clothing meant more than a simple fashion, it was already too late. In fact, the fashion was not just a simple fad; it meant new social models and aspirations. And, although the 1848 revolution was a failure, in less than 15 years the Romanian Principalities were involved in an institutional, political and social modernization phenomenon. The clothing homogenization wiped out the ranks. Instead, it consecrated equal chances, as an essential prerequisite for the idea of meritocracy.

However, this mechanism of social promotion – meritocracy – can be glimpsed since 18<sup>th</sup> century, the period of the Greek reigns (*fanarioți*), when it was imposed the common law of according princes by the ruler. But, because these princes were offered especially to the foreigners, perverting the idea of aristocracy, the reaction of the local boyars had a xenophobic side. In this respect, illustrative are *Constituția cărvunariilor* rewritten by Ionică Tăutu or *Cererile norodului românesc* formulated by Tudor Vladimirescu. Although still considered as the first signs of the Romanian society liberalization, in fact is the xenophobic reaction of the local boyars replaced from the state functions by the foreigners. The goal of returning to the Romanian reigns is, in fact, the intention of the local boyars to monopolize the administrative apparatus. For the Romanian boyars administrative function was not a political duty, but a devotion relationship with the reign. Although it may seem as a reform, the fight of the local aristocracy meant the return to a state design considered to be equitable. The *Organic Rules* tried to find an answer to this problem, recognizing the nobility titles to those capable to prove this with documents. Still, an innovation is implemented: the consecration of the meritocratic principle in achieving nobility titles that could be conferred especially by the Reign (Lazăr 2002, 101).

Meritocracy is closely linked to the idea of individual freedom. But, despite the 1848<sup>th</sup> revolutionary program included social goals, these were subsidiary to the national objectives. What was really important for the revolutionary leaders remained the emancipation of the Romanian space. Through this, the 1848<sup>th</sup> liberalism divided society into a liberator elite and an obedient community. It is a model inspired by Jules Michelet theory, according to which the world was made of immutable entities

seeking freedom: the nations. In this respect, the evolution of a nation is addicted to the affirmation of *a national genius* and to a historical fate. The youngster revolutionary leaders tried to apply this vision to the Romanian society, but ‘considered that the freedom was for the people as a communitarian entity, and not as a collection of independent individuals’ (Matei 2004, 62). Because of the foreign domination, primordial was to gain the freedom for the entire nation, while later the modernization efforts should be focused on the implementation of the individual liberty. ‘The nation liberty subordinated individual liberty’ (Matei 2004, 63), a vision that would destroy any trace of respect for the individual liberty, but instead it would develop a collectivistic syndrome of adulating the national virtues.

Was meritocracy only a way for the old aristocracy to legitimate its continuity in the field of power? The Mihai Sorin Rădulescu prosopographic analysis regarding the antebellum liberal elite highlights the boyar origin of the most important leaders of this first political party from modern Romania (Rădulescu 1998, 145). For instance, the ten liberal prime-ministers during 1866-1900 were, with two exception (P. S. Aurelian from Transylvania and Dimitrie Sturdza from Moldavia), descendants of Wallachia boyar families: Brătianu, Ghica, Krețulescu and Golescu. In fact, no member of the liberal elite was a descendant of the bourgeoisie (Rădulescu 1998, 42, 147). In contrast, the great conservative political leaders came from Moldavia, but their social origin was an aristocratic one, too. Due to the distinctive geographical separation of the two political groups the programmatic differences will occur. These differences will be visible during the 1848<sup>th</sup> revolution, when we can distinguish the roots of the dilemma regarding the role of meritocracy with long term effects in defining the modern Romanian elite. For instance, if the ideas of meritocracy in Walachia were positively perceived, in Moldavia it was obvious a sort of call for tradition; it was about Moldavians’ desire to return to tradition, in order to regain the natural rights of the privileged status, unfairly lost. More than this, the Moldavian boyars didn’t accept the idea of ceasing the role of *primus inter pares* to the Walachia landlords in the projected future Romania. This is the way we can justify why so many Moldavian boyars were part of antiunion current in 1859 (Rădulescu 1998, 147).

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stăruie încă, dar soarta lor e deja pecetluită. Cele noi și-au făcut deja apariția, dar nu au triumfat încă) (Cazimir 2006, 10).

As it concerns Transylvania, the idea of revolution itself will be monopolized by the fight for national emancipation, a characteristic that would transform this movement in the sole counter-revolution in 1848. Fighting against the Hungarian revolution led by Lajos Kossuth, the Transylvanian leaders' goals would end up in an indirect favor to the Austrian monarchy. Despite its amplitude, the Transylvanian revolution of the Romanians remains a clear proof of the inextricable linkage between the idea of modernity and national ideology. This is the reason why the idea of meritocracy will remain absorbed by the national emancipation goals.

Along with these regional different approaches regarding meritocracy, it should be stated that no debate was developed either. But, the idea of meritocracy can be detected in the debates concerning the political ways that must be followed and, especially, in the debates about the limits of the Romanian citizenship concept. Still, meritocracy was supposed to assure the mechanism for a new social typology: the intellectual, who has to embrace the ascending aspirations built only through personal merits in a democratic society.

#### **Romanian Cultural Elite: scholars, intellectuals, *intelligentsia* or revolutionaries?**

The failure of the 1848<sup>th</sup> revolutionary project meant a redefining process of the scholars' role in the building of the modern Romania. The cultural and political sides proved to be inseparable in order to accomplish the national desiderates. At a first glance, here we can detect the differences between the French intellectual model and the Romanian case of *intelligentsia*.

The concept of *intelligentsia* is used especially to describe those intellectuals from the Russian space who opposed the autocratic monarchy of the Tsar. Practically, *intelligentsia* tried to develop a political alternative that, because of the lack of dialogue, would end up into an anti-monarchic current liable to destabilize the Russian society. Narodnicism represented an ideological association between intellectuals and peasantry in this fight. Secondly, these political methods will give birth to a terrorist current, materialized in attacks against the Tsar, like the December's movement (1825) and the assassination of Alexander the 2<sup>nd</sup> in March 1881 by the anarchists. The lack of political dialogue will have as a result the birth of some revolutionary ideologies, the most suggestive being the work of Nikolai Cernashevski, *What Is to Be Done?* (1863),

pattern of thought that will inspire Vladimir Ilici Lenin later.

The Romanian space suggestively resembles with the Russian Imperium. For example, the young 1848<sup>th</sup> elite focused on the improvement of the peasantry status. More than this, the so-called *bonjour youth* (because of their French style in speaking and dressing) developed a sort of peasant spirit archeology, a spirit considered to comport the ingénues idea of Romanianity. Ion Heliade-Rădulescu, Mihail Kogălniceanu with his *Literary Dacia*, Alecu Russo and his project of recovering the Romanian folklore – are just a few examples to reinforce the above stated ideas. The folklore would become the romantic heroic vision of the national *bildungsroman*. Through the mediation of history and folklore the building of the Romanian-peasant image began. In fact, the peasant was entitled with the 'status of national eponymous ancestor, on the condition to remain silent' (Karnoouh 1994, 115).

We could state that in the Romanian space we do not witness the birth of the intellectuals either, but rather the *intelligentsia*'s genesis. In the limits of an autocratic system – as it was the reign of Mihail Sturdza in Moldova during 1834-1849 – the reforming local boyar cluster, also known as the 'national party', seemed to be a counterpart in front of the abusive power of the ruler. If we also take into consideration the foreign influence in organizing the Principalities, we can clearly make a difference between the political sphere and the possibilities of the new elite with European orientation. But this is rather a false perception. The political changes that could emphasize this point of view are the political union between Moldavia and Walachia (1859) and the instauration of a foreign monarchy in ruling the modern Romania. So, these events consecrated the conquering of the political sphere by the new elite, the 1848<sup>th</sup> generation. From this moment, the vision regarding the Romanian ways of modernization were no longer coherent, the cultural elites launching a well-known debate – the opportunity of westernization, perceived as a historic regularity (the modernist current) or as a dissolution of the nation (the traditionalistic approach). Because of these, the cultural elite will form *groups of prestige*, denomination developed by Sorin Adam Matei from Max Weber's concept of *status groups*.

In conclusion, this new cultural elite succeeded peacefully in imposing on the political scene. And this is why we can quit the denomination of *intelligentsia*. The 1848<sup>th</sup> elite

ruled the Romanian state in a modernization process, after a first stage characterized by revolutionary movements. But, because of the political appetite and the aristocratic roots of many of these young cultural elite, we can hardly speak about intellectual elite. The intellectual characterizes himself through political independence. It is not the case in modern Romania, where politics were created by these ex-revolutionary leaders. Still, they developed political and cultural currents regarding the destiny of the Romanian nation: the conservatism and the liberalism.

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# Stranger's Hypostases in the Transylvanian Romanian Imaginary of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century

Elena Andreea TRIF-BOIA

PhD, 'Babeș-Bolyai' University from Cluj-Napoca

E-mail: boia\_andreea@yahoo.com

**Abstract.** The present study investigates the stranger's picture in the Transylvanian Romanians' mindset in a period when the society was engaged in a full scale process of modernization and building of its national identity. This time interval corresponds to the time when Romanians were involved in the movement of political emancipation in order to obtain rights and freedoms kindred to those that possessed their cohabiting neighbors and when the Romanians have forged their own cultural model based on principles and values that were entrenched in Europe during the Enlightenment. From the methodological point of view, the study, based mainly on press materials, brochures and textbooks of that age passes beyond a mere string of Transylvanians' clichés and stereotypes about foreigners and tries to analyze their functionality.

**Key words:** *the other*, ethnic representation, Transylvania Romanian culture, nineteenth century

## Introduction <sup>(1)</sup>

The image of the other wasn't imposed as a field of study until the last century, although distinctness on certain criteria – sociological, gender, ethnic, geographic, religious, political, ideological, and later national, racial etc. – has been one constant throughout the history of human pursuits (Grancea 2009, 55). Ethnically, the Foreigner could not stir anything but antagonistic reactions whether he was perceived as an individual within the community, or seen as belonging to a different culture, sometimes exotic. Despised or admired, inspiring fear or confidence, seen as likable or, on the contrary, offensive, he always proved to be a 'violation' of community's norms and values, since his characterization was passed through fantasy's inevitably subjective filter (Boia 2000, 117-132; Boia 2001, 301-305; Boia 2005, 51-68). The nineteenth century was worthily called as the century of otherness' rising. First, nationalism has spawned a true race for devising its own national identity, in that each people sought to define its specificity by relation towards those who were different, towards foreigners who had other customs, traditions, beliefs etc. than their own. It was followed afterwards by racism, an approach that went a little further and invoked an alleged biological and intellectual inequality

of the human races, in order to justify the African slave labor. However, the representatives of the abolitionist movement, as some romantic intellectuals, have forged a positive portrait of the Africans, depicting them either as human beings who deserve enjoying the benefits of freedom, either in the posture of 'good savages', bearers of natural virtues, untouched by the corruption of modern lifestyle, or in that of 'good blacks' who would be the embodiment of devotion and self-sacrifice. Finally, feminist movements, by their tendency to put on an equal footing both sexes, have given rise to heated debates that placed women either in the position of domesticated creatures, responsible for the care of the household and children, and therefore in an intellectually lower position than men, either in that of human beings that equaled the latter and were able to study and become economically independent.

Romanians in Transylvania too enrolled in these trends that have guided the European public. Especially since it is known that their main inspiration was made up by European writings, be it periodicals, or volumes on their own. Nonetheless, the *foreigner's* picture has experienced its own development also, provided that Transylvanian Romanians' political conditions, their own system of values and cultural peculiarities have had a major role in assuming and interpreting all these general imaginary projections.

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<sup>(1)</sup> Sections of this article have been published in the work entitled *Imaginea Celuilalt în cultura românească din Transilvania. Secolul al XIX-lea* (Cluj-Napoca: PUC, 2012).

## The Other's Image as Self-Image

The analysis of *other's* image in nineteenth century Transylvanian Romanian culture must therefore be understood as an investigation that focuses on the Transylvanian Romanians of that time, whereas the clichés and stereotypes that were attributed to outer or cohabiting people, must be understood as a testimony of their own fears, of the thrill and sensitivities and beliefs that marked their lives (See Oișteanu 2003). The more so as the analysis' time period corresponds to their coagulation around the modern concept of nation, whereas Enlightenment principles that sparked in the previous century also proved highly effective tools in their struggle for emancipation (See Mitu 1995). Therewith, it is the period when Transylvanian Romanians with the help of intellectuals, the majority of whom had been educated in prestigious European cultural centers, self-impose a civilization model, a framework worthy of being reproduced or imitated. A template founded on supreme Enlightenment principles, such as freedom, equality and justice, faith in progress and modernization, as in the universal values of Christianity, template that matched the Western or Western European type of civilization. Obviously it was not chosen by chance. Awareness of the common origin shared with Latin people of the West had a decisive role in this choice, practically making them feel much closer to them. We just have to remember the symbolic weight of the voyages taken to the Eternal City that were usually perceived as a return to the origins (Grancea 2009, 108-117) and accompanied by meaningful gestures, including depositing offerings at the memorial of the Roman victory over the Dacians (<sup>1</sup>). Or the Italians' scale examination, some travelers going so far as to establish similarities between their traditional costumes and the Romanians', all comparisons invoked to support the same idea of brotherhood (*Familia* 5/1866, 55). At the same time, only the implementation of the West's advanced ideas gave Transylvanians hope in improving their own destiny, while they likened the unlimited power of some Eastern leaders to the policy of the Transylvanian Austro-Hungarian authorities. Therefore we may say without reservations that Romanians, as a young nation, found in the West not only a territory of

<sup>(1)</sup> We refer here to Badea Cârțan who, coming to Rome, would be deposited at the base of Trajan's Column a bag containing wheat and soil from Transylvania (*See* Dinu 1979, 150).

almost sacred meanings, but also a solution to their internal problems. France, for instance, revealed itself as an emblem of humanitarian spirit, as a country that declared war to the system of privileges, citing the natural rights of the individual, which held that every person is born free and equal in his or her inalienable rights with other individuals, while the young nation that was born in North America, through its courage, confidence and spirit of sacrifice, proved to them the strength and authenticity of these principles (*Familia* 39/1877, 457; Rus 2011, 202-210; Márki 1899, 91-92; Boia 2010, 319-357). Over all those mentioned above overlapped also the awareness of the more pragmatic aspects of the West, the economic boost, the advancements and new achievements in technology, arts, science, and especially their effects on the common man, their improving comfort and material wealth, issues that were throughout the century the leitmotif of printed periodicals in the province.



*Porturi din Sicilia [Ports from Sicily],  
Familia, 1866*

Once accepted, this prototype had the value of a 'supreme law' of the collective imaginary, being unmistakably invoked almost every time when the question of otherness was raised. The *Other* was, therefore, examined from all angles, the prominent criteria being cultural, followed by the politico-ideological and religious one. The verdict, clearly expressed without leaving room for speculation or interpretation has been consistently reiterated: despotism cannot have other effect than depriving people of culture's and civilization's benefits, whereas people in the bosom of whom despotism has taken root, the Oriental and African ones, by the economic, political and cultural standstill and backwardness that they exhibited, were the most frequently cited examples. The Chinese, the Turks, the Arabs,

the Afghans, the Moroccans, and most people of Central and South Africa etc. were harshly penalized for hindering freedom (Boiu 1972, 6; *Familia* 43/1973, 496; *Familia* 28/1886, 336; Felezeu 2012, 57-58) and, hence, the pervasion of culture among their people. All the same, they were more lenient with the Japanese or the Persians, the former being praised for the reforms that have led to the modernization of Japan with the Meiji era, while the Persians were instead admired for the openness under which they manifested towards arts and science, openness that brought them over time the nickname ‘the French of the East’ (Marki 1899, 127; Diaconovici 1904, 567).



*Cafenea arabă la expoziția din Paris*  
[Arabic Cafe. Exhibition in Paris],  
*Familia*, 1889.

Even more interesting is the equity that Transylvanians strove to display in addressing information, and their refusal to deviate from the principles that they took as standard. Thus their supreme reverence for people like the North Americans, individuals who have repudiated the old system based on privileges and who founded the first modern state in human history, one deeply marked by progress, didn't push them to be biased and to overlook the violations to their own rules which they elevated as universal values, deviation overtly demonstrated by the black African slavery practices or by the measures that had the effect of extermination of the Native Americans (Boia 2009, 119-150; 164-170). Besides, almost any population that suffered persecution and was wrongfully deprived of rights was viewed with sympathy, just because it appealed to Romanians as a true and regrettable mirror image of their own

condition. Thus, they got to quickly identify themselves with the cause of such people and even to harshly criticize the Austro-Hungarian officials' policies by comparison, disseminating written examples about concrete situations of persecution that occurred in other cultural spaces — such situations were frequent precisely during periods when Austro-Hungarian censorship limited their right to free expression. Of course, except the above mentioned cases, namely, that of the African-Americans and that of the ‘red skins’, the interest for the Irish cause that aroused in the first years of the Romanian newspapers (Mitu 2000, 123-165; *Amicul Familiei* 14/1882, 156; *Familia* 97/1880, 606; *Organul Luminării* LIII/1848, 299; Goldiș 1897/III, 248; *Unirea* 1/1891, 4) and the unconditional admiration that they showed for the liberation movements of the Balkans' people might be mentioned too. The attitude that Great Britain displayed towards its own subjects stood alongside the Ottoman Empire, which is why British abolitionists were heckled by intellectuals like George Bariț precisely for their refusal to improve economic and political conditions for their ‘servants’ at home (Mitu 2000, 141).



*Muntenegreni* [Montenegrins], *Albina Carpaților*, 1877

The contact history with neighbors or co-existing people also had an important role in the formation of imaginary projections. The most striking example is that of the Turks, described as downright demonic beings, true ‘dark knights’, directly responsible for all the shortcomings of the Romanian people (Goldiș 1897/III, 58; Diaconovici 1900, 911) by the obstacles that they raised against its natural development path. Another example is that of the Turks' ‘relatives’ in Europe, the Hungarians. The fact that what really were considered decisive for the former were no specific aspects of religious beliefs is demonstrated by their mere

association with people with a similar status. Arabs, for example, also followers of Islam, although portrayed as fanatical, cruel and vindictive, have a portrait that is completed by references that come to praise their love of freedom, their passionate and serious character and their generosity. Likewise the same laudatory tone is also kept in materials that display their data on scientific and cultural history, focusing their accents on contributions of the arts (*Familia* 43/1873, 496). Meanwhile, the Moroccans or the Afghans were blamed, especially, for refusing enlightenment and endorsing the patriarchal life (*Familia* 92/1878, 586; *Familia* 21/1879, 142). It is obvious that fear and terror caused by the Turks in the Middle Ages couldn't be entirely forgotten, more so as in the nineteenth century too they continued to have great influence on the Romanian territories. These emotions rather turned into repulsion, into a general attitude of rejection. The situation went so far that Romanian rulers' portraits that were victorious in battles with the Turks achieved downright legendary proportions — Paul the Knyaz, 'Hercules of his time' (Boiu 1872, 94) — and the hospitality that the Turks had been showing to strangers was to be cataloged as a result of a sense of obligation, and not as a genuine, naturally developed feature (*Familia* 43/1873, 496).

Neither Russians were granted forgiveness for their behavior concerning Bessarabia, and their betrayal during the Russo-Turkish War (1877-1878) was interpreted as evidence of greed, lack of honor and respect for the given word (*Familia* 26/1878, 156). And the case of the Hungarian authorities is more than telling, as aversion towards everything that could be labeled with the word 'master' had taken uncontrollable proportions. A thing that should have appeared absolutely normal within a community whose intellectuals elevated the most revolutionary ideas of the time to absolute models and constantly denounced the abuses of the Old Regime, citing very often examples of people who have made sacrifices to overcome it. It's enough to remember the phrase used by a contemporary journalist to describe the situation of Hungary in 1897, 'A State divided in two: cruel rulers and tormented thralls' (*Tribuna Poporului* 7/1897, 29) — such descriptions constantly occupied the pages of Transylvanian publications, and were complemented with specific references to abuses committed against ethnic Romanians: unjustified arrests, kangaroo trials, 'bloodshed, often without reason' (*Tribuna Poporului* 7/1897, 31), searches and

seizures, daily violations of the right to assembly and association, constantly generating insecurity and terror, etc. (<sup>1</sup>).

The issue concerning the Jews and the Gypsies was rather peculiar as history has not recorded between the three ethnic groups neither moments of close cooperation, neither intervals marked by strong conflicts of interest. Thus the 'danger' theme that the former represented and all the negative elements that accompanied this theme were nothing more but facets of a general European picture that has been transmitted here through written text. Of course, amid the hysteria generated by nationalism, they were taken up and amplified by some intellectuals (Slavici 2000; Popovici 2008, 379-380) and even associated with those of other 'evil forces' that 'threatened' the good of the nation, namely the Hungarians. But we may not speak, in general, about an attitude born within the Romanian community, especially since they, including graduates of theological seminaries, spoke positively about the Jews, praising them for the gift of being God's chosen people. Zacharia Boiu, for instance, showed that of all the ancient people contemporary to the Jews only they worshiped one God, honoring him 'in a very similar way our Christian religion does' (Boiu 1872, 17). Gypsies, instead, have been reproved almost exclusively based on 'their cultural inferiority', their disinterest in education, as well as for their lack of courage in

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(<sup>1</sup>) From a longer list of such claims, remember the following news articles: 'Selbaticii, Arad, 18 February', *Idem*, 25 (7/19 February 1898), 123. 'Vandalisme ungurești', *Idem*, 88 (10/22 May 1898), 431. 'În unguri gendarmii nu pușcă', *Idem*, 115 (18/30 June 1898), 563. 'Puncte de orientare', *Idem*, 17 (28 January/9 February 1897), 77. 'E rândul țaranilor noștri. Un proces monstru', *Idem*, 37 (25 February/ 9 March 1897), 174. *Idem*, 39 (27 February/11 March 1897), 182. 'Falsi și mincinoși', *Idem*, 42 (4/16 March 1897), 197. 'Fanatism unguresc la Cluj', *Dreptatea*, 95 (28 April/10 May 1894), 3. 'Procesul lui Lucaciu', *Idem*, 198 (11/23 September 1894), 1. '68 de învățători nemaghiari din comitatul Timișului suspendați', *Idem*, 4 (6/18 January 1894), 4. 'Adevărații agitatori', *Tribuna Poporului*, 44 (6/18 March 1897). 'Procese nouă. Procesul părintelui Lucaciu', *Familia*, 38 (18/30 September 1894), 455. 'Procese de presă', *Idem*, 40 (2/14 October 1894), 479. *Idem*, 41 (9/21 October 1894), 491. 'Procese nouă', *Idem*, 43 (23 October/4 November 1894), 516. 'Infamia șovinismului', *Tribuna Poporului*, 46 (21 March 1897), 217-218. 'Cavalierism maghiar', *Dreptatea*, 98 (4/16 May 1894), 5.



defending their cause (Diaconovici 1904, 1095-1096; Reteganul 1896; *Familia* 1/1886, 12). They embodied the very opposite of what was required from a people in the era of nationalism and progress, because instead of showing concerns in order to display greatness and uniqueness, they contented with a living that Transylvanians catalogued as 'bohemian' or even 'promiscuous'. Notable in this regard are the words of Ioan Pop Reteganul in the brochure dedicated to their history, *Gypsies* (Blaj, 1886), 'Gypsies have had no ideas, no dogma, no customs, no history, no tradition, no country, not even their own superstitions, since even those special superstitions of other nations that they so easily seized and acquired, they just as easily rejected them. They have no national costumes, no baptism or some special mark. Between Tartars they dress like Tartars, between Hungarians, like Hungarians, and everywhere they dress with what other people are dumping at them... Their dictionary... has no verbs for concepts like 'to have', 'to own' neither for 'to must' or 'debt' and 'law'. They're like air plants' (See Reteganul 1886).

There are very numerous cases where imaginary projections on *foreigners* have been disseminated in Transylvania as ready-made stories translated from the sources of information available during that period – Hungarian, German, Romanian, French, English periodicals and so on, books purchased from Romania or the European states – and whose interpretation was either totally blocked by the fact that they simply didn't have the additional knowledge needed to combat or defend them, either limited because they had a complete trust in the authenticity and authority of the used sources. It is the case mainly for remote, exotic populations, foreign to the Transylvanian horizon and for whose 'discovery' the resort to intermediaries was needed; but also the cases of some pretty familiar ethnic groups, neighbors or even close inhabitants. The resulting image in this case is, in general, quite brief and heavily influenced by the cited source text, the discourse of the colonizer or of the European explorer, when referring to Africa or to Asia, and by the intellectual discourse and that of the aristocracy of the Old Continent, if we consider North America.

The first, was focusing on the habits of the conquered people, in general, on the elements of novelty and even strangeness designed to fill the gaps present in areas such as geography, ethnography, history, biology and so on, in cases of discovery expeditions. The second was

persisting on the issue of the United States' political system, on that of the morality of its inhabitants, as on that of their kind of relation to culture. We may refer, then, to the example of Latin America, mainly known thanks to the great powers' interventions on its soil, the instauration and dethronement of the Emperor Maximilian of Habsburg in Mexico, Cuba's war of independence, the Spanish-American War etc. Finally, we may also evoke the example concerning the Greeks in the case of whom the echo of the Romanian intellectuals' discourses from beyond the Carpathians – N. Bălcescu, M. Eminescu, D. Drăghicescu (Boia 2001, 310) – consists in a more than obvious manner either in a reproach on the fiscal measures taken during the Phanariotes reigns in the extra-Carpathian territories, either on the undesirable effects of these measures upon the inhabitants, reproaches that can be found in almost all types of publications. In fact a correlation may be observed between the Transylvanians' discourse about the *foreigners* on one side, and their other provinces brethren's discourse, on the other, while the 'enemies' or, conversely, the 'friends' of the latter were taking credit at large of a similar status in the mindset of the former.



*Gipsy from Banat, Familia, 1892*

Alongside this general portrait dictated by the nature of contacts with the other, but alongside the specificity of Transylvanian Romanian customs and traditions too, a few particular representations have been outlined in such that it has been assigned to each people or nation a number of defects and/or virtues. Thus,

the British impressed Romanians by their pragmatism and ingenuity, the French by wit, cheerfulness and good taste, the Germans by sobriety and high scientific and cultural development, the Russians by their good humor and a seemingly pious spirit, the Italians by their fiery character, their cheerfulness and hospitality that welcomes those who have passed their threshold, the Spaniards by courage, perseverance and love of their country, the Swiss by their patriotism and respect for liberty, equality and fraternity, the Americans by entrepreneurship, eccentricity and exacerbated materialism, the Dutch by diligence and perseverance, the residents of the Scandinavian countries by their high levels of literacy, the Balkan people by their courage and sacrifice spirit, the Hungarians through their pride and chauvinism, the Chinese by traditionalism and exacerbated nationalism, the Japanese by their openness toward culture, the Indians by their wisdom and ability to contemplate the fundamental essence of things, the Turks by their fanaticism, violence and sensualism, the Arabs by their love of freedom, courage, hospitality and so on (See Trif-Boia 2012). Articles of an extreme racy taste are also those that emphasize the subjective perceptions that nations mutually address to each other, on the one hand, from the desire to show themselves off in front of the other, to assert their own primacy, and hence, sometimes harsh neighbors' reactions occur against it, and on the other hand, depending on the nature of the existing relationships, stemming from the interests that they have in common. In an article suggestively entitled *How people judge each other* George Coşbuc, for example, was expressing his confidence that every nation is endowed with an attitude of superiority against its neighbors, an attitude that can be noticed by the mutual mood of seeking their 'flaws' or of 'mocking' each other. In this sense, bringing into question the graphic representations of some nations in European humorous magazines, most of them sanctioned for their vices: the English appeared as a 'dog, bulldog, with teeth grinning and ready to bite', the Russians were represented by a 'bear' standing on his rear feet 'in a paw with a knout and with a flask of vodka in the other', while the French were assimilated to a 'cock — usually climbed on a bunch of litter — proud and pugnacious and gazing the chickens all the time' (*Familia* 21/1900, 242). In order to situate the Romanians in relation to *others* and especially their poor relations with their neighbors, the author has inserted a few words

of wisdom passed down over many generations: 'The Russian's a bear,/ the Turk's a wolf/ the Polack's a fox,/ But the poor Moldavian/ Is either sheep/ either cow' (*Ibidem*) shaped, on the one hand, the portraits of the Turks and the Russians as enemies, and on the other, the portrait of the Romanian Moldavian as a victim of the hostile deeds and of the gain lust of his neighbors. A symbolic meaning also had expressions such as 'If you give Ivan excuse, you'd be sure he will abuse', 'Slyly walk with the cross hanged on the chest like the Russian', 'Like master, like man', 'The Turk beats you, the Turk judges you'. — The first two, alluded to an alleged greed, insolence and hypocrisy of the Russians, while the last illustrated the unfairness of Turkish relations with Romanians. Finally, Coşbuc didn't miss his witticism on people such as the Germans, the Serbs, the Jews and the Gypsies and as a rule he always signaled the least flattering. The fairness of the first was expressed by maxims such as 'Just, like the German' or 'You don't see a German to steal his pipe' while statements like 'The German puts his hand and God takes His mercy' came to establish a balance between virtues and vices. The quips regarding the Serbians highlighted their lack of wisdom, those aimed at the Jews spoke about their loud character as well as about their inclination to scam other people, meanwhile the Gypsies were generally associated with a common propensity for theft as well as with a lack of firmness — 'A green horse and a mindful Serbian', 'Jewish Larva' 'The Jew only eats after he cheats' or 'To have an honest feel, the Gypsy has to steal' and 'Sturdy as a chicken' (*Ibidem*).



*Femeie din Orient* [Woman from the East],  
*Familia*, 1892

A final issue that we'd wish to take into consideration is that of the woman. In her case the image is polarized, as the Transylvanian observers' assessments drew connections between her status, on the one hand, and the political and cultural development of the people whom she belonged, on the other. Therefore we may observe the Oriental women's portrayal, that of the women from Eastern Europe and the Balkans being depicted as inferior beings, subjected to men, and only concerned with the household and its proper functioning. In parallel, however, also took shape the image of 'westerners', educated women who were about to gain their economic and political independence. We recall, in this regard, the tens even hundreds of articles who described either the actions of the feminist movement, either the successes obtained by women in various activities (*Familia* 4/1887, 44; *Foaia Poporului* 4/1898, 41; *Familia* 14/1903, 161; *Albina Carpaților* 21/1879, 335; *Bunul Econom* 1/1900, 9; *Familia* 27/1870, 324; *Familia* 56/1871, 368; *Amicul Familiei* 3/1888, 47; *Familia* 24/1866, 282). Beyond such considerations, the portrait of the fair sex, as well as that of men, takes some of the most diverse shapes, such as the analysis that targets the beauty of their physical traits, their clothing and accessories are completed by studies focused on their temperament and particular habits, contributing in this way to the shape of a very diverse picture. It is a portrait of beings whose striking otherness sparks not only curiosity, but also observers' fear, admiration or, on the contrary, their rejection. The latter especially occurred in the case of individuals scared by the momentum of the feminist movement and of its impact on the traditional family.

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# Historiographical Discourse in Transylvania Magazine (1868-1895)

Alexandru NICOLAESCU

PhD Student, '1 Decembrie 1918' University of Alba Iulia, Romania

Faculty of History and Philology

E-mail: alex\_nicolaescu@yahoo.com

**Abstract.** Our analysis stopped over the 1868-1895 period because it represents the first major step in the evolution of 'Transylvania' periodic. This period is divided by the editors of the magazine in three individualized parts: George Barițiu (1868-1878; 1881-1889); Ioan Popescu (1890-1891); Zaharia Boiu (1892-1895). Each one of them established its own editorial management.

This study tries to draft the evolution of the historiographical discourse in 'Transylvanian Association for Romanian Literature and Culture of the Romanian People' magazine. Due to the large number of papers that were focused on studying the life and activity of George Barițiu, we did not want to pay much attention to the period in which he was the editor. Ioan Popescu and Zaharia Boiu continued to publish historical studies in Transylvania magazine even though they were not as good as their predecessor. The two of them continued, to a great extent, the precedent editorial politic regarding the type of historical studies published in the magazine.

**Key words:** Transylvania, press, George Barițiu, Astra, historiographical discourse

After the end of the Romantic Age, which was somehow indifferent to the true historical demands, the Romanian historiography entered a much stricter phase called positivism, in the first part of the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Zub 1987, 146). The letter has not spared from exaggerations as well, being considered, by some historians, a post-romantic period or a late-romantic one. There was a struggling for renewal in this period, especially concerning the critical spirit, which will be imposed later on (Zub 1985, 15-16). Efforts were made to transform Romanian historiography in a more professional one, but the process was real slow. The appearance of history departments in Iași (1860) and Bucharest (1864) did not also led to the history's immediate professionalization, as it happened in other countries (Boia 2011, 92-93).

The Romanian historiography's entry to the criticism phase or to the critical spirit is placed at the same time with the foundation of the Junimea Society and 'Literary discussions' magazine (Teodor, 1970, XXXIX). The new orientation was barely imposed at the end of 19<sup>th</sup> century, A.D. Xenopol being declared as the initiator of this movement, influencing the later great historians: N. Iorga, Ioan Bogdan, D. Onciul and C. Giurescu.

The historians' concern for the topics that were tackled was influenced by the current in which they activated, now defending approaches, genres and newer research methods. It is to be noted that the publication of

documents was generalized in the period after 1849, while the historical interests were pointed towards modern medieval and social history, alongside with the political concerns that were also preponderant. Besides the concern for modern, medieval and antique history, the events of the 19<sup>th</sup> century started to be discussed, putting an emphasis on the history of the 1848 Revolution. Historical reviews and changes of opinion also appeared in this period which helped to find the solution to major historical problems (*Ibidem*, XXXVI). All these characteristics that belong to the period after 1849 will be fully retrievable and debated in the pages of the Association's periodic.

Romanian historiography got a significant answer through the contact with the specialized literature from the West. Under this aspect, the progress registered in Transylvania was less obvious than in extracharpatic Romania, which can be explained by the orientation of the latter towards critical spirit, while Transylvanian historiography had a more juridical-constitutional vision, due to the propaganda for historical writing (Zub 1985, 20).

Regarding the historical writing, we must underline the role of the educational preparation of the intellectuality in Transylvania, influencing the historical development of the province (<sup>1</sup>). The theological formation was quasi-total during the Transylvanian School and in the fortyeigher

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(<sup>1</sup>) For more clarifications, see Sigmirean 2000.

period, among the intellectuals from Transylvania being also jurists and teachers. The teachers studied philosophy, history and philology, although their basic formation was theological. After 1860, theology and the sacerdotal class encountered a drastic diminution of their social role, thus in the Transylvanian intellectuality entered, starting now, more and more intellectuals with studies in various domains (Mureșanu 2003, 22-23).

In the second part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the historical research received a tremendous output from the cultural magazines, helping to specialize and professionalize the history (Zub 1985, 192). The Association complied with the requests of that period and founded its own publishing department in various scientific branches (Curticăpeanu 1968, 85).

The most important Transylvanian historian that published in Transylvania magazine was, without a doubt, George Barițiu (<sup>1</sup>). He led the magazine during its first twenty years of existence. The second editor of the Association's periodic, I. Popescu, did not have historical preoccupations. As well as his predecessor during 1890-1891, he pushed the magazine towards literature (Ardelean 2009, 177). Zaharia Boiu, editor of the magazine during 1892-1895, wasn't also interested in history, leaning towards the publication of articles referring to the Association's mission of educational guidance through school and church (*Dicționarul literaturii române de la origini până la 1900*, 1979, 110; *Dicționarul general al literaturii române, literele A/B*, 2004, 586).

The historiography of the Association's periodic developed and revolved around important personalities like: Timotei Cipariu, Alexandru Papiu Ilarian and George Barițiu. We can also mention the following: Iosif Hodoș, Ștefan Moldovan, Silvestru Moldovan, I. Sîrbu, Augustin Bunea, N. Togan, T.V. Păcățian, N. Densușianu, A. Marienescu, I. Lupaș, S. Dragomir, Vicențiu Babeș, Ioan Micu-Moldovan, Silvestru Moldovan, S. Manguica etc. Almost all of them contributed to Transylvania magazine with historical studies. Although some of the above-mentioned personalities were not treated favorably by historiography, being considered to have used outdated methods of analysis and of historical

interpretation, they were still recognized as being contributors to this field (<sup>2</sup>) (Zub 1985, 53). Another fact to be noticed is the absence of Timotei Cipariu's studies in Transylvania magazine, most probably due to the fact that he was busy with the redaction of his own publication entitled 'The archive for philology and history', which appeared in Blaj, in 1867.

The historians that were part of the Association were acquainted with the methodology and the research techniques of the time, especially with the Romanian ones. Their concerns focused mainly on national history. They approached topics like: the origin of the Romanian people and of the Romanian language. But they hardly let go of the exaggerated approaches of Latinism (Curticăpeanu 1981, 10). The Transylvanian historiography of the second part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century covered especially topics referring to the history of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, a century of good changes, marked by the national struggle in Transylvania (Racovițan 1992, 225-226). This was due to the fact that the magazine was supposed to have as an audience as many classes as it could. Some of them were not familiarized with the writings of a professionalized and systematized history. That is why in Transylvania magazine there were published several popularization studies of the historical writing during 1868-1895, covering subjects of vital importance for the understanding of the Romanian people's history. The large number of biographies published when a cultural and political personality died or at the anniversary of a certain number of years from his/her birth or death was not random. These studies/articles were published with the purpose of developing a conscience and a national pride, characteristic to the Romanians who lived in Transylvania.

The studying and the publication of the articles that referred to the medieval history and especially the ones referring to the continuity of Romanians in the former Dacian Kingdom was one of the struggle methods of the Romanians from Transylvania against the authorities' tendency of assimilating them. A veiled struggle was carried in this sense by the Association's periodic through the appearance of some studies that referred to the ancient period, in the contemporary political field, namely for gaining of some rights for the Romanians living in Transylvania. The most important series of articles/studies were represented, as it was to be

(<sup>1</sup>) We did not want to analyze the historical writing of Barițiu because it was already analyzed in numerous studies and volumes, of which the most important being signed by V. Netea (1966) and George Em. Marica (1980).

(<sup>2</sup>) We refer to Iosif Hodoș considered an amateur historian.

expected, by those referring to continuity and its theories.

While the magazine was edited by Ioan Popescu, A. Marienescu<sup>1</sup> wrote most of the studies referring to the medieval period. He began his series with: 'The Roman Emperor Aurelian and his retreat from Dacia' (*Transilvania* 1890, 341-365) and he continued with 'The Roman leaders in Dacia during the Sarmatians' (*Transilvania* 1890, 389-399; 421-439), 'Caucaland in Dacia' <sup>(2)</sup> (*Transilvania* 1891, 1-19; 33-45), 'From which parts of the Roman Empire were brought the Roman colonists that were settled in Dacia' <sup>(3)</sup> (*Transilvania* 1891, 354-364). The author, a convinced Latinist, with concerns for folklore and ethnography, proved to be a dogmatic spirit in the history field, using outdated ideas concerning the historical research (Zub 1985, 53). His Latinist conception can be deduced from the above-mentioned studies. In the case of the historical analysis, Marienescu turned to examples and linguistic targets, wanting to underline as often as possible the Latin character of the Romanians.

Another author that published an article referring to antiquity was P. Broșteanu. His article 'Charta lumii (Orbis Pictus) de castoriu,

séu așa numita tabula peutingeriana' (*Transilvania* 1891, 65-76; 97-110; 129-139; 161-173) analyses the tabula peutingeriana. In this book, the author presents several villages in Dacia which he wanted to identify with the most well-known ones from the contemporary period. The studies signed by the two authors mentioned above are more of linguistic style, seasoned with historical information.

During Zaharia Boiu, *Transilvania* periodic published the following studies referring to the medieval period: 'Are the Romans from Dacia descendants of the Roman colonists and of the Dacian people who remained here after the Roman conquering or not?' (*Transilvania* 1892, 117-127; 166-173), 'The result of the Dacian defeat by the Romans' <sup>(4)</sup> (*Transilvania* 1894, 15-27), 'Why did the Dacians romanize more easily than other people?' <sup>(5)</sup> (*Transilvania* 1894, 313-321). We can notice that during this period, Marienescu A. and Broșteanu P. were not published anymore in the magazine with studies referring to medieval periods, Bașiotă B., which also had a strong Latinist faith, accordingly to the Transylvanian School, being now preferred.

During 1868-1895, the majority of the article/studies referring to medieval history had as a topic the continuity of the Romans on the former territory of Dacia, *Transilvania* magazine giving this way an exhaustive answer to Rösler's theory. The purpose of these studies was also linked to the struggle for winning political rights for the Romanians who lived in Transylvania in the last decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The focus on the popularization studies

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<sup>(1)</sup> Although he studied law, he presented himself as a historian, philologist, folklorist and ethnographer. As a historian he was attracted by the Latinity of the Romanian people, approaching topics like: the conquering of Dacia by the Romans, the Aurelian retreat and the formation of the Romanian language. He also wrote a manual of history which was used in Banat for 15 years. Nevertheless, his primary concern was folklore, gathering several Romanian carols. He became a member of The Romanian Academy in 1881.

<sup>(2)</sup> These studies present a more linguistic analysis, but with more historical and geographical references. He does a linguistic and topographic analysis of the word 'caucaland'. These articles were a continuation of the first two, as the author declares.

<sup>(3)</sup> He treats this subject because he considers that Romanians did not cover seriously this matter, and that the foreigners who have studied it, treated it with malice in order to denigrate the medieval Romanian history. The study is based on many quotations of the analyzed period but it also presents versions of other modern historians. He interprets the word of Latin authors translating several phrases from the original, because he considered that foreigners, out of hateful purposes, wrongly translated certain expressions, in order to sustain their theories, depending on what was their interest.

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<sup>(4)</sup> The author tries to demonstrate that Romanian language comes from Latin, presenting several Romanian and Latin words to support this theory.

<sup>(5)</sup> The author sustained the idea according to which Dacia was founded by Illyrians and Italian populations and for this reason the Dacian language was similar to that of Romanians. For the Latinisation of Dacia the author sustained that colonists were brought from the corners of the Roman Empire. To the support of the Latinisation the author presented the examples of Gaule (considering that during Antoniu almost all of it was romanized) and Spain (which during Nero's period had already been romanized). In these countries the Latin language was spoken in all cities, while the local dialect gradually disappeared. The author questions the following: if in 117 Gaule was romanized, couldn't Dacia do the same thing in 167 years? The article represents a strong change in good of a Latinistic point of view in the tradition of the Transylvanian School.



about the Aurelian retreat, the Romanization of the Dacians and especially the colonization of Dacia by the Romans is not random. If we tie these studies to the Romanian struggle for political rights in the last part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, we can understand much more easily why during 1890-1895 the Association's periodic, which was forbidden to treat political subjects, published most part of the studies referring to the medieval period of Romanian history.

During 1868-1889, Transylvania magazine was not concerned with the medieval period, thus the published studies that referred to this topic were close to none. This was due to the low interest of the Transylvanian historians towards an age dominated by the feudal aristocracy of Magyar and German origin. The interest for this period was way under the level of research in the Romanian age, where the Middle Age started to be studied with much more interest.

A pretty interesting study which referred to the medieval period appeared while Ioan Popescu was editor. The study written by Atanasie Marienescu, 'The Arabia from the Danube's outfall' (*Transilvania* 1890, 225-237), tries a geographical description of Arabia, presenting several data of its history with many presentations and references made by medieval historians, but also from a closer period. The study leans on Hașdeu's explanation about the name of Bessarabia, which is supposed to have been composed of 'Bess' and 'Arabia', thus it was known as The Arabia from the Danube. This interpretation is presented at the end of the study and it is neither contradicted nor adopted by the author. The interpretation is, without a doubt, outdated in our days, being unanimously accepted that the name comes from the Bessarabian lords from the Wallachia. Nevertheless, the study is very interesting, especially from the historical imaginary evolution's point of view, which is not only a characteristic of the author's article but more likely of a generation.

The studies that approached contemporary and modern history themes are not resolved either. Even though during 1868-1889, Barițiu approached various themes like the revolt of Horia, Cloșca and Crișan, the history of Romanian border regiments, especially the events of 1848-1849. By studying these events he wanted to draw the attention over the importance of the Romanians in Transylvania, who were, in certain moments, the champions of the renewal demands and of modernization. In

these studies there are also remembered the Romanians from the other Romanian provinces (*Transilvania* 1876, 73-76; 89-91; 97-100; 109-111), and neither the ones from the Balkans were forgotten (*Transilvania* 1885, 68-71). An interesting idea is the one that treats the Independence War of Romania during 1877-1878. In Transylvania magazine appeared many articles with this topic, most of them claiming the courage of the Romanian army in the battle of Plevna <sup>(1)</sup> (*Transilvania* 1883, 157-160; 175-177; *Ibidem* 1888, 17-21; 33-37; *Ibidem* 1881, 21-25; 39-42), intending this way to generate the so-desired and so-claimed national changes for Romanians.

Even though in the period when Barițiu governed, the articles referring to the history of the 17<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> centuries were plenty, during Ioan Popescu they were represented only by the series: 'Information taken from foreign authors' (*Transilvania* 1890, 42-51; 65-72; 104-109; 271-280), while during Zaharia Boiu, they were entirely missing.

Even though a large pallet of issues was approached and the culturalization of the Romanian people was desired, Transylvania magazine was not very appreciated, being neglected by a high percentage of Romanians, which were supposed to be its audience. This happened due also to the fact that it was considered to be too academic and not so accessible (Iorga 1989, 482; *Dicționarul general al literaturii române*, literele S/T, 2007, 763-764).

As a conclusion, we can notice the fact that the magazine of the Association retook into discussion certain issues of the Romanian people's continuity, contradicting the theories launched by Rösler. Wanting to create an appropriate identity for the Romanians from Transylvania, historians or, better said, pseudo historians who published studies in Transylvania magazine relapsed into Latinism, this time being considered a positive one. The authors of the studies that leaned over modern and contemporary history topics wanted in return to underline the greatness and the importance of Romanians in certain events, considered by them as very significant ones.

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(<sup>1</sup>) It is a romanced description of the event, resembling more to a sketch, and not at all to a historical study.

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# Bessarabian Contributions to the Study of the Romanian Language in the Context of Slavic Culture (the 19<sup>th</sup> Century)

Maria DANILOV

Associate Professor, PhD, National History Museum of Moldova

E-mail: danilovmaria@yahoo.com

**Abstract.** In the Bessarabian historiography there is no systematic analysis of the research conducted by some Bessarabian personalities in the field of Slavistics. Still, some well-known researchers, such as Polihronie Sârcu (1855-1905) and Alexandru Iațimirski (1873-1925) can be found in the reference lists and are considered to be the ‘founders of the Bessarabian Slavistics’, as they imposed this discipline as an important research field at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The current study can be considered rather a brief and synthetic approach on Polihronie Sârcu's research on the matter of the Romanian language in the context of the Slavic culture.

In Russia, the Romanian Studies emerged as a discipline belonging to the larger area of Slavistics. The Russian researchers were interested in the Romanian language, folklore, old books – manuscripts or printed – from the perspective of the cultural relations that have always existed between the Slavic and Romanian areas. At the end of 19<sup>th</sup> century, famous scientists as V.I. Grigorovici, I.I. Sreznevski, A. I. Sobolevski studied the cultural links between the Romanians and the Slavs. Thus, P. Sârcu's and Al. Iațimirski's works have perfectly matched Russian scientific interests. We want to underline the issues of importance and impact of the Romanian language on understanding the cultural Slavic world of the era, in the South-Eastern Europe. P. Sârcu and Al. Iațimirski's researches do have a historical value and can be considered ‘Bessarabian contributions’ to the Romanian language and old Romanian books in context of Slavic language.

**Key words:** Bessarabia, Russian Empire, Romanian language, Bessarabian Slavistics, Polihronie Sârcu

Those who, no matter the reasons, are interested in the issue of the Romanian language in the context of the Russian culture will necessarily face various information gaps, especially when it comes to the ‘Bessarabian contributions’ to the matter. In the Bessarabian historiography there is no systematic analysis of this issue, even though – from a historiographic point of view – some well-known researchers, such as Polihronie Sârcu (1855-1905) and Alexandru Iațimirski (1873-1925) can be found in the reference lists. Furthermore, they are considered to be ‘founders of the Bessarabian Slavistics’, as they imposed this area as an important research field (Țurcanu 2004, 35), at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. We know even less about the contribution of the Bessarabian people to the research of the old Romanian books. The current study can be considered rather a brief and synthetic approach on Polihronie Sârcu's research <sup>(1)</sup> on the matter of

the Romanian language in the context of the Slavic culture.

It is not difficult to notice that, since at least a century, Polihronie Sârcu's work has not stirred any special interest, however insignificant. We can only mention some studies in the Soviet period, and some biobibliographical completions, signed by Alexandrina Matcovski (Metcovski 1976, 36) and a more recent study that belongs to the Russian historiography (Domosilețkaia 2009, 52-151).

For now, our degree of knowledge on Polihronie Sârcu's works remains to the level of the ideologized surface of the Soviet regime. Far from mentioning some hasty findings regarding our matter, we must notice that Polihronie Sârcu's writings have unfairly faded into oblivion.

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<sup>(1)</sup> Polihronie Sârcu (July, 30, 1855, Strășeni – June, 23, 1905, Sankt Petersburg), historian, Slavist, and folklorist. He studied at the parochial school

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of the Căpřiana Monastery; a graduate of the History and Philology Faculty of the Sankt Petersburg University (1878); private docent of the same university (1883).

In Russia, the Romanian Studies emerged as a discipline belonging to the larger area of Slavistics. The Romanian language, folklore, the old Romanian books – manuscripts or prints – were appreciated among the Russian researchers, firstly from the point of view of some cultural links that always existed between the Slavic and the Romanian spaces. At the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, well-known Slavists, such as V.I. Grigorovici, I.I. Sreznevski and A.I. Sobolevski, were close to conceiving, through their researches, a large perspective in the matter of the cultural relations between the Romanian and Slavic peoples. Thus, Polihronie Sârcu's researches and/or contributions in the pointed era, have perfectly matched the Russian people's area of scientific interests (Sircu 1896, 17; Sircu 1914, 7). Or, this phenomenon can be followed only to the extent to which the Bessarabian personalities fitted into the Imperial Russian scientific community.

Polihronie Sârcu has proved a constant scientific interest for Slavic paleography, and was considered a peerless knower of the old Slavic texts, of the old church literature. The Russian researcher V. Lamanski held him as 'a living encyclopedia, a source of information for the university scientists, to whom he lavishly offered consultations in matters of history, ethnography, geography, history and literature of the peoples of the Balkans (Matcovski, 1976, 54). In the purpose of researching old texts in the Balkan area, Polihronie Sârcu went for documentation to the Romanian Principalities, Bulgaria, Macedonia, Serbia, Transylvania, Bukovina, Athos, Constantinople (1884-1893) <sup>(1)</sup>. He contributed to the reopening of the Chair of Romanic Languages at the Sankt Petersburg University. In 1883 he was a private lecturer at the Chair of Slavic Philology at the university, where he lectured the Romanian language and literature course (Domosilețkaia 2009, 78).

We will furthermore refer to the matters approached by Polihronie Sârcu in his opening lesson at the Chair of Romanian Language of the Imperial University of Sankt Petersburg - *On the Importance of the Romanian Language for the*

*Slavic Science* (Sircu 1884, 235-247) – from which we can easily notice the research directions, related to the Romanian language, on which the author insisted. Two aspects of the matter deserve to be layed special emphasis on:

First, we must notice the range of matters related to the importance and/or impact of the Romanian language on the Slavic/Russian science:

In a larger context it would be appropriate to point out Polihronie Sârcu's contributions to the research of the Romanian Philology matters in the Russian Empire.

We will notice that Polihronie Sârcu's assessments are based on solid documentation and advocated by a matchless eloquence: 'The object of my conferences will be the Romanian language and literature. You can ask yourselves, why would a philologist or a historian need to know this language and of what importance could this knowledge be for the Slavist, the historian or the Russian philologist? In order to answer these questions it is absolutely necessary to follow both the historical destiny of the Romanian people, as well as the main stages of the birth of the Romanian language' (Sircu, 1884, 235). But before bringing a historical explanation to the discussed matters, Polihronie Sârcu spoke about the existence of a Romanian language chair at the university: 'About 40 years ago, at this chair, Iacob Hâncu held a practical course on the Romanian language. He also wrote a textbook for this purpose and even a crestomathy containing texts from the most advanced Romanian literature in the era. This textbook is still useful up to this date' (Sircu 1884, 234-241) <sup>(2)</sup>. Let's follow on Polihronie Sârcu's opinions on the Romanian people and language's history.

The territory inhabited by the Romanians. Polihronie Sârcu believed that the fact that 'the Romanian people inhabited a Subcarpathian area, which might very well have been the Slavs' early homeland [...]' was a false assumption:

The actual Romanian kingdom – Transylvania, a part of the Banat, Bukovina and Bessarabia [...], – these are all areas inhabited by Romanians [...];

<sup>(1)</sup> During his documentation periods, Polihronie Sârcu gathered an impressing collection of Slavic manuscripts, that subsequently entered the collections of the Imperial Academy. În urma stagiilor de documentare Polihronie Sârcu a adunat o impunătoare colecție de manuscrise slavă, care au intrat ulterior în colecțiile Bibliotecii Academiei Imperiale din Sankt Petersburg.

<sup>(2)</sup> It is about the manual edited by Iakob Ghinkulov, *Načertanii pravil valaho-moldavskoi gramatiki*, SPb, 1840, 376 p. (Hancu 1840); the first 'Wallachian Moldavian' chair was opened at the imperial University of Sankt Petersburg, in 1839. It has functioned for twenty years, up until 1858, with small interruptions.

The Romanians also live in Macedonia, Moravia, where a whole region is called Wallachia [...]:

The territory situated at the left of the Dniester has not since long been ceded to the Rusyns [...];

The Danube is only a political border [...]. From the Southern Bessarabia and beyond the Danube the population is mixed [...]. Towards the Macedonian frontier there is a whole ethnographical corridor inhabited by the Romanians - that has not yet been explored [!]. Or, the mentioned territories indicate clearly that the Romanians do live in the area of Slavic interests (Sircu 1884, 234-237).

*And they are not only neighbors [...].* The Byzantine and Russian chronicles both 'attest the Vlachs' to be living in this area, argued P. Sârcu. At the same time, he recalls the importance of the 'Vlach element in the Bulgarians' wars', but also about the fact that those 'admixture of the Vlachs have woken up the Turks' wrath'. Or, the 'nobility of the Balkan Slavs will find a permanent refuge in the Romanian Principalities. This element has been romanized throughout the centuries', claims P. Sârcu: 'The rulers of the Romanian Principalities, but also the boyars, have strongly stood for the Christians in Serbia and Bulgaria, from the moment these countries had been invaded by the Osmons' (Sircu 1884, 237).

#### *Less Known Pages of Russian History*

In P. Sârcu's opinion, the knowledge of Romanian history, and especially of the role it played in Eastern Christianity, will shed more light upon some less known pages from Russians' history. And not only: the 'Romanians' relations with the Polish people and the Kazachs are also a less known part of the history.' However, it is certain that a more careful examination of the concepts P. Sârcu employs on the historical events that took place in this cultural space regarding the relations between the Romanians and their Slavic neighbors also reveals multiple interpretation errors. For example, P. Sârcu incorrectly presumed that the Romanians have been strongly influenced by the Slavs, from a cultural point of view, due to some strong historical links with them. Also, that once 'they entered the Bulgarian Kingdom, it seems, they converted to Christianity together [...]' (Sircu 1884, 239) <sup>(1)</sup>. Also that 'the Romanians borrowed the chancery as well as the diplomatic

vocabulary from the Bulgarians, and after the fall of the Bulgarian State, its place was taken by the Polish and Russian elements' (Sircu 1884, 238-239).

#### *The Romanians – an Orthodox Centre. The 15<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> centuries*

P. Sârcu properly considered that 'in those difficult centuries for the destiny of the Christianity, the Danubian Principalities became a centre of Orthodox refuge, just like Italy was for the Byzantines and the Greeks'. The Romanians themselves invited scholars from the Slavic world and offered them good work conditions for creating cultural works for the whole Orthodox space. The holy places 'in Transylvania, in Wallachia or in Moldova are full of monks [...]. Important cultural personalities, such as Nikodi, Grigore Țamblac and Paisie have created here. They have created their works for the entire Slavic world' (Sircu 1884, 239-261).

#### *The Romanians – a Martyr People*

In the 15<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> centuries, the Romanians, 'this martyr people, has carried on its shoulders – and still carries – a lot of political and social difficulties'. The distinguished professor praised the names of some prominent cultural personalities of the Romanian people, who are at the same time 'big scholars not only for their times, but for today's world as well'. They were highly knowledgeable in 'European languages, in Eastern and European literature: Petru Movilă, the founder of the Kiev Academy, Nicolae Milescu, Dimitrie Cantemir [...]' (Sircu, 1884, 241).

#### *The Romanian Principalities, at the Crossroads of Two Cultural Worlds: the Slavic/Greek and Romanic/German Worlds*

In the above mentioned context, we will also notice some working hypotheses, issued by Polihronie Sârcu. In his opinion, the Romanian Principalities were 'a point of conveyance', or, more exactly, a centre of the literary links between the Slavs and the Greeks. This centre is known due to 'multiple acts of charity towards the Mount Athos and towards other Orthodox countries of the East'. Furthermore, the Romanian Principalities, 'located at the crossroads of two cultural worlds: Slavic/Greek and Romanic/German are equally marked, in their evolution by those political and cultural influences. This space becomes an epicentre that conserved traditions and permanent links, an epicentre where these links and traditions have

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<sup>(1)</sup> The Bulgarians became Christians at 864 under the reign of the Tsar Boris [Mihail I] (852-889).

permanently collided, but where they have also reconciled, on the Orthodox basis, directioning and/or irradiating Christian traditions towards the whole Orthodox East'. This way, the Romanians have culturally assumed the 'mission of being the successors of the Southern Slavs', argues Sârcu. Unfortunately, this brilliant cultural era of the Slavic literature 'is very little researched' (Sircu 1884, 240).

*About the Romanian Language and Polihronie Sârcu's 'Linguistic Amalgam'*

Almost two decades after the debates initiated by the Academy member I.I. Sreznevski <sup>(1)</sup> regarding the origins of the Romanian people and language, Polihronie Sârcu claimed that 'the Romanian nation was constituted of a number of ethnical elements: Roman, Thracian and Slavic. Along the centuries, to the Latin structure joined barbarian elements: first some Thracian elements and then some other byzantine ones, then entire Slavic layers. An insignificant Hungarian element also superposed, and, finally, a Turk one joined'. Such a linguistical symbiosis is wrongly defined as a 'linguistic amalgam' (Sircu, 1884, 241). We must also accent the fact that P. Sârcu is the first Slavist in the science of the Russian Phylology who recalls the existence of other Romanic languages in the East: 'With only 10 millions of Romanians, the Romanian language has very little dialects – only three: a Dacian one (in Wallachia, Bessarabia, Bukovina, Transilvania and Banat), a Macedonian dialect and a Istro-Romanian one. This extremely valuable linguistic material must be subject to a careful analysis because it reflects a continuous struggle between the languages and the victories that one won over the other. A solid research of the phenomenon will not only help us understand the culture of the peoples in the Balcans, but also to penetrate the essence of the resistance and survival force of the Romanian people' (Sircu 1884, 242).

The formation of both the literary language and the Romanian literature is placed by P. Sârcu towards the 16<sup>th</sup> century: 'Until that time, the literary language was the one of the

church writings which, being still a weak language, could not immediately set free from the Slavonic ties. But the first steps towards the release from the Slavic model were slowly, unsurely made [...]. The Slavonic alphabet, well adapted to the sounds of the Romanian language, served it for another long period of time. The first translations were made line by line, just like a gloss. It is only after countless language experiences and exercises that, towards the second half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, full writings were translated in Romanian, accompanied by explanatory indices: what must be read at the liturgical service and how must it be done. A century had not yet passed when the people's language won a place at least equal to the Slavic one, not only in the church, but also in court and in the diplomatic world. The most ardent supporters of the Romanian language were two well-known sovereigns: Princes Vasile Lupu (1632-1654) and Matei Basarab (1633-1654). Both wanted to gather the Romanian people in a single country' (Sircu 1884, 243).

The most important literary phenomenon of the period – in Polihronie Sârcu's opinion – was represented by the chronicles 'especially the ones from Moldova, that all the Romanians can be proud of'. In the Romanian chronicles 'priceless informations on the history of the Southern Slavs, of those in Poland, Ukraine, Turkey or Greece, that cover the 15<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> centuries, or the 18<sup>th</sup> century' can be found (Sircu 1884, 244). A lot of 'scholars-hierarchs, who studied in Europe and in Poland, stood out: Dosoftei, Varlaam, Iacob Stamati, and the bishop Filaret. Besides their liturgical books, they also wrote treatises, dogmatic writings, and Christian apologetics' (Sircu 1884, 244).

*Romanian Folklore*

The Romanian folklore is considered by P. Sârcu to be a phenomenon 'unique of its kind, a synthesis of the European peoples of this area' (Sircu, 1884, 243). Doubtless, some of P. Sârcu's interpretations and/or conclusions are confuse. He states, for example, that the 'spiritual community of the Romanians and the Slavs doesn't only consist in their language and in their faith. Both the ritualic folkloric poetry, and the lyrical and historical ones have a lot of affinities with the Slavic one, especially with the Southern Slavic one (Sircu 1884, 243)'. Polihronie Sârcu's findings were based on proofs gathered during some 'recent researches' in the Romanian Principalities. He had gathered a rich folkloric material: Romanian Christmas carols, that he considered being 'very similar to those

<sup>(1)</sup> I.I. Sreznevski (1812-1880), without being a Romanist, has afforded some hasty conclusions on the origins of the origins of the Romanian language that, in his opinion, 'abounds in Slavic words, in such a way that writing and speaking without them is just as impossible, as it is to express yourself in English without the root of the French origin word'.

belonging to the Ukranian and Russian', 'Serbian ballads that praised the hajduks and the Cossacks'. He also gathered materials from the apocryphal literature of the Southern Slavs, where he rediscovered a strong reflection of the Romanian folkloric works, that had gotten there orally or in writing.

The 19<sup>th</sup> century is conceived as a modern era, a new phase of the Romanian literature, marked by its contact with the Western European literatures. A 'new direction' started then, expressed 'through the tendency of the Romanian thinking to set free from the Slavonism and to get closer to the Latin West'. P. Sârcu concludes that the most representative sons of the Romanian people, such as 'Hasdeu, Odobescu, Xenopol, despite some ephemeral political views, realize more and more that the people who survived the Turkish and Phanariot supremacy, has based its history on Byzantine models, among the Slavic peoples of the East, and develops based on the byzantine Orthodoxy' (Sircu 1884, 246). At the end of his lecture 'On the importance of the Romanian language for the Slavic science, Polihronie Sârcu firmly states: 'We, the Slavists, will never be sure on a big part of the Slavs' history without knowing the history, the literature and the language of the Romanians, just like the history of the latter will not be clear enough without knowing the Slavs' history' (Sircu 1884, 246).

### Conclusions

The recovery and valorisation of Polihronie Sârcu's work have a special importance for a better knowledge on the era of the 'cultural Slavonism' of the Romanian people, and this, in its turn, can be classified among the 'Bessarabian contributions' to the research of the Romanian language and the Romanian old writings. We will also notice that Polihronie Sârcu's works on the matter of the Romanian language are marked by the uncertainty of the situation that the Russian Slavistics was in, at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. All this 'scientific agitation' was a clue that the the academic environment in the Russian imperial society of Sankt Petersburg had a certain level of knowledge of the Romanian language in the context of the Slavic culture.

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# The Emergence of a New Educational Model during the Long Nineteenth Century. A Study Case: Children's Education

Georgeta FODOR

Assistant Lecturer, PhD, 'Petru Maior' University of Tirgu Mures, Romania

E-mail: georgeta.fodor@science.upm.ro

**Abstract.** Education was one of the domains which registered great changes - challenges too - during the modern age. It is during this period of time while the bases of a modern institutionalized educational system were set. This should be considered a consequence of the intellectual debates led by Romanian scholars who were more than convinced that a nation's progress lies in granting to its people the right to education. Their interest materialized in an entire literature on the best model to be applied for educating Romanian people in order to contribute and facilitate the society's progress towards modernization. Thus, the study focuses on this kind of literature which was published during the second half of the nineteenth century. Our aim is to find the patterns of this new educational model that emerged as a consequence of the debate on the education's importance in the Romanian society during the long nineteenth century. We are also interested in revealing the new perception on child which developed in the context and as a consequence of the previous mentioned debate. We made a selection of the published materials due to their great number, but we chose the ones which best reveal the features of this 'literary genera'.

**Key words:** educational model, nineteenth century, children, debate, school textbooks

In 1915 *Direcțiunea Statisticiei Generale* (The Institute of Statistics) published a survey on the literacy level of Romanians. The report was based on the figures from the final results of the General Census made by Romanian authorities in 1912. The aim of the report was to determine the cultural level of the nation as literacy was seen as its indicator (*Statistica* 1912, I). This study is also relevant for the present approach as it makes reference, within the Introduction, to the population's level of literacy as this resulted from the census made in 1899. Thus, we can have a better insight of all the efforts made by the State and its intellectuals in order to increase the level of literacy among citizens. According to the figures from 1899, 78% of the population over seven years old was illiterate. From a gender point of view, the figures are even worst as almost 90% of female population was illiterate. Comparing these figures with the ones from 1912, and keeping in mind the fact that the population registered a demographic growth, situation did change. We can infer that progress was made by 1912, since the percentage of literate women grew from 10.9% to 23.2%. Although a progress was registered, the dissatisfaction caused by these figures was expressed by those who published the statistics. They laid stress on the finding that

illiteracy was still higher among women compared with men and also that the law making the elementary school compulsory for women was more difficult to impose for women than men (*Ibidem*, XVIII, see also Fodor 2013). Despite these figures, a progress was made. It can be seen also as a result of the efforts made by the State in order to expand the institutionalised educational system. In fact, the State started to have a coherent politics in this domain since 1864 when the Education Law was elaborated. According to it, the primary school was made free and compulsory. This law was followed in the 90s by three other laws: Take Ionescu's Law, in 1893; Poni's Law, in 1896 and Spiru Haret's Law, in 1898. Besides these formal decisions, the intellectuals tried by all means, not only through the institutionalised ones; to contribute to the progress of educational level of ordinary men and women. As a consequence of their interest, a real intellectual debate took place in Romanian society during the second half of the nineteenth century. Indeed, among the reasons of the debate one can mention the controversies caused by the education laws elaborated by the State. Alongside with this reason, we must mention the intellectuals' interest in the population's level of literacy. It is also a proof for their strong

involvement in the general effort of modernising Romanian society. From the intellectuals' point of view; this modernization could be made by increasing the population's cultural level, also. This attitude explains the emergence of an entire 'literature', and by literature we refer to journal articles, school textbooks, translations *etc.* having as main subject the educational question.

We will try, in what follows, to give an overview on the key aspects of this debate aiming at an objective view on the new educational model which resulted as a consequence of this debate. As the information is plenty, we will not insist on laws and statistics as they had already been subject of analysis in other researches. Thus, we analysed different, one can call them informal, types of documents which can allow us to have a better view on the complexity of the debate on the best model to educate a child. In fact, we chose three types of documents: the ones that had as subject of analysis 'the theory' meaning those published studies or books written with the intention of teaching the parents how to raise their children according to the imperatives of a modern world. We also focused on several textbooks as we are interested in revealing how theory met with the practical teaching. We also analysed translations or adaptations from foreign authors. We chose this type of texts in order to see the impact of the western scientific literature on Romanian society in what children's education and care was concern. This perspective of analysis is necessary in the context of the age and for the effort we make to identify the new educational model as well as the new perspective on children that emerged under the impact of the scientific progress registered in Western Europe.

The present study will focus on two facts: the new modern educational model and the new modern child as they both were 'designed' during the long nineteenth century Romanian society.

In order to have a pertinent view on the subject, two were the key terms we need to define.

First, we have to explain the concept of educational model and secondly, the concept of child/children.

By new educational model, we make reference to the patterns of modern educational system as a result of the progress registered by the science of pedagogy with the works of J. J. Rousseau or Pestalozzi. Such works have also been influential in Romanian society. The fact is proven both by Romanian translations of these

authors but also by the perspective intellectuals had on education.

Through educational model, we do not understand only the formal, State elaborated one. We also refer to the education the parents were taught to give their children. Indeed, the State has a great merit in this sense. In fact, beginning with Spiru Haret, the idea of extracurricular education for both children and adults gains ground in Romanian society, too (Albulescu 2008).

The documents of the age testify that there was a considerable effort to streamline and update the knowledge of child rearing. This could be also considered as a result of the modernization process. Thus, we could also discuss, in the more general context of education, by the effort Romanian scholars made for educating not only the children according to the imperatives of a modern society but parents as well.

The phrase educational model was also chose due to the fact that it best describes a feature of the long nineteenth century. It is this period while Romanian society, its intellectuals in fact, became aware of the great role education has in a changing society. It is during this period of time Romania developed its modern educational system: primary free and compulsory schools, secondary and higher education institutions.

In what the concept of child is concerned, it also steps in its modern age. The child will no longer be considered as a small adult, but a distinct human being who should be treated as like. This is also a consequence of the progress registered by psychology, pedagogy and medical sciences.

Besides these conceptual delimitations, we must also stress the fact that we made a selection based also on the professional background of the writers. For instance, we consider of great relevance that university professor discussed the education's problem in an effort of finding the best suitable model for Romanians. We paid attention to the gender of both the authors and of their public target, too. This aspect is to be taken into consideration due to the fact that in the context of the general debate on children's education a researcher cannot separate this issue from the debate over the role a woman should play in the society. As we had proven in our previous studies, women as mothers were the first called to set the bases of a child's education (Fodor 2012 a., 200). Thus, it is no surprise that during the nineteenth century in Romania were published plenty of books for teaching women

whose mission in life was to raise the children according to the society's imperatives. No aspect was left outside the analysis: from practical advice given for pregnant women up to the best rearing methods mothers should respect in order to have a healthy, well educated child. The reasoning is the following: this child was not only someone's boy or girl; it also meant in fact a healthy, well educated citizen. This is for instance the aim which motivated physician Dimitrie Cantemir to publish a textbook in 1877. Its 'target audience' were the parents, in general, and mothers in particular. The reason behind this initiative can be found in the fact that mothers were seen as the ones called to preserve and transmit a people's legacy and tradition. This attitude towards women's role in society can be considered as a consequence of the society's progress during the nineteenth century. But it is also truth that the same progress explains the negative attitude against some of these traditions and practices seen as no longer suitable or even wrong. These are among the reasons which made Dimitrie Cantemir write: *Consilii Hygenice pentru creșterea copiilor* (Hygiene Advice for Raising Children). The title suggests a manual of parenting (Cantemir 1877). The author tries to give parents, to mothers in the first place, a child's rearing textbook based on his experience as a physician. He considers that mothers must have a guiding book in order to learn how they could best rear their children. What is more significant is the author's intention to correct 'the traditional wrong practices' which he noticed in children's education. Once again modernity and tradition are brought on the same scene in an effort of conciliation. In fact, the author's intentions were clearly stated from the very beginning: as a physician his intention was that of correcting, and even eradicating, the bad habits mothers had in their children's education:

*'An eight years medical practice as well as a deep interest for this subject, authorizes me to discuss all the bad practices of raising children preserved and transmitted as dogmas by parents from one generation to another. I do this as the society lacks such a book about Hygiene' (O practică medicală de opt ani și o osebuită aplicațiune pentru acest studiu, me aotoirză de a'mi ridica vocea asupra tuturor obiceiurilor vătămătoare, pe care tradițiunea le-a conservat, în creșterea copiilor și pe care mumele le transmit ca niște dogme moștenite de la părinții lor, în lipsa unei cărți speciale pentru această parte importantă a Hygienei) (Ibidem, III).*

Although the book focuses on the medical aspects of a child's education it is relevant for our present approach for several basic reasons: it underlines the central role of mothers in children's education as well as for its effort of streamlining the best methods for educating Romanian children. The author is very modern in view as he considers that a child's health, education and future depend on mother's physical and intellectual features. Thus in the first chapter he insists on giving advice to future mothers. He does this by stressing some of the bad practices which he considers to be harmful to the child. He seems to respect a somehow chronological order as the first bad habit he discusses is the early marriage. He considers that a girl of 14-16 years old is not physically prepared for childbirth. The author questions himself:

*'What can a young woman become when married in such a tender age, before reaching her physical maturity and without having her reproductive system fully developed?' (Ce pote deveni dar o tânără copilă la o etate atât de fragedă, întrată în viața conjugală, înainte de a fi luat o desvoltare complectă a corpului, înainte ca organele concepțiunei să fie de ajuns formate?)* The best age for a woman to be married should respect a physician's prescriptions: 18 years old says Cantemir to be the perfect age. This is the age when a woman reaches her physical maturity (*Ibidem*, 3).

But there should be made exceptions to this rule, for instance, if the woman was of weaker constitution she should wait until she was 21 before marrying. But both extremes should be avoided: neither an early marriage nor a too older one.

A threat to child's health is also considered to be the alcoholism. On this subject Cantemir is only one of many voices considering it as being an endemic problem of Romanians. The following chapters of the book deal with such matters as pregnant women; potential dangers a woman could face while being pregnant (among these the author mentions the corset women still used to wear). The author discusses other topics such as breastfeeding or the colostrums. In the concluding chapter of the first part of the book, the author reiterates the reasons for the advice he gave to young mothers: due to the guidelines in his book,

*'mother will no longer feel the need to ask for advice from women living next door whose*

*advice could sometimes do more damage than good' (Aceste linii sper că vor fi cu atât mai folositoare cu cât mamele nu vor mai avea nevoie de a cere sfaturi la tote femeile vecine, a căror povește sunt adese-ori forte contradicătoare, și care le au fost impuse a le urma ca niște dogme venite de la persone ce au preptențiunea de a le cunosce din esperianță) (Ibidem, 19).*

Cantemir is actually among those Romanian intellectuals considering that science should overcome tradition, not entirely of course, but the latter should be purified of all those bad practices transmitted through tradition:

*'Young women: beware of all the advices, passed down from one generation to the next ,considered by the science as being harmful and hazardous' (Feriți-ve dar, junelor femei, de tote acele consilii ce au fost transmise din generație în generație, și pe care știința le condamnă ca vătămătoare și periculose) (Ibidem).*

The same seems to be the author's attitude towards breast feeding, subject analyzed in the second part of the book. He criticizes another bad habit of young Romanian mothers, especially of those from the high-class, who deliberately chose not to breast feed the babies. He considers that this is not only a lack of maternal love but also the equivalent of infanticide. The refuse of breast feeding is considered to be an explanation for the highest rates of infant mortality. He describes this practice as being a 'controlled infanticide'. This view is nothing more than an argument for proving the fact that the traditional perception of children as small adults who do not need a different or special attention has long gone. The stress weaves now towards the child understood as a distinct entity who needs to be treated accordingly. The tendency to put the maternal education on certain scientific bases is more than obvious even when the author insists on the psychological side of mother-child relationship. Besides this well-argued statements, some pieces of advice seem to be rather traditional than modern. For instance, he suggests that women who could not breastfeed the baby should better choose a dark complexion woman as wet nurse. The author considers that this kind of woman's breast milk was healthier and richer in proteins:

*'one should choose a brunet, with black eyes and hair; the blondes are lymphatic or with less*

*blood thus their milk is not always protein rich' (In alegerea lor vom prefer tot-dé-una o femeie negricioasă, cu părul și ochii negri; femeile blonde sunt în genere limfatice sau cu puțin sânge, și prin urmare cu un lapte nu întot-dé-una bogat în principii nutritive) (Ibidem, 35).*

Besides these key issues the author also discusses the problem of the baby's clothing; the food diversification; the hygiene and other aspects considered – even nowadays – as being among the paediatricians' major concern.

If we try to evaluate the importance this work has for the present scientific approach, we consider that it lies in all the points Cantemir expressed within the book's pages. It is also valuable because, during the age, there are not so many books of this kind and with so much attention paid to every detail concerning the pregnancy, the childbirth and the first years of a baby's existence. Thus, its value is given by the effort of setting the basis for the 'parenting science'. The author moves away from the traditional practices of child rearing by replacing them with scientific advice and practices. Moreover, its value is increased by the author's experience in children's treatment as a physician, so he speaks out of his own experience. It is also a proof that a new conception on the child has emerged during the XIX century. It is also a testimony of the effort the doctors and school teachers made in order to educate the parents, in general, and mothers in particular. But not all the questions got there answer. There are still questions to be asked: what was the impact this book had during the age. How many parents could have had access to it? The answer to this question should take into consideration the illiteracy rate.

This specific kind of textbooks dealing with such subject matters as the children's rearing according to scientific rules are not so many during the period. We have a very generous literature dealing with the moral and religious education children should be taught, instead. They are the proofs for Romanian elites' effort of trying to find a compromise between the modern influence on one side and the traditional features of Romanian family on the other. They, as well as Romanians from Transylvania too, feared that modern world and modern style of education will endanger the basic cell of the society which was the family. How else could we explain the accent on the moral and religious education? But these kinds of prints are also valuable in the effort of constructing the features of Romanian child

during this time period. We intend to see if the tradition had changed in what the children's education is concerned. Also, two facts must be stress: that the authors of such texts are also prominent personalities of the Romanian cultural life, and secondly that they had insisted mainly on girls' education. The latter fact can be explained by the new perception on women that arose also during the XIX century. They were no longer seen and perceived just as loyal men's subordinates but also as those who could determine a nation's bright or dark future. Everything was directly connected with their quality as mothers who took care not only of their children but of the country's future citizens. This perspective is in fact both new and old at the same time: these are the traditional roles a woman had for centuries. What is new is the interpretation the author gives, as these traditional roles gain a modern perspective being seen as women's social roles. This new perspective on women will be clearly affirmed in an entire literature dedicated to women. It is a literature discussing the Romanian women's education in order to become a 'modern Romanian mother'. On one hand, there was the education a woman needed for meeting the families' necessity, an education based on religion and morality, and, on the other hand, there was the school education for learning basic knowledge a woman needed in order to become a 'social player' (Fodor 2012 a., 203).

This perspective is subject of another book published during the same period. The manners and morality, of both boys and girls, will be discussed by I. Constantinescu in his reading book titled: *Carte de Citire pentru Formarea Moravurilor fiilor si fiicelor crestine* (A Reading Book for Educating the Manners of Christians Sons and Daughters), published in Bucharest, in 1882 (Constantinescu 1882). Before making a content analysis of the text, we must keep in mind not only the fact that the author was a priest, but also that he was a professor to the girls' school from Bucharest. He wrote the text as both a priest and a teacher. The two qualities are in fact joined in order to set some reference points in the moral and religious education of the youth. In fact, and this is explainable by the author's basic formation – as priest – that moral education is deeply influenced by the religious morale. It is not a surprise that the book addresses to female public in the first place. The author, like many others, explains why Romanian girls needed to be raised with a strong moral base. Everything is related with the mission women were supposed to have

in the social life but also with this modern view on women understood as citizens of the nation, not equal with men, but citizens indeed. Traditional is the fact that woman's quality as a citizen is given by her basic feature as mother. It is the motherhood which gains a 'modern' definition: by this quality women fulfil their social role. This seems to be also the author's point of view while considering that

*'a woman is one of the most important member of the religious and civil society; because a wise, caring and religious woman is the soul of a house' (pentru că femeia este unulu din cele mai puternice resorturi ale societăței religioase și civile; pentru că o femeie înțeleptă, băgătoare de semă și religioasă, este sufletulu casei) (Ibidem, 5).*

Opposite to Cantemir's scientific approach, Constantinescu gives Romanian readers a book of morals offering guidance to the youth according to the religious prescriptions. It is divided in three parts: the first is centred on religious matters: a Christian's dignity; a Christian's duties; the prayers; celebrating the Sunday and the religious holidays. The second part, which is of great value for our present study, consists of several chapters dealing with parents-children relationship. The author is not interested in giving parents advice in the spirit Cantemir did, but rather insist on religious and moral obligations they have to each other. Four were a child's responsibilities to his/her parents: love; respect; subordination and help (*Ibidem*, 40). These were the constitutive elements of the relation among family members inspired by the Trinitarian model of the family: hierarchy and love must govern earthly family as it governs the relationship between the Persons of the Holy Trinity (Lung 2006, 140). The third part of the text keeps the same religious perspective when discussing about the children's educational best suited model and their Christian moral duties. Although the text somehow recalls the medieval spirit, it cannot be considered outdated, on the contrary: in an age when 'liberty' was sometimes seen as a potential threat to traditional values, this book insists on the latter. The author understands that, as both a priest and a teacher, he must give children guidance in this changing world. He tries somehow – and in this respect he is not the only one – to preserve Romanian traditional values. Religious identity was among them.

These conclusions are valid for several printed editions of the textbooks used in girls' schools. They also seem to have as main objective that of educating the girls for their future duty as wife and mothers. The authors, of such materials, mostly priests, clearly specify sometimes that the school books must be gender differentiated. Look for instance at the textbook published by a school teacher, T. V. Stefanelli. This time it is clearly specified in the title that the book is for Christian learning. The book is a girls' only one and the author underlines this. Not only the subject but also the layout is designed for girls:

*'This book is different from the other one through the colour displacement so that the prologue, the text as well as the epilogue make a religious and moral impression on girls and considering that, the boys do not need such a displacement, the epilogues being enough for this purpose.*

*This book is different from the other one because the message and the examples are adapted to the girls present and future' situation. The reason for this consists in that the girls will not be theologians or high rank officials' (Această carte se deosebesce de ceea-l-altă prin propunerea acromatică; acesta se face din motivul că atât prologul și tratatul, cât și epilogul, să producă simțiri religioase și morale durabile, care la băieți au să se producă numai prin epilogurile respective).*

*Această carte ...se deosebesce de ceea-l-altă, pentru că apelurile sunt adresate către eleve și exemplele și cele-l-alte, cât cu puțință, acomodare stărilor prezente și viitoare. Acesta se face din motivul, că elevele nu vor fi nici teologi, nici nu vor ocupa locuri de funcțiuni mai înalte ale Statului) (Stefanelli 1887, V, VI).*

The text proves also that the difference between boys and girls, even at their capacities and level of understanding, still exists.

It is also a testimony for arguing that religion and morality seem to be among the main concerns connected with the children's education. Priests and school teachers make efforts in giving Romanian children the basic knowledge they needed for turning into adults. But not only priest - teachers shared this point of view. Laymen share the same opinion, too. George T. Buzoianu, a history and geography teacher had a similar vision on education. He is the author of a reading book *Miculu Școlar* (The Little School Boy) about a child's qualities and defects. The text seems to be an adaptation from French (Buzoianu, 1883). It was published

in Craiova and proves the fact that same concerns were preoccupying not only the intellectuals from Bucharest. The book is also relevant as it addresses to children in a very simple language. It is a reading book specially designed for children - one more proof that children are seen as distinct individuals that need not only a special care but also a specific education according to their level of understanding. This does not mean that we stepped outside the moral and religious education a child should accumulate. The reading book remains in the same spirit: teaching the kids by examples. The stress is now on how important is for a child to go to school and study. It respects somehow the educational program of the State which was intended to increase the literacy level of its citizens. *Copilul care știe să citească* (The child who knows how to read) versus *Copilul care nu știe să citească* (The child who does not know how to read) or Constantin versus Florea and Cezar; *Copilul Înțelept* (The Wise Child) are some of the subjects which appear in the book under the form of short stories easily understandable for children. The moral aspect is inserted within the text which underlines the benefits of institutionalized learning. For instance, the story about the boy who knows how to read describes a boy who listens to his teachers, who helps his parents. This is opposed to Cezar's story who is lazy, who does not want to learn preferring to play games with his friends (*Ibidem*, 5-6). Between these two cases, going from one extreme to another, the author describes the case of another boy who cannot read because he does not have the necessary means: his father died and his mother could not afford to send him to school. It is a touching story, of impact to the young minds, as it ends by describing the unhappiness this boy turned into an adult will feel by not being able to write or read his mother's letters (*Bietul Florea înțelege că mai târziu cându va fi departe nu va putea nici să scrie mamei sale, nici să citească scrisorile ce-i va trimite ea. Bietul băiatu este nenorocitu*) (*Ibidem*).

Much the same energy is put for educating the parents. They are seen not only as those who must provide for their children and cover their material needs. They are perceived, and this is an idea widely expressed in the age, the ones to set the basis for the children's intellectual and cultural development. Another author who could be included in this group is Ioan Slavici. He wrote a textbook on ethics and aesthetics while being a school teacher at the

girls' school financed by Ioan Oteteleşteanu. The school was financed with a clear purpose: that of helping the students to become 'good mothers and wives' (*Întru fericire pomenitul Ioan Oteteleşteanu a luat în testamentul seu dispozițiunea, ca fetele adăpostite în insitutul susținut din averea lăsată de densul să fie crescute așa, ca ele să poată fi «bune mume și bune soții»*) (Slavici, 1897, III). We have another textbook for the fifth grade students. But the textbook is very different form the texts we had analyzed so far. It was deliberately made for teaching morals and morality. These two were transformed into a distinctive subject matter. He teaches ethics and aesthetics, which include notions concerning the children's rearing also. The author was a school teacher appointed to teach these lessons. As a consequence, he published the text in order to help his future students:

*'they should focus not in copying it but rather on the housework duties or in the activities done in the workshop' (mi-am pregătit caietul și l'am dat la tipar, pentru ca elevele mele, care sunt foarte ocupate în gospodărie și în atelier, să nu mai fie nevoite a-l copia)* (Ibidem, III).

But the author considers that not only students will benefit from the text but mothers will found it useful too. (*Îl pun la dispozițiunea publicului atât pentru ca mai mulți să-l poată citi și corecta, cât și pentru că am convingerea firească, că ori-și-care mumă poate să tragă foloase din citirea lui*) (Ibidem, IV). Moreover, Slavici considers that this kind of book is needed in Romanian society as it lacks this kind of literature. This textbook was his personal contribution to the development of such a literature (*Noi avem trebuință de o asemenea carte, și ori eu voi fi ajutat să întregesc și să corectez pe aceasta, ori altul, care e mai bine pregătit și dispune de mai mult timp, va scrie alta mai bună*) (Ibidem).

The third part of the book *Morala socială* (Social Morality) discusses the family relations. By the social morality the author refers to common life whose origins are to be found in the normal parents-children relationship (Ibidem, 118).

The text resembles to the one of Cantemir we previously analyzed. He is not so scientific though. It definitely recalls the modern definitions and views on family and children. The text can offer also a better view on how children were perceived in the society, as well as

on how they should be treated by their parents and by the society. The family is seen as the natural result of a freely consented marriage whose destiny is accomplished through children. The author considers that a complete family consists of six members, three of each sex (Ibidem, 118). In what the parental relationships were concerned, Slavici gives a modern view. The child is not seen just as his/her parents' flesh and blood but also as the inheritor of their spiritual legacy. Thus, the parents' love for their children should include not only sympathy and protection but also the interest towards the development of the child's individuality (*Copilul nu e numai carne din carnea părintelui și sânge din sângele lui, ci tot-o-dată și continuățiunea lui sufletească. De aceea iubirea părintească nu e numai compătimire, nici numai simțement de conservare, ci tot-o-dată și ambițiune pentru desvoltarea propriei individualități*) (Ibidem). We should not exaggerate: Slavici is more modern in defining family relationships but he is not a revolutionary! He respects the traditional perspective of the family seen as a hierarchy led by the husband. Children must respect the paternal authority. Children must obey the parents' decision even in such problems as choosing a professional career or choosing a life partner (*...copilul nu poate să primească nicio însărcinare fără de voia părinților sei, nu să-și aleagă cariera, nici, mai ales să se căsătorească*) (Ibidem, 122). The hierarchy is to govern the relations among brothers and sisters too. Respecting this advice, the children will rich their best in both family and social life (*Acela, care e bun fiu, e și bun frate și are să fie și bun soț și bun părinte, om bun și bine deprins, care-și face în toate împregiurările datorita*) (Ibidem, 124). We can imagine the impact this school subjects had on the minds of the future mothers. This effort of educating the parents seems to be among societies' main objectives. A similar type of literature can be seen at Romanians from Transylvania too. It must also be stressed the fact that the tone and language seem to be adapted to the readers' social level. The leader of this campaign for increasing Romanians' cultural level was ASTRA, of course. Since 1861, when the association was established, it worked mainly for the purpose of educating the nation. This aim was obviously even in the organization's name, ASTRA being the abbreviation for *Asociația transilvană pentru Literatura Română și Cultura Poporului Român* meaning an Association for Romanian literature and for Romanians' culture (Fodor 2012, 24). They also published books for educating the

parents which stressed the importance of educating the children. For instance, V. Gr. Borgovanu will publish *Ionel. Principii morale și creștinești de educațiune*, (*Ionel. Principles of Moral and Christian Education*). It is a series of volumes about the importance of education (Borgovanu 1904). The book is part of the collection coordinated by *Astra's Library* ('*Biblioteca populară a Asociațiunii*'). It is a serial of five volumes, analyzing general aspects of education: *Principii morale și creștinești de educațiune. Cartea I. Familia*; *Principii morale și creștinești de educațiune. Cartea II. Ionel de un an*; *Principii morale și creștinești de educațiune. Cartea III. Ionel până la șese ani*; *Principii morale și creștinești de educațiune. Cartea IV. Ionel la școală*; *Principii morale și creștinești de educațiune. Cartea V. Ionel la școala vieții*.

The fourth book starts with an epigraph that perfectly mirrors the new perspective on children considering that the educated ones are the greatest asset (*Copilul bine crescut e cea mai mare avere*) (*Ibidem*). In fact, the entire collection proves the importance children and their education were gaining as a result of the modernization process.

Although, the latter references are made to a Transylvanian text whereas all the others were from Romania, it does prove our point: that during this period of time Romanian elites were very deeply involved in the debate around education. They made a real effort, under different paths: first they insist on the parents' education as they were the ones to set the bases. But a difference is being made in this case between boys and girls education. The majority of printed material addresses mainly to mothers. This fact does not only reveal the important role mothers are granted in their children's education, but also the progress made by the debate around women's emancipation. Secondly, they tried to change the educational system by enlarging the opportunities of getting into the system of institutionalized schools. They also try to change it through the subject matters taught in Romanian schools.

As a result of these efforts, a new educational model has emerged during the second half of the XIX century. It is a more rationalized one, a more modern one for several reasons: first, because it involves the parents in the process and secondly, because by child the elites mean both boys and girls, who must gain an education although, a gender differentiated one. Modern is also the utility given to this new educational model: it prepares the future citizens who must

respect and accomplish his/her social duties. All the texts we had analyzed within the present study are nothing else than a testimony of the fact that nineteenth century was the age witnessing the creation of a modern Romanian man. Both men and women are subject of transformation as G. L. Mosse stated in *The Image of Man. The Creation of Modern Masculinity* (Mosse 1998). The author considered that although *it is impossible to point to a precise moment when the ideal of modern masculinity was born and became part of modern history... it happened sometimes between the second half of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth* (*Ibidem*, 5). We consider that the perception on children underwent a similar process. Alain Bidaud proved also through a historical analysis on the evolution of the child shows that it is not a given fact, eternal and unchangeable, but a social product (Bidaud, 1985, 69). Thus he/she changes and adapts to the society's evolution. The modern child is definitely a consequence of the changes registered by the society within the modernization process it was going through. We can definitely conclude that Romanian modern child and the educational model specially designed for him is the result of a similar process. The assertion is supported by the books and manuals analysed in this study. Moreover, we must also stress the fact that this change was caused also by the Western influence which cannot be denied. Once again the previously mentioned translations prove our statements. The translations from I. H. Pestalozzi, *How Gertrude Teaches Her Children*, for instance is a good example in this sense. The text was well received by Romanian intellectuals. It even generated a debate over the educational model developed by the author and reclaimed a reprint. It was first published by Eniu L. Bălteanu in a journal with the main objective the enlightenment of the nation (*Lumina* 1886, 26). The text was republished as a brochure few years later, in 1898. The initiative belonged to V. Gr. Borgovanu, a pedagogue who published a critical edition and who stressed the utility of the text for educating the future teachers (Borgovanu 1898).

The change in the children's education as well in what the perception of child in the society is concerned is also due to the progresses made at a scientific level: in medicine and its new branches such as child care, paediatrics as well as pedagogy. They explain the changing in perception toward children although it is not clear enough which is the cause and which is the



effect (Bidaud 72). *The changing of perception definitely contributed to the development of such new scientific branches as well as the progress of medical sciences influenced shaped the attitude toward children (Ibidem)*. Romanian society does not remain outside these changes and progress registered at the scientific level. D. Cantemir's book is a good example in this sense as well as the pedagogy books which were quite numerous (see for instance Bărnăuțiu 1870).

There is a chronological gap between Western and Romanian societies in the perception of child, indeed. In West, for instance, from around the middle of the eighteenth century there emerged a new perception which attached greater importance to the young child aged between three and seven (Luc 1990, 69). Romanian society will try to recover this gap, fact proven by the literature published during the second half of the nineteenth century and by the effort made by authorities in order to increase the parents' level of consciousness towards child care and education.

We should not exaggerate though: the progress made by Romanian society in order to create more careful parents and more educated children has its limits. These are given by several motives: the limited access to the institutionalized educational system; the great level of illiteracy within the Romanians which turned into an obstacle against the process for decreasing it. It is also a question of mentality, of a certain opposition against allowing the children to go to school. This fact is proven by the content of the books addressing to parents, as the one written by V. Gr. Borgovanu. It is also explained through the texts which stress the importance of educating the girls as they will turn into mothers.

But the texts we had analyzed so far, and it was just a selection that we did, prove another important fact: Romanian intellectuals had a deep concern for preserving the traditional values of the nation. This explains the important role played by religion and morality in children's education. Religion is still an important feature in the Romanian society during the XIX century and it still has a great influence on the parents-children relations. It also explain the deep interest in giving the girls, in the first place, a moral education in order to make sure that the family will not be endangered by modernity. As a result of their interest in the nation's progress which could be achieved only through education we are the witnesses of a new educational model as well as of a new perception on the child. It is not a revolutionary

change as the educational model is still a compromise between tradition and modernisation. The school is the institution designed for progress it will also be used now for transmitting the nation's features together with the parents whose duties are also subordinated to the State's efforts for modernization.

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# Multispeed Modernization in Interwar Romania. On Decadence and Complexes of a Peripheral Province – Northern Moldavia

Anca FILIPOVICI

PhD in History, Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania

E-mail: anca.filipovici@yahoo.com

**Abstract.** Romanian culture faced over time its own decadences manifested as cultures of negation. Nor the Romanian interwar was protected by the shadow of decline, despite of the today's perception on the period as one of absolute glory. The feeling of decline is felt especially at the periphery and is manifested on economic and political level, but also through the voices of some provincial intellectuals, creators and animators of the local culture. In Moldavia, the phenomenon is associated to a specific notion borrowed from the Italian culture: 'Moldavian crepuscularism' as a specific form of decadentism. In other words, we refer to the condition of minority allocated to peripheral regions, generating a provincial complex expressed in the context of excessive centralization imposed from Bucharest on all levels of social life.

**Keywords:** northern Moldavia, creative localism, provincial complex, modernization, decadentism

'Decadence is a gift of modernity', says Pierre Chaunu in his exegetical journey through periods of decline over time (Chaunu 1995, 52). A gift that history does not receive with open arms, for this 'phenomena of nostalgia' occurs during a decline or disequilibrium, as a transition from progress to regress. We consider here two types of antithetical modernity: on the one hand, the bourgeois modernity as a phase in the history of Western civilization, linked to the progress through science and technology and to the transformations of capitalism; on the other hand, we speak about modernity as an aesthetic notion with radical antibourgeois trends, showing an overt disgust to the values of the middle class, from anarchist standpoints or from an aristocratic exile (Călinescu 2005, 52). Such a modernity fighting its own crisis gives birth to avant-gardes and decadences. In terms of aesthetic, decadence shows up in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, as reverse side of progress. Its manifestation is especially noticed in the decadent literature from France.

Romanian culture has also its own decadences manifested as cultures of negation. Nor the Romanian interwar was protected by the shadow of decline, despite of the today's perception on the period as one of absolute glory. The feeling of decline is felt especially at the periphery and is manifested through the voices of some provincial intellectuals, creators

and animators of a local culture (<sup>1</sup>). In Moldavia, the phenomenon is associated to a specific notion borrowed from the Italian culture: 'Moldavian crepuscularism' as a specific form of decadentism (Mitchievici 2011, 27). In other words, we refer to the condition of cultural minority allocated to peripheral regions, generating a provincial complex expressed in the context of interwar excessive centralization imposed from Bucharest on all levels of social life.

1918 Union reaches an old goal by coagulating the Romanian provinces in a nation-state, doubling the territory and population and conferring the possibility of making the Romanian voice heard on the world stage. From the national perspective, the gain is undoubtedly enormous. Furthermore, the union itself without a subsequent unification would have been incomplete. Therefore, the tool for this purpose was the centralization on political, administrative, institutional and cultural level. The imposed harmonization often held in a tense, that of an antagonistic networking between center (the Capital) and peripheries (the provinces). The provincial complex in Moldavia

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(<sup>1</sup>) In Romanian literature, French decadentism is taken at first by translations, then proposing its own lyric and prose, with an ambiguous impact on critics that often associate this trend with symbolism. Main directions of this current approach themes like artificiality, sickness and rejection of modernity in a pessimistic note.

had though earlier origins, which preceded another union – that of 1859 – shifting the pole of the political power from Iași to Bucharest. If Iași gradually erodes its fame, yet retaining the status of the main city of Moldavia, the northern part of the region feels increasingly slighted. This status is perpetuated after the 1918 Union, when northern Moldavia seems incapable of exceeding the condition of ‘the place where nothing happened’.

### **Was there Moldavia once ‘the place where everything happened’?**

At the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Romanian society begins to take small steps towards modernization, reflected mainly by the process of urbanization. Imposing administrative buildings, theaters, schools and other cultural institutions, public roads, streets and gardens were built in the central areas of cities, following the Western architectural models, but in a high contrast with the shabby homes in the suburbs. The capital benefits of the most important edifices becoming a space of reference for the urban modernization (Georgescu, Velicu 2009, 13). However, the image of a modern Bucharest with cobbled streets was not to be found in the provinces where cities changed their appearance in a much slower pace. Marked differences between the Capital and provincial towns and also between the central part of towns and suburbs without sewage system or lightning installation confer the image of a discrepant space to the Romanian society of the time. Undoubtedly, the contrast is even striking between urban and rural areas, Romanian villages being trapped in an archaic world, undisturbed by modernization. The first signs of modernization throughout Moldavia occur in early 19<sup>th</sup> century, at fairly low level. The data provided by researches indicate significant differences between the city of Suceava suffering consequences of the 1775 land division, or Dorohoi, with an urbanization rate of 4% and Botoșani city with an urbanization rate of over 30%. The period 1821-1860 seems to be prolific for the mountain towns of northern Moldavia that benefit from the developing of mining and wood industry, the level of urbanization exceeding 35%. In contrast, between 1860 and 1948, despite all transformations, the average level of the country exceeds constantly the level of urbanization in Moldavia (Ungureanu 1980, 35).

Modernization begins to show its first signs around the cities, especially in the central area. The early stage was also common for the

Capital, whose image described in an article from *Intellectual Work Week*, at the beginning of 1924, seemed not so different from that of a provincial town: ‘This city is endless ugly. Look at all the streets full of some special kind of clay, look to the passengers dirty to their neck in mud, splashed by cars like sprinklers, barely dragging their coats and rubbers. [...] Ten times downs the man from the sidewalk to go around a pit with water gushing up again immediately so as he doesn’t get crushed by a car’ (Pârvolescu 2003, 112). Paved and lighted streets, wide boulevards, imposing buildings, bohemian cafes and shiny shops contrast with dirty ugly suburbs. Extremely suggestive is the picture described by a Berliner photographer in 1939, capturing the mélange of West and Orient when crossing Brătianu Boulevard in Bucharest. Thus, till the Brătianu Market the image seems ‘imported from America. Not only the skyscrapers, but also the automotive shops, elegant gas stations, hotels, theaters and streets give this impression.’ After crossing the market, ‘this axis cutting Bucharest from north to south is dominated by the oriental look. There are also blocks, but the specific note is provided by the long strings of carpets merchants hang on groove’ (Pârvolescu 2003, 114). Discrepancies between cities and villages, between downtown and suburbs, between cities and provincial towns sketch a Romanian society of contrasts on different levels.

In the 30s, urban area covered about 20 % of the population, half of which concentrated in the 20 major cities. Along with the development of industry, trade, transport and services, the influx of people from rural to urban has contributed massively to the growth of urban population, Bucharest being the most significant case in this respect. Capital became a complex structure controlling and influencing the rest of the country. Other urban centers, including the provincial towns with 5 000-30 000 inhabitants, developed institutional structures being the proper space for cultural life.

North-Moldavian cities do not appear with the intention of acting as complex urban centers, but develop initially as towns at the crossroads of trade routes. Since its formation, in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, and until the First World War, Botoșani acquires major industrial and economic functions. However, after 1916, the trade becomes rural and the industry decays, the main destabilizing factor being the Capital’s decision of not connecting the town to the main railway nodes (Tufescu 1938, 516). Although it appears as an upgrading element for road

structure, the development of railways proved unfavorable for Botoșani which at this time will be isolated in a continuing economic downturn. The landmarks of prestige in this northern corner are signaled by the four coryphaeus: Eminescu, Iorga, Enescu, Luchian. Their de-provincialization by leaving the native places for good and their fame across the country or abroad deepened the sense of inertia in postwar Botoșani and also the provincial complex for those intellectuals who chose to activate locally, especially from the cultural press stage.

19<sup>th</sup> century Dorohoi appears with clean, neat suburbs, like a well-kept village (Xenopol 1910, 44), while, after the war, the faith of the town seems to follow that of neighboring Botoșani, looking as ‘a shabby city which hardly deserves city status, but who apparently starts to wake up, especially by school and intellectual activity’ (Simionescu 1925, 125).

In Fălticeni, town of Baia County, we find the same atmosphere: ‘city buried in quite, forgotten by the world’, ‘where the numb souls of locals could revive’ (Ibidem, 134). With a population, in 1930, of more than 14000 inhabitants, the small town remained part of Moldavia province after the annexation of Bukovina, representing a refuge for Romanians who refused Austrian rule. An agricultural area with underdeveloped industry, shrouded in a silence favorable for creation, Fălticeni was the desirable place for the intellectual formation of personalities like Eugen Lovinescu, Mihail Sadoveanu, Arthur Gorovei or Marcel Blecher.

At the turn of 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> century, Suceava had a modern look, influenced by the Austrian architectural style, but also preserving Romanian traditions. The city represented a ‘center of Romanianism’ in relation to a Czernowitz too concentrated with ‘the formalism of everyday.’ (Ibidem, 242) With a multi-ethnic population engaged in agricultural area, Suceava lived in the same numb atmosphere characteristic for northern Moldavia. However, a very rich cultural activity played an important role within schools and cultural societies.

Rădăuți, Siret, Câmpulung Moldovenesc, Gura Humorului – look all oppressive and decadent. What we generic call as ‘culture’ was the string northern Moldavia used for getting out of the shadow and making its voice heard. Without holding a university, such as the one from Iași, north-Moldavian area noted through a network of secondary schools around which cultural mobilization of local intellectuals manifested constantly. If slow pace of change fully characterizes this provincial corner,

cultural activities seem to be the only mechanism for getting out of the mist of time.

### **Provincial cultural production in northern Moldavia, between ‘creative localism’ and ‘crepuscularism’**

In most cases, provincial identity defines itself under the spectrum of complexes of periphery and through a negative comparison to the decadent center. The background of these complexes stands in comparing two unequal entities. On the other hand, ascertaining inferiority doesn’t generate complexes automatically, but proves a lucid self-criticism. A source of this state is the awareness of weakness, the feeling of unreachable giving rise to resentment (Martin 2002, 32). Speaking of Romanian literature as literature at the incipient stage, Mircea Martin argues that the provincial isolation – geographical, temporal or linguistic – determines a series of complexes manifested naturally (<sup>1</sup>). Adrian Marino also talked about ‘the Dinicu Golescu complex’ with reference to the substantial economic and cultural differences comparing to the West (Ibidem, 20). Furthermore, provincialism manifests at different scales. The role of periphery and center is translated on several levels: from East to West, from capital to province, from rural to urban, from suburbs to downtown area *etc.* The literature of a province – in this case, Moldavian province – suffers from this load of complexes when comparing to the writings from the Capital.

What are the bases on which we plead for a reading of the peripheral traditional creation thorough the modernist grid of decadentism? The note of decadentism for these writings is translated by asserting own values in tandem with the rejection of what the Capital imposes; denunciation of the Capital’s morals; accusing the central literature of promiscuity and ignorance of peripherals. In fact, this is also the slope of sliding (the slipping) of the traditional *semănătorism* towards decadentism: promoting tradition and a healthy rural in antithesis with a decadent, urban, capitalist and aggressive modernity. Decadentism becomes the occasion for revealing contrasts and for manifesting a

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(<sup>1</sup>) Mircea Martin analyses the following ‘literary complexes’: the complex of delay; the complex of discontinuity; the complex of the rural; the complex of the continuous beginning; the complex of imitation; the complex of the absence of the top names; the complex of the lack of audience; the complex in front of the critics.

contemplative nostalgia of periphery opposing modernity.

The cultural press and writings in interwar northern Moldavia follow two main directions: some prints cover topics and trend from the central media. Other exploit the local, with the literary tools circumscribed to a 'delayed semănătorism' promoted in interwar period by Nicolae Iorga <sup>(1)</sup>. Many works of north-Moldavian authors were being published in journals sponsored by Iorga, following the traditionalistic principles of recovering tradition by invoking the idyllicism of rural life and the glory of the national past, rejecting, in the same time, the urban civilization. Perhaps it's no coincidence that the Moldavian novels representative for the 'crepuscular' creation belong to Mihail Sadoveanu (*Locul unde nu s-a întâmplat nimic*) [*The place where nothing happened*] and Ionel Teodoreanu (*La Medeleni*) [*At Medeleni*], de-provincialized Moldavian authors from Iași area. Frescoes of patriarchal society, the novels reveal the nostalgia of a world unadapt to modernity – the peasantry – and of a world that is denied any chance to adapt – the old nobility. Returning to the northern area, Moldavian 'crepuscularism' is shaped on several coordinates.

Going through the press and memoirs of some intellectuals from this region, we find out that the creators of the province cling often to the fame of personalities born there, but de-provincialized. The fame of the 'uprooted' acute the silence remaining behind them and the complex of periphery that gave the world great names, but failed to remove itself from the shadow. Such complexes occur along with exaggerated reductions or augmentations of proportions. Some articles from the local interwar press drawing attention to the harsh situation of province begin by invoking the high class personalities originating in the area: 'what city of the Romanian country has a past as glorious as the city of Eminescu?' Such a fact should be a source of regeneration for the city like Botoșani 'who did not sin at all to be forsaken' (Drimer 1935, 2).

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<sup>(1)</sup> *Junimea Moldovei de Nord, Revista Moldovei, Moldova literară, Tudor Pamfile, Revistă de limbă, literatură și artă literară, Șezătoarea. Revistă pentru literatură și tradițiuni populare, Junimea literară, Făt-Frumos, Freamătul literar, Muguri, În muguriri. Revistă literară, artistică-socială, Vestitorul satelor, Tinerimii. Organ de cultură al Societății Tinerimea, Îndrumarea, Orion, Pană literară, Iconar etc.*

Any return of the 'illustrious' is always perceived with enthusiasm and nostalgia for a fame surrounding the area which disappears with the completion of the visit. In his memoirs, the writer Eugen Pohonțu, former student of Laurian High school from Botoșani, remembers a visit of the historian Nicolae Iorga at the school he also graduated. After a triumphant reception, the students remain fascinated by a man perceived beyond genius. The fact that Iorga studied at the same high school intensifies the mirage, but also the oppressive atmosphere after the guest's departure: 'I lived, as a high school student, the Iorga myth and mirage. For our young generation he was more than a superman. He was an idol, because a superman, however high he may be, can be reached and even surpassed by other. We felt Iorga out of any possibility of being outdone by anyone. Impossible of taken as a model, we sat him in our soul with extreme admiration' (Analele Bucovinei 2000, 541).

The reference to the leading personalities and the desire to overcome the provincial condition also occur in a note signed by the Laurian High school alumni association: 'Of course, in the secret chamber of our heart we worship those who, by the brilliance of their culture, adorn the gate of European orient, but, turning our eyes around, we don't overlook those who swarm here, in this quite town, as we do. [...] We are convinced that this proud country is not only the work of genius, scientists, wise philosophers and victorious generals, but is also the result of those who work with obstinacy, with devotion, supporting the state building' (Revista Moldovei 1924, 49).

Even if the provincial intellectual realizes his importance in the overall process for the evolution of society, the discourse transpires a certain degree of inferiority, especially when he relates himself to the intellectual from the Capital. The self-perception of the provincial intellectual playing the role of a regionalist writer is depicted by C. D. Fortunescu in an article about the reviews from provinces: 'If he is really an intellectual, not an employer with a pen – he is interested in what it is written also in Bucharest and in the province, his spirit not being so professionally deformed that he would consider the Capital the *umbilicus mundi* of the Romanian mind [...] the provincial man of letters lets himself less influenced by the changing patterns and cliques of Bucharest [...] being more studious, unrushed, capable of choosing himself and descending into his own soul in search for originality which so many

thought to find in the neighbor's backyard' (Fortunescu 33, 2).

With all this arsenal of more or less objective attributes, the local creator is subsidiary of the center imposing cultural values, and although these values concern him, he cannot influence them, his presence being either ignored, or treaded with condescendence.

The literature from the periphery is another coordinate of the Moldavian 'crepuscularism' built around the complexes. Relevant in this context is the literary review from Suceava, *Făt-Frumos*, edited since 1926 under the leadership of Leca Morariu, one of the most vocal supporters of province's individuality. Focused on promoting the local folk creation, the review stigmatized from the beginning the 'mystification' of modern literature feeding 'the cult of pride' and 'self-worship' (Morariu 1926,1). The publication define itself as a 'weapon' of 'Romanian authenticity' fighting against the snobbery of the Capital. For instance, in a chronic of an article appeared in *Țara de Jos*, Morariu disagrees one author's claim that provincial reviews – including *Făt-Frumos* from Suceava – try to copy the writing style from Bucharest, without playing the spirit of the region: 'They say, for instance, *nothing from the regional folklore* in the *Făt-Frumos* of Suceava whose only constant concern is *to get closer to the level of Bucharest reviews!* [...] He should leave us alone, Mister N. N. Vasiliu from Bucharest, with his *level* [...] our regionalism [...] doesn't need, doesn't need, doesn't need that mentioned *level!*' (Morariu 1927, 24-25).

Travelling Moldavia towards the Bukovinean counties, we find samples of creative localism conferring other values to the provincial complexes. We refer here to the *Iconar* group, created in 1931 in Rădăuți and moved five years later in Czernowitz. *Iconarism* defined itself as 'Moldavian gothic' opposed to aesthetics and modernism from Christian-ethic views and it was generated by a series of grievances manifested within a complex of periphery somehow different from that one of the north-Moldavian cities from the Old Kingdom. After the 1918 Union, the writers from Bukovina showed a sense of superiority, overshadowed by marginalization, by the lack of a well-strengthen Romanian tradition in a multi-ethnic space and by the presence of foreigners perceived as enemies (Diaconu 1999, 21). In such an atmosphere, maybe the xenophobic and anti-Semitic tendencies should not surprise. The language practiced by this literary movement

was also pretty violent, especially when expressing the support for the Iron Guard. The program of the movement is edited in 1934 and pleads for regionalism and for the emancipation of Bukovina out of Bucharest publishing houses. The authors from *Iconar* shared their belief that the province is 'the only way to salvation of the ethnic being and the path for rebirth of the original patterns' (Ibidem, 83). Thus in the pages of the *Iconar* review from 1935-1937 there are creations pursuing the recovery of the provincial values, but also articles and legionary praises signed by local authors and also by writers from the Capital: Radu Gyr, Nae Ionescu, Mircea Eliade, Emil Cioran, Ion Marin, Vasile Moța *etc* (Niculică 2006).

Revealing these samples of 'crepuscular' creation we do not intend to throw all the provincial writings under the 'yoke' of complexes. Without any doubt, masking the differences between Capital and peripheries was the appanage of many local personalities trying to create a bridge between northern Moldavia and Bucharest. We must mention here Ion Nistor, historian and unionist militant from Bukovina, and George Tofan, editors of *Junimea literară*. Published since 1904, the review followed the line of semănătorism promoting Romanian culture and the awakening of national consciousness in the front of the 'black-yellow spirit' symbolized by the Austrian rule (Nistor 1923, 1). Since its inception, the review intended to create a true literary movement with known authors like I.G. Sbiera, Simeon Florea Marian, T.V. Stefanelli, Sextil Pușcariu and the youngers Victor Morariu, Gabriel Rotică, Ion Grămadă, Traian Brăileanu, Dimitrie Marmeliuc *etc*. After the war, local intellectuals make efforts to reactivate the publication whose first number appears in 1923 with the hope of soul unification through culture of all inhabitants from Bukovina. This time, the program added a new goal: 'We want to be the organ of an intellectual and spiritual connection between periphery and center, striving to spread here the Romanian culture and to enrich it with our literary productions' (Ibidem, 6). The movement around the liberal Ion Nistor intended to be consistent with cultural activities from the Capital, while the creative localism developed within the review was not so touched by the provincial complex. Actually, Nistor always rejected the idea of regionalism, pleading for unification at all levels and believing that emphasizing the local values does not express regionalist tendencies.

The problem of the provincial complex and the efforts for overcoming this statute was also frequently approached by the liberal newspaper *Glasul Bucovinei*, although the paper always rejected any claims of regionalism, promoting integration and unification. From the cultural stand point, *Glasul Bucovinei* encouraged local culture, advocating for the asserting of a new provincial literature that couldn't pierce the shadow: 'It's true, our young writers work much, perhaps more than they work in other annexed provinces, but the result of their labor is not known. [...] With so many writers, and some real talented ones, real encyclopedic spirits, we cannot remain without a real literature' (Putneanu 1933, 3).

In a review on a poetry anthology, the writer George Drumur from northern Moldavia praises poetry in this corner of the country, but blaming the attitude of 'various failed critics, housed at the mercy of various publishers from Bucharest which print lately a fantastic scrap' (Drumur 1934, 2). We see here two paradoxical attitudes: the assertion of superiority in relation to the center dealing with a complex generated by ignorance and unfounded critics. The explanation of an erroneous reception of the creation from this province is taught to be conferred by the unique regional identity: '...northern affinities in Bukovina form the border point between Orientalism, Byzantine in shape, Oltenia and Muntenia. Hence the repugnance for everything that is Bukovina which indicates that the millennial dream of union is more territorial...' (Ibidem).

### Conclusions

An overview on interwar north-Moldavian creation reveals undoubtedly its minor character. Intellectual production in the province limits itself especially to the literary or opinion press. Press enjoys constant attention from about 60 names who sign constantly in the interwar decades. The following area for north-Moldavian creators is lyrics and prose, although the relevance of these writings according to the literary criticism is not that high: out of 121 creators we have counted only 50 appear in main Romanian anthologies, while the other 71 are listed only in local or regional dictionaries (Filipovici 2012, manuscript).

Romanian literature and science is propelled by the work of great creators who manage to become landmarks of the national culture. Creative localism, in its crepuscular note, contributes to strengthening this culture, especially by constructing a local identity and

lifting the marginalized provinces by means of culture. For this reason, local dictionaries and monographs promotes its intellectuality often apologetic, while, at the center, local creation is reviewed with condescendence. This is just one pillar explaining that modernization and unification had different speeds within the same borders and that for every gain there is always a reverse.

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## Two Patriarchs in Jerusalem (1927)

Valeria SOROȘTINEANU

Associate professor, 'Lucian Blaga' University of Sibiu, Romania

E-mail: valeria.sorostineanu@ulbsibiu.ro

**Abstract.** The pilgrimage of the first Romanian Patriarch, Miron Cristea, in 1927, to Jerusalem, exceeded the characteristics of a protocol visit, as it also meant an evaluation of the position of the Romanian Orthodox Church after 1918. Although it did not benefit from a large scale promotion – except for the detailed account on the pilgrimage published in the *Biserica Ortodoxă Română* [*The Romanian Orthodox Church*] periodical – its significance was indisputable. The most representative aspects were those regarding the situation of the Romanian Orthodoxy after the instalment – in 1925 – of the Romanian Patriarchy, the involvement of the first Patriarch, Miron Cristea, in promoting an open attitude of the Orthodox towards the Protestant and Anglican churches as well as a re-evaluation of the traditional and profound connections to the Eastern Christianity, the latter having constantly benefitted from Romanian (especially material) support. The pilgrimage to the Holy Land was assessed not only in terms of personal experience but also through the context in which the Romanian community was expected to be represented – especially in Jerusalem – as well as the rest of the Christian communities through a church and a shelter for Romanian pilgrims. Just as in the case of the Patriarchate of Constantinople – on behalf of which he pleaded against the authoritarian tendencies of Mustafa Kemal's Turkish state – in Jerusalem, Miron Cristea advocated for the need that the traditional Eastern Patriarchates should support – in a modern way – the Greek cultural superiority in the foundation of the old Byzantium. He argued however that this should only concern the dogma and not the perpetual affirmation of the importance of the Greek element at the expense of other Orthodox communities.

**Keywords:** Orthodox Church, pilgrimage, Orthodoxy, Jerusalem, Romanian believers

Miron Cristea's (1868-1939) appointment as Metropolitan-Primate of the Orthodox Church of Romania was an open and clear manifestation of the new realities offered by the Greater Romania (in Romanian *România Mare*) and a symbol of the latter. Born in Transylvania (Toplița/Harghita), he first became known there, both within the church and due to his publishing and literary work, but most of all for being a supporter of the Romanian cause. The future Patriarch of Romania had several attributions, which subsequently recommended him for the positions he later held: secretary of the Metropolitan Bishop Miron Romanul, Bishop of Caransebeș (1910-1918), Metropolitan-Primate of Romania (1919-1925), elected in 1919 as an honorary member of the Romanian Academy. The Romanian Orthodox Church became a Patriarchy in 1925, and Miron Cristea became the first Patriarch, also initiating the opening of the Romanian Orthodox Church towards the Protestant world, as one of the founders of the ecumenical movement (establishing close relations with the Anglican Church). He advocated for cordial relations between all the Orthodox Churches and for maintaining the

Orthodox Patriarchate in Constantinople. In politics, however, he was not equally successful, as during his regency (1927-1930) and his time as prime minister during King Carol II's personal authority regime (1938-1939), his contemporaries accused Cristea of supporting the negative implications of the anti-Semitic legislation promoted by the Goga-Cuza government.

Although it started as a diplomatic response to the visit of Patriarch Damianos of Jerusalem in Romania in 1924, Patriarch Miron Cristea's pilgrimage to the Holy Land (May 22-June 4, 1927) exceeded a custom protocol visit, being turned into an evaluation of the situation of the Orthodox Church in general and of the Eastern Orthodoxy in particular.

His pilgrimage had a mixed character, both diplomatic and private, but many times it exceeded the official implications of his visit. Dedicating a substantial study to Patriarch Damianos' visit to Bucharest, Archimandrite Iuliu Scriban warned that – in the new context following 1918 – the Romanian Orthodox Church felt more entitled to advocate for the Orthodox faith, which belonged 'generally to us

and we have to be interested in it and cherish it even when it passes the borders of Romania'. However, precisely in order to manifest itself in the above mentioned manner, the Romanian Orthodox Church took upon itself a new, more active role (Scriban 1924).

Considered to have been a time of great achievements, particularly through the instalment of the Romanian Patriarchy in 1925, the interwar period was one of initiatives on behalf of the Romanian Orthodox Church, among them the efforts to support the traditional Eastern Orthodox Patriarchies. This placed the former in a significant position, including in its relations with the Patriarchate of Constantinople. We must however mention that the new image, more dynamic, of the Romanian Orthodox Church as well as the obvious weakness of some of the Eastern Patriarchies did not result in the expected balance.

The years of crisis during the conflict between Greece and Turkey meant a difficult period, not only regarding the two countries, but also for them in relation to the Patriarchate of Constantinople, this requiring several international conferences – of which the most important was that organised in Lausanne – in order to clarify the problems, namely territorial, between the two countries. At the above mentioned conference, the Romanian Minister of Foreign Affairs, I.G. Duca interceded - at Miron Cristea's request and benefiting from the support of the U.K. – in favour of the Greeks' claims not to have the Orthodox Patriarchate of Constantinople relocated and, as a result, the Patriarch Meletios IV officially expressed his thanks (Abrudeanu 1929, 315-317).

Thus, the location of the Patriarchate remained there since the Turks had the situation under control anyway. The latter also manifested benevolence towards establishing cordial diplomatic relations, including with Romania. Besides this context of the conflict taking place in Asia Minor between Greece and Turkey, we must add that the diminishing of the prestige of the Patriarchate of Constantinople took place after the transformation of tsarist Russia into the Soviet Union (Petcu 2009, 206).

Since in the period of 1917-1925 the Patriarchate of Constantinople was in a very vulnerable position and the voice of Russian Orthodoxy had been silenced by the Bolshevik regime, Miron Cristea triggered an action plan that sought to impose, instead, the Romanian Orthodoxy in supporting the cause of Orthodoxy itself at the official level (Plămădeală 1987, 349-350).

The year 1925 also meant the celebration of 1600 years since the First Nicaea Ecumenical Council, and the European Christian Churches, especially the Protestant and the Anglican Churches, along with the Orthodox Church, held at London a Congress for the reassessment of the importance of the First Ecumenical Council. This generated a broad ecumenical movement, a noble idea in itself, but especially complicated due to the time required to clarify and achieve joint Christian church reunification actions. Becoming a Patriarch in 1925, Miron Cristea had already initiated fruitful relations with the Protestant areas, being the first Romanian hierarch who visited England and the first initiator of the ecumenical movement in the Orthodox area.

Along with Metropolitan Nicolae Bălan of Transylvania – also a supporter of this cause - attended or sent delegates to the ecumenical conferences organised since 1920 at Chicago and Geneva, and followed by the better known ones that took place in London and Stockholm in 1925 (Plămădeală 1987, 47).

Besides the debates that took place in London, the Christian congress organised in Stockholm generated what is now officially known as the ecumenical movement, and among the other initiators we must not forget to mention again the Romanian Patriarch Miron Cristea.

Although pleased with the Romanian representatives' contributions at these first ecumenical conferences, Cristea believed that the Orthodox world should review its discourse about society and, moreover, take a stand against its problems. That is why he answered enthusiastically to the idea of organising an ecumenical pan-Orthodox council.

Although in general the Orthodox world has always appeared to be connected to an immutable tradition, one must say that in the context described above the Romanian Orthodox Church established a number of issues to be discussed and reviewed at a potential ecumenical Orthodox council: the calendar, the adaptation of the religious service to the needs of the churches and the revision of fasting, also the remarriage of widowed priests, the reassessment of the relations between all the Orthodox Churches, as well as the emergence of common institutions to serve the cause of Orthodoxy and raising the Orthodox monasticism to its 'former glory' (Plămădeală 1987, 20).

Miron Cristea's intentions went however beyond all these plans, significant as they were.

A pragmatic nature, he wished that the Council of Nicaea was celebrated by a new ecumenical council and that the Orthodox Patriarchate of Constantinople became a representative of the Orthodox faith, following the desire of some national patriarchs, who had declared that they wanted to feel the spiritual leaders of a Christian church, without any ethnic, national or political threats and pressures (Cristea, 1920).

Despite initial difficulties, between 1923 and 1932, two conferences took place in order to prepare the pan-Orthodox synod. The first took place in Constantinople in 1923, being convened by the Patriarch Meletios IV, and discussed a sensitive issue – the calendar – but without reaching an agreement. It was followed in 1930 by the conference of Vatopedi/ Athos, which was to prepare the future works of the pan-Orthodox synod – for which the new patriarch, Photios II, established the year 1932 - but for various reasons, the council did not take place (Petcu 2009, 210-211).

In the same period, the Romanian historian Nicolae Iorga advocated for a real transformation of the Patriarchate into a federal body, detaching itself at some point - for the benefit of all the Orthodox Churches - from what the Greeks were trying to put into practice, through the 'Megali Idea': the Great Greece, dominating the Balkan Peninsula.

Also departing from an ancient structure and benefiting only temporarily from the support of the European Powers, besides being internally divided into royalists and republicans, Greece also failed in its political plan while the Patriarchate of Constantinople made no efforts to modernize its general image. In fact, in his pilgrimage to the republican Greece, Miron Cristea observed the tense relations between the political leader E. Venizelos and the Orthodox Church, the latter being considered a supporter of the monarchy (Cristea 1927).

It was in this context that, according to Miron Cristea and other interwar Romanian intellectuals that the Romanian Orthodox Church needed a patriarch, being the only country preserving the metropolitan as the highest religious level, although it had the largest number of Orthodox believers, after Russia (Petcu 2009, 405).

Miron Cristea left on a pilgrimage after officially becoming a patriarch (on January 11, 1925), having participated in Iași at what was meant to be a preamble to a synod of the Orthodox world. We refer here to the Iași Celebrations, dedicated not only to the Council of Nicaea in 325 but also to the significance of

the writing, in 1642 – by Petru Movilă of Kiev – of the Orthodox Confession of Faith, in the presence of Prince Vasile Lupu and Metropolitan Varlaam, in a time when the Protestant Church wanted to win on its side more territories besides Transylvania. At the above mentioned celebrations, the Patriarchate of Constantinople chose only to send delegates, while the other Eastern patriarchs, of Alexandria and of Jerusalem, later expressed their interest in visiting Romania (Abrudeanu 1929, 419-420).

There have also been successful attempts to establish friendly relations between the Patriarchate of Constantinople and two of the Orthodox churches: one, the Bulgarian Orthodox Church, having been considered schismatic for a long time, and the other, the Albanian Orthodox Church, being a newly founded one. However, despite their importance, these contributions did not receive the expected recognition (Petcu, 2009, 203-204, Dron 1926).

Between the visit of Patriarch Damianos of Jerusalem in Romania in 1924 and Miron Cristea's pilgrimage to the Holy Land – as well as the Patriarchates of Constantinople, Jerusalem and Alexandria, in 1927 – the emergence of the Romanian Patriarchy was meant to strengthen the institution through many innovative ideas, which however remained at the level of plain debates.

Officially travelling to confer the Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem to the Romanian royal family, to some ministers and the Metropolitan-Primate Miron Cristea, the Patriarch of Jerusalem considered natural that an eventual Orthodox ecumenical synod should take place in the Holy City, while he did not hide his dissatisfaction with the new British authorities in Palestine who sought by means of a commission to oversee the pilgrimages to the Holy Land. As a result, Miron Cristea interceded with the Archbishop of Canterbury for a better understanding of common problems (Plămădeală 1987, 365).

Following the impressive pilgrimage of 154 pilgrims organised by Metropolitan Nicolae Bălan in 1925, the one organised by Miron Cristea in 1927 can thus be included in a series of personal and official travels of a similar kind. The main source of information on this pilgrimage is the report that he prepared, at his return, for the Romanian Orthodox Church Synod.

Just as in previous pilgrimages, the visit included the traditional stages: leaving from Constanța harbour to Constantinople, Athens, Alexandria, Cairo, and then Jerusalem. The only

regret he expressed was that, because of the lack of time, they could not visit the Patriarchate of Antioch (Cristea 1927, Abrudeanu 1929, 443).

Regarding the first major stop, there is not much to say except mentioning his previously expressed sadness regarding the fact that in Constantinople there were increasingly fewer aspects to remind them that for the followers of this religion, the city remained the 'Capital of the Orthodox faith'. Arriving there on May 23, 1927, Miron Cristea offered his support to militant Orthodoxy, expressing - in his talks with Patriarch Basil - the belief that a pan-Orthodox movement was desirable and that they must strive to stop the Turks from perceiving the Patriarchy as 'just a representation of the interests of the Greeks' (Abrudeanu 1929, 315-317).

Athens was considered a special stop in the pilgrimage, although the first part of the visit was focused on official aspects, including the meeting with the President of the Republic, the reunion with the Synod of the Greek Orthodox Church and the service held in the Cathedral of Athens. However, these could not compete with the manner in which Miron Cristea felt and described the moment at 'the rock of the Areopagus, where I read - our heads uncovered - the speech given by the Apostle Paul to the Athenians' (Cristea 1927).

The next visit took place at the Patriarchate of Alexandria, on which the account offers details about Patriarch Meletios' kind welcome, as well as observations about the evolution of the Orthodox community there. Miron Cristea was primarily interested in the relations between the Greek community - dominant not only numerically but also through the position it had in the choosing the Patriarch from among its hierarchs - and the political aspirations of the Arab community - particularly of the Orthodox one - which could not be ignored. A special role was still played by the Copts. Even more so, in the visits performed to the Patriarchate school in Ramleh he noticed that there were young Syrians among its students (Cristea 1927).

The last aspects of his journey were rather focused on touristic aspects, illustrated by the photos taken at the Museum of Antiquities in Cairo and of course at the pyramids and the Sphinx.

In fact, the visit to Alexandria prepared Miron Cristea for the most important part of the pilgrimage, namely the visit to Jerusalem, where he remained between May 30 and June 4, 1927. It was associated to some touching moments

such as Patriarch Damianos' welcome at the entrance of the Holy Sepulchre. After the common service held there by the two patriarchs, Miron Cristea expressed his wish to give his thanks for the 'blessings towards our Motherland and our Church' but also for 'King Ferdinand's health, [as he was] seriously ill'. At the Calvary chapel he performed a memorial service for the Romanian heroes in World War I as well as for those who had been on pilgrimage there in 1925 (Ploieşteanul 1940).

Another important moment, filled with religious significance, was that of the baptism in the Jordan River, symbolising the conviction of sin and the hope in the future. Personally, Miron Cristea consecrated with holy water from the Jordan River a number of five icons, which he later sent to the hermitage he had built in his hometown, Toplița. Other important stops during the pilgrimage took place in Bethlehem, the Mount of Olives, Bethany, the Dead Sea, Jericho and Nazareth, Cana of Galilee, all filled with biblical meaning related to Jesus' life in that part of the world.

Another special moment was the visit to the 'Transylvania' colony, inhabited by Hebrews originated from Romania. Officially, in Jerusalem the diplomatic issues did not prevail, except for an official meeting with the governor of Palestine from which just one diplomatic representative - that of Turkey - was absent.

For the Romanian Patriarch, it was important to solve three aspects concerning the Patriarchate he was visiting: the relationship with the Christian Arab community - on which he correctly noticed a 'strong Arab consciousness', the reassessment of the many properties of the Patriarchate that were not valorised properly, having as a result the accumulation of large debts and, finally, establishing a balance in the relationship they had with other Christian churches, present at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, in particular with the Roman Catholic Church and the Armenian or Coptic Church (Cristea 1927).

But what was the situation of Romanians in Jerusalem? In 1927, the year of the pilgrimage, their situation was complicated, in the sense that the building of a Romanian institution in Jerusalem (consisting of a church and a hostel for pilgrims) was still at the beginning. The situation was all the sadder, as the Romanian donations to support the Holy Places were recognised as significant, due to the special symbolism Jerusalem had for the Romanian Orthodox. Concerning pilgrimages, Romanians started this practice rather late,

particularly if one considers the non-clerical pilgrims, as monks and nuns were mentioned in many sources to have been at the Jordan River, Mount Tabor and Jerusalem (Crețu 2007, Al.A.Botez 1971).

Returning in 1927 to Jerusalem, Miron Cristea noticed that Romanians, despite the sacrifices they had made, had 'no shelter of their own', although they deserved - for everything they did - the 'gratitude of Christianity and Orthodoxy' (Cristea 1927).

The model followed until then in everything related to pilgrimages was the Russian one, pilgrimages being organised in the period 1900-1914 by the Palestinian Archaeological Society of St. Petersburg that also built monasteries and shelters for pilgrims on the route Odessa-Jaffa, and organised 2 travels per month (Veniamin 1933).

In the nineteenth century, there had been a number of important initiatives of some clergymen as well as non-clericals, who actually contributed to the foundation for what was to become later the Romanian settlement in Jerusalem. Among them we could mention: the monk Theodor Rosetti and his disciple Irinarh, who built a Romanian monastery on Mount Tabor (1859-1862), and Sister Porfirie from Râșinari, who turned a deserted chapel of the Holy Archangels Monastery in the so-called Romanian chapel, consecrated in 1926 (Pocitan 1927, 335).

A special case was that of Theodor Burada, Professor at the Conservatory in Iași, and a well-known ethnologist and folklorist, who after the pilgrimage made in 1884 dedicated himself to the mission of fundraising in order to build a settlement for the Romanian pilgrims. He received help from Queen Elizabeth, who, between 1906 and 1914, supervised the work of the initiative committee, whose president she was. The committee consisted of the Metropolitan-Primate Conon Arămescu, the Metropolitan of Moldova and Suceava, Pimen, the Sinaia Monastery Archimandrite, Dionisie, and the architect Ghica-Budești. The initiative was supported by the Romanian state through a grant of 200 000 lei. In the call issued by the committee and addressing the Romanian people, there was a sentence worth mentioning, suggesting that the action was meant to unite all efforts, from the 'oblation of the poor, to the talent of the rich, as a proof of Christian love of the Romanian people' (*O biserică românească în Ierusalim din inițiativa Majestății Sale, Reginei Elisaveta*, 1914).

Following the first fundraising in 1906, the initiators of this project could rent a location for housing Romanian pilgrims and in 1908 purchase some land for the construction of a Romanian church (the location of which being established in 1912). Patriarch Damianos' initial consent had been given but the works could not start because, according to the legislation of the Ottoman Empire, a request on behalf of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem was necessary, justifying the need to build a Romanian Orthodox church there, followed by an imperial decree on the matter. In order to perform an analysis on the field, the Romanian Orthodox Church sent to Jerusalem, in April 1914, a commission headed by Father Demetrescu, along with Dionisie Simionescu, abbot of the monastery of Sinaia, the architect George Lupu and Theodor Burada (Demetrescu 1914).

In the same context, around the year 1918, the priest Florea from Dobrogea and his wife - who had decided to spend the rest of their lives in Jerusalem - tried to reunite the entire Romanian community in Jerusalem and rented a house with this purpose, one room being converted into a chapel (Negoiță 1941).

In the meanwhile, in 1930, Patriarch Miron Cristea received the support of the Royal family for a new initiative committee, consisting of the two queens - Queen Marie and Queen Helen -, following their pilgrimage to the Holy Land (Ploieșteanul 1940).

After solving the political and canonical formalities, there was still the need to clarify the situation of the estate purchased by Theodor Burada on behalf of an Arab Christian and which was going to enter into the property of the Romanian Patriarchy. Regarding this issue, Miron Cristea, on returning home, convinced the Ministry of Religious Affairs to pay the remaining taxes on behalf of the owner of the estate. Moreover, as in British Palestine the institutions of other states could not own properties this right being limited only to citizens, after the payment of remaining debt of 6633 lei, the priest-vicar of Bucharest, Tit Simedrea bought the land in question and donated it to the Patriarchy in 1935.

Between 1930 and 1935, the issue of the Romanian settlement in Jerusalem was advocated by Athanasie Negoiță, a young and ambitious scholar that had received a fellowship from the Romanian state and who studied Biblical Studies at the French School of Archaeology-Biblical Studies. It was he who provided perhaps the most eloquent and concise opinion on the disproportion between the

donations made by the Romanian to Jerusalem and their actual presence there. Thus, Athanasie Negoită argued that he had found traces of the passage of Romanian pilgrims in Jerusalem only at the Archangels Monastery, where one could find Romanian inscriptions 'on the stone floor of the cloister yard'. An enthusiastic nature, he found in Father Gherasim Luca – who had retired to Jerusalem, after a long period of being a priest in America – a great supporter of the cause.

Together they initiated a committee and fundraising in Jerusalem as well, their appeal addressing all Romanians, including those living in America, where an Orthodox diocese was founded in 1934. In order not to create the impression of parallel actions and for a better coordination – at least that was the official version – the Romanian Patriarchy took the initiative in 1931 and placed the action under the direction of Father C. Constantin Dron (Negoită 1941).

Father Gerasim Luca's initiatives went however further: he purchased some land on the shore of the Jordan River from a Romanian who had come from America, Nicolae Zvanciu, followed by another in Nazareth - in the Hebrew colony 'Afuleia' – in 1931. Finally, he purchased in 1937 an estate - which was allegedly on the place of Zacchaeus' house – with an area of 1,500 square meters, all these being subsequently donated to the Romanian Patriarchy. Moreover, in his will he left all his movable and immovable property to the Romanian Patriarchy (Ploieşteanul 1940).

Disappointed with Patriarch Damianos' delays regarding the Romanian project, Miron Cristea sent another delegation to Jerusalem, led by the Bishop of Hotin, Visarion Puiu, with a totally unexpected mission: the request to transfer or sell the Holy Archangels Monastery to the Romanian Orthodox Church, request motivated by the latter's ability to provide real support to the Orthodox cause at Jerusalem, in the context of the Catholic, Muslim, Coptic and Protestant claims. The refusal – quite predictable - was motivated by the fact that the Archangels Monastery was part of the heritage of the Holy Sepulchre, or – as Athanasie Negoită wrote – of the 'Greek Heritage'. Despite the negative response, Bishop Visarion bought, before leaving, some land, as the other churches had done, especially the Catholic Church, in Nikeforia, the newest neighbourhood of Jerusalem, an estate originally owned by the Patriarchate of Jerusalem.

The establishment in Jerusalem of a Romanian consulate, led since 1932 by Marcu Beza represented in its turn more support in this respect, including for the church. Marcu Beza's appointment was worthwhile because – although well intended, in general – the previous (honorary) consul, Gherasimos, of Greek nationality, showed neither the feeling nor the behaviour necessary to support Romanian interests (Negoită 1941).

The year 1935 meant a significant change in Jerusalem: on August 15, 1935, the foundation of the Romanian settlement was laid, gathering representatives of both Patriarchates but later, in 1939, the works were stopped due to war.

At the Jordan River, the foundation to the hermitage 'St. John the Baptist' was laid on March 28, 1935 and the solemn consecration took place on April 25, the works being completed the following year. On this occasion, 150 pilgrims arrived in the country, among them the Bishop of Roman, Lucian Tritean. A solemn moment was that of signing the charter, when, alongside clergymen and all pilgrims, representatives of the Jerusalem Patriarchate participated – unlike in Jerusalem -, after some hesitation. The best period of the monastic community there was that of 1947-1953, when the latter was headed by John Jacob the Romanian (in Romanian, *Ioan Iacob Românul*) from the wilderness Hozeva, a monk who was later canonized as the Father John (Jacob) the Romanian. As a reaction to what was considered to be an unexpected offensive of the Romanian Orthodoxy, the Patriarchate of Jerusalem agreed to consecrate the Romanian church in Jerusalem but not the one in Jericho. Concerning the efforts to build the church and the Romanian Settlement in Jerusalem one must mention in addition the financial contributions of the Bishop of Hotin, Visarion Puiu, who also undertook a pilgrimage to Jerusalem in 1927, and also the special support of General Cornel Beza and the use of the money obtained from projections of Mount Athos made in the country with a 'mobile cinema' (Petcu 2010).

In 1938, the church was finished but its consecration and of the entire establishment in Jerusalem then passed to the care of another patriarch, Nicodim Munteanu, and King Carol II. Actually, due to the conflicts between Israel and the Arabs in general, only in 1975 Patriarch Justinian Marina could consecrate the Romanian church there (Creţu 2000).

At Jericho, the building of a settlement – considered nowadays for organised pilgrimage –

was the most delayed and this also because it was placed, similarly to the Jordan River, in an area always disputed by Israel and Jordan. In that area the Romanian presence was also known, and there was a Samoilă family who donated as early as 1933 their properties there (a land of 10 000 square meters and several houses) to meet the needs of a future Romanian settlement. In fact, for the reasons listed above, the construction started only in 1999, after the family heir, Dumitru Samoilă, made the final donation that was also recognised by the Palestinian authority in 1996 (Crețu 2007).

Miron Cristea's pilgrimage – although combining public and private features – was transformed into an action of political and diplomatic significance meant to bring to the fore the Romanian Orthodox Church. The result was generally positive, although some expectations could not be satisfied. One cannot ignore some specific aspects of the pilgrimage, such as the stop to the Acropolis of Athens, at the Holy Sepulchre, Golgotha, the Jordan River, Alexandria and Constantinople. The Patriarch, as any other pilgrim, perceived every moment of the visit only through the traces of Christian history. A pragmatic nature, he could not fail to give warnings on issues whose consequences could be negative in time, for example, on the evolution of the Christian Arab community separate from that of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem and the emphasis laid on enforcing other Orthodox communities to merge into a pseudo-Greek one.

Officially, though he admitted the great merits of the Romanian Orthodoxy, the Patriarch of Jerusalem was in no hurry to give approvals for the construction of Romanian settlements in Jerusalem, Jordan River and Jericho, being afraid he would be annoyed with other similar requests coming from other Orthodox Churches.

Accepted – as before – due to the substantial material aid and personal devotion of monks and nuns who went to the Holy Land, the Romanian Orthodox aimed at the opportunity to find an official representation and manifestation. The efforts of Romanian hierarchs before and especially after 1918 and the emergence of the Romanian Patriarchy forced the other Patriarchates and particularly the traditional Eastern Patriarchates to accept the image of a reinforced Romanian Orthodoxy. Besides collective pilgrimages, Miron Cristea's 1927 individual pilgrimage also triggered, officially speaking, the period of consolidation of the Romanian presence in Jerusalem, providing a strong impetus to Romanian Orthodox initi-

atives, and demonstrating the ability of the latter to exceed the national recently stabilised (in 1918) borders.

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# Carlist Propaganda and National Holiday: Restoration and Youth's Day (1938-1940)

**Diana-Mihaela PĂUNOIU**

Researcher, PhD, Romanian Academy, 'C.S. Nicolăescu-Plopșor'  
Institute for Studies in Social Sciences and Humanities from Craiova, Romania  
Department of Archaeology and History  
E-mail: dianamihaelapaunoiu@yahoo.com

**Abstract** <sup>(1)</sup>. National holidays, Royal Family's celebrations and, generally, any festive manifestation have been turned, during the regime of authoritarian monarchy of King Carol II (February 10<sup>th</sup>/11<sup>th</sup>, 1938- September 6<sup>th</sup>, 1940), into instruments for official propaganda, with the purpose of spreading the Carlist ideology among the audience. The ideology was based, in essence, on the principle of national solidarity and citizens' fidelity towards the King Carol II and the new regime, established through the coupe d'état from February 1938. In this context, the present study reconstructs and analyses the organization and deployment of one of the most important national holiday during the Carlist regime, 'The Youth and Restoration's Day', celebrated on June 8<sup>th</sup>. The investigated archival documents revealed the inter-dependence between the official propaganda and the staging of the analyzed festive event, translated into: the concern of the central power to ensure a 'climate of celebration' all over the country, respecting the pre-established programs, making the speeches held by the central and local authorities or by various personalities of the times, following the pattern of the official speech (that presumed the apology of the new regime, the praise of the King Carol II *etc.*) the exacerbation of the personality cult of King Carol II.

**Key words:** official propaganda, national holiday, the cult of the Ruler, King Carol II, youth

The period between February 10<sup>th</sup>/11<sup>th</sup>, 1938 and September 6<sup>th</sup>, 1940 is synonym, in Romanian history, with the authoritarian monarchy of King Carol II, which meant the end of the traditional democratic system. During this time interval, the central power tried to implement a series of transformations destined to fundamentally rebuild the Romanian state and society, promoting a new propagandistic scenario, centered on the principle of social solidarity and the citizens' fidelity towards the motherland and king (*Constituțiunea Regele Carol [al]II [lea]*, passim; Sandache 2007, 143; Păunoiu 2012, 34-51). The king's alternative to traditional democracy meant also the introduction/enforcement of a new socio-political ritual (the roman salute, patriotic songs,

uniforms, national holidays *etc.*), intended to create and to level the political attitudes and to inspire the sentiment of identification of the national community with the new regime (Layton 2001, 71).

In this context, the propaganda represented an important component of the Carlist regime. The king himself acknowledged the importance of the propaganda machine for spreading the information to the wide public, noting, on July 15<sup>th</sup>, 1938, that he found necessary to give to Eugen Titeanu, the newly appointed undersecretary for propaganda, a few indications regarding the propagandistic action: '*Is not just about the external propaganda, but is also about the internal one. The country must be kept informed and electrified about the achievements of the regime and Government [our underline]*' (Carol II, vol. I, 2003, 276).

The general image created and spread by the structures of the official propaganda starting with 1938 was constructed around an atmosphere of 'euphoria, the measures stipulated by the king being praised in the most accentuated tonalities' (Sandache, 2007, 171).

All propagandistic activities were coordinated 'after new norms, in accordance

<sup>(1)</sup> The study is part of the research project called: 'Institutionalized propaganda during King Carol II: Olt County (1938-1940)', included in the research program called 'Propaganda and ritual in Romania (1866-1989)', coordinated by Researcher III PhD Nicolae Mihai, Researcher III PhD Diana-Mihaela Păunoiu, Researcher III PhD Gabriel Lohon, developed within the Romanian Academy 'C.S. Nicolăescu-Plopșor' Institute for Studies in Social Sciences and Humanities from Craiova.

with the time of national rebirth [the Carlist regime – our note]’ (National Archives, Vâlcea, fund Vâlcea County Prefecture, file no. 87/1939, f. 45). A document relevant for the way the central authorities understood to ‘guide’ the propaganda actions is the one from August 16<sup>th</sup>, 1939 representing the instructions that the undersecretary for propaganda has sent to the territorial authorities. You can see below a fragment from that document: ‘[...] in the future, we will be informed in time of any propaganda manifestation that will take place within your county and we will receive the program and all the details, so we can study them in detail, in order to intervene under any way we consider it appropriate, to grant the size and importance that the event deserves. [...] using the right moment, to be in the middle of them, with all the necessary elements and all useful material to form a unity in thought, a unity in action and a single ideal of new times’ (*Ibidem*, f. 45-45v.).

The creation of a powerful propaganda mechanism (Scurtu 2001, 260-261, 269-270; *Istoria românilor*, vol. VIII, 2003, 396-397) had the role to mask the real situation in Romania of those times and to inoculate the public mass with the idea that the King Carol II, the creator of a new Romania, and his regime enjoyed the total adhesion of the population, ending up in such a point where even the state spirit of the population was ‘regulated’: ‘The popular ‘Enthusiasm’ was deployed after a rigorous scenario conceived by the Ministry of the National Propaganda, created on October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1939. The ministry sent instructions regarding the materials that were about to be published on the occasion of some anniversaries and king’s visits, of his speeches, of what it had to be written about the sovereign’s way of life: all had the purpose of presenting the King Carol II as the symbol of human virtues [...]’ (*Istoria românilor*, vol. VIII, 2003, 401-402).

Inside this mechanism, the national holidays represented one of the main instruments to spread the Carlist ‘ideology’ around population, and also to manifest the popular adhesion towards the new regime and towards its main partisan, King Carol II, the epicenter of any festive manifestations. The image that had to be shaped on these events was one of a disciplined and obedient national community, united around its Ruler.

The calendar of the Carlist ‘Royal Holidays’ had important and decisive moments for the formation of the modern Romanian state (the Day of January 24<sup>th</sup> – ‘Unification of the

Principalities, 1859 and of all Romanians, 1918’, The Day of May 10<sup>th</sup> – Anniversary of Independence Proclamation in 1877 and of the Kingdom 1881/‘Day of Nation’ etc.), Royal Family’s anniversaries (the most important being October 16<sup>th</sup>, the birthday of King Carol II), holidays with double significance, national and religious, (‘the Heroes Day’, national holiday with variable date, celebrated in the same day with the religious holiday ‘Ascension of the Lord’; on August 6<sup>th</sup>, in the same time with the religious holiday ‘Transfiguration’ it was celebrated, all around the country, ‘The victory from Mărășești’/‘Day of Romanian Glory’), the important religious celebrations *etc.* (National Archives, Vâlcea, fund The National Guard of the National Renaissance Front, Vâlcea County, file No. 1/1939-1940, f. 197). This calendar was enriched with two holidays specific to King Carol II’s reign: The Restoration Day (June 8<sup>th</sup>) and, from 1938, The Day of Constitution King Carol II (February 27<sup>th</sup>).

All these major festive events were under the monopoly of the central power and transformed into important propagandistic moments, having the purpose of spreading of the new regime’s ideology and of praising the King Carol II, ‘the saviour of the country’ and the creator of the new Romania.

In this context, our study intends to reconstruct and analyse the organisation and the deployment of one of the most important national holiday during the Carlist regime, The Restoration Day <sup>(1)</sup>. The archival documents

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<sup>(1)</sup> The first two festivities dedicated to ‘The Day of Restoration’ that symbolized the arrival, on June 8<sup>th</sup>, 1930, of King Carol II on the Throne of Romania, were organized, in 1931, by the government of national union, presided by Nicolae Iorga (April 18<sup>th</sup>, 1931 – May 31<sup>st</sup>, 1932). This national holiday started with thanksgivings in Bucharest and in the county’s capitals. The program for the activities in that day, for the entire country, was conceived and executed by the institution in charge with the youth’s education: initially The Office for the Education of Romanian Youth (O.E.T.R.), then the Guardians of the Motherland, after the reorganisation from December 1938. In Bucharest, the celebration was deployed on the Cotroceni plateau. The Presidency of the Ministry Council was the one sending the invitations, received from O.E.T.R. / The Guardians of the Motherland, to the officials that assisted those festivities from the Presidency Tribune (*Istoria românilor*, vol. VIII, 2003, 303; National Archives, Vâlcea, fund The National

investigated revealed the inter-dependence between the official propaganda and the staging of the analysed festive event, translated in: the concern of the central power to ensure a 'climate of celebration' all over the country, respecting the pre-established programs, making the speeches held by the central and local authorities or by various personalities of the times, following the pattern of the official speech (that presumed the apology of the new regime, the praise of the King Carol II etc.) the exacerbation of the personality cult of King Carol II.

The day of June 8<sup>th</sup> received a double signification, celebrating the Youth and Restoration Day, spreading this way the idea that the reign of King Carol II represented the future of the country. This was underlined also in the time's press. In the newspaper 'The National Conscience' from 1938, it was underlined the fact that the celebration of Restoration – 'The Day of Romanian Kind' – in Craiova had made a powerful impression on population, 'the gush of enthusiasm' coming from 'ebullience of hot love, of uncontained patriotic expansion of the youth enlisted with such divine goodwill in the 'white army' of the guardian', and from the fact that 'all this precious holy devotion, of heroism in continuous and overwhelming ebullition is for Him, for the Voivode of National Culture, King Carol II' ('The National Conscience', year XIV, no. 1-2, June 28<sup>th</sup>, 1938).

'The holiday of Youth and Restoration' (June 8<sup>th</sup>) was preceded by the 'Week of the Guardians' (June 1<sup>st</sup>-7<sup>th</sup>), and it was considered to be the concretization of the work in a guardian's year'. Every day was dedicated to a specific problem, that had to be lived intensely, in all its characteristic aspects', as follows: June 1<sup>st</sup> was 'Day dedicate to the town', when the guardians did voluntary work for the use of the community they belong to; June 2<sup>nd</sup> – 'Day dedicated to Church and family'; June 3<sup>rd</sup> – 'Day dedicated to nature and health'; June 4<sup>th</sup> – 'Day dedicated to guardian's solidarity'; June 5<sup>th</sup> – 'Day dedicated to the preparation for the major celebrations from June 8<sup>th</sup>', when the last rehearsals for the celebrations from June 8<sup>th</sup> took place, in the presence of the authorities, families and guardian's friends; June 6<sup>th</sup> – 'Day dedicated to heroes and great people'; June 7<sup>th</sup> – 'Day dedicated to work and guardian soul', was the day when there were highlighted the achievements of the guardians 'from everywhere

and from the town and it will be spoken of the guardian soul in the action of Kind's ascension and strengthening' (Guardians of the Motherland, 1939, 203-207).

'The Week of the Guardians' was completed with the day of June 8<sup>th</sup>, when 'The Great Holiday of Youth and Restoration' was celebrated. In that day, '*the guardians everywhere lift an altar of praise to the Great Protector and Ruler of our national destinies* [our underline]' and 'the entire manifestation was made in a frame of imposing greatness' (*Ibidem*, 182).

The general scenario for the day of June 8<sup>th</sup> had 3 main stages: In the morning, reviews of the guardian's units, the ceremony of raising the national flag, demonstrations of sport, choirs and national dances took place; in the afternoon – open air sportive activities, and in the evening, the retreat with torches and camp fires (*Ibidem*, 208).

'The Week of the Guardians' and 'The Great Holiday of Youth and Restoration' symbolized the main ideas of the new regime's doctrine; considered as indispensable for forming the young people, the future citizens of Romania, the ones that had to ensure the persistence of the new regime, in the conception of Carlist's protagonists.

The pattern for organizing the day of June 8<sup>th</sup> was similar with the ones of the great national holidays, with the difference that there was also organized 'major deployment of troops' of the guardians that were prepared intensely for that day.

Therefore, on May 6<sup>th</sup>, 1938, the Ministry of Interior sent a notice to the prefects of the counties, with instructions for celebration of the day of 'June 8<sup>th</sup>, dedicated to H.M.S. King Carol II, The Great Guardian of our Kind' and for arranging the competitions between towns and counties during May.

According to those, all prefects had to call in, urgently, the committee for preparation and organisation of the established program for the day of June 8<sup>th</sup>, formed out of the commander of the legion and of a representative of the local administration, police, health service, church, school, fire department *etc.* On the meeting, they had to established, in detail, the exact program and delegate the attributions and responsibilities so that everything will happen 'in the most perfect order, discipline and safety'. The people had to be selected initially and the ones that did not inspire confidence had to be removed. This committee had to gather as often it was needed in order to be informed on the status of

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Guard of the National Renaissance Front Vâlcea County, file no. 1/1939 – 1940, f. 197).

preparations (National Archives, Olt, fund Olt County Prefecture, file No. 23/1938, f. 4).

The camp fires mentioned in the Bulletin of 'The Guardians of the Motherland' ('The Guardians of the Motherland Bulletin', No. 1-2/1938, 83) were to be held only in the towns that were county's residency and in the major cities, where the police supervision could be ensured (National Archives, Olt, fund Olt County Prefecture, file No. 23/1938, f. 4).

Also, while it was considered that the units of guardians were 'inspired by a spirit of discipline' and, generally, they could be trusted, the prefects were being asked to make a serious selection: '[...] still, to avoid any surprises, please collect checked information over the units that will travel to Bucharest for the restoration celebrations and in case you have doubts over some of them communicate [them] to the Prefecture of Capital Police, and also to the Commandment of the Guardians' (*Ibidem*, f. 4v.-5; National Archives, Vâlcea, fund Vâlcea County Prefecture, file No. 58/1938, f. 11v.-12).

Other measures that had to be taken by the prefects, in the territory they ruled over, aimed to maintain the public order, organise the traffic on the main public streets and check the stages 'so nothing could shadow this beautiful celebration with any unfortunate incident' (National Archives, Olt, fund Olt County Prefecture, file no. 23/1938, f. 5).

With all the safety measures that authorities took 'The Day of Youth and Restoration' in 1938 was 'shadowed' because of atmospheric conditions. The festivities, deployed partially for two hours, were postponed for the next day. Nevertheless, the delegations that came from overseas were impressed by 'the kid's discipline under the rain' (Carol II, vol. I, 249).

Restarted on June 9<sup>th</sup>, 'The Day of Rain and Welfare Restoration', as it was named by Eugen Titeanu, undersecretary for propaganda, finished in a real holiday atmosphere. The King wrote in his journal the following: 'Yesterday's celebration continues today with all the glamour. The program is executed wonderful, all as good as possible. The boys have made great progress, almost reaching the perfection of the girls. [...] The march is to be compared with the Army's best. Excellent are the guardian's bands; bagpipes raise many applauses' (*Ibidem*, 491, 250).

The pre-established program of the manifestation from the A.N.E.F. stadium in Bucharest had the following stages, identifiable

in the ceremony practiced by the youth in the Guardians of the Motherland: the divine service, singing the Royal anthem, the prayer 'Our Father', and 'the biblical Text', the speech of the Great Guardian, King Carol II, guardian's songs, guardian's gymnastic and the march of the Guardians of the Motherland. (*Istoria românilor*, vol. VIII, 2003, 397). All these had to highlight the love and devotion for the king and his regime (Cristea 2011, 171).

In 1939, the celebration of Restoration and Youth was held with a special fast all over the country, being prepared in the smallest detail by the Carlist authorities. So, on June 5<sup>th</sup>, undersecretary for propaganda, Eugen Titeanu (<sup>1</sup>), was sending to the counties' prefects precise instructions for the decoration of urban and rural settlements. These had to be cleaned, decorated with many national flags and in bright colours'. In the same time, the windows of the shops had to be decorated with the portrait of King Carol II and the Great Voievod Mihai, and also with guardian's materials (National Archives, Olt, fund Olt County's Prefecture, file No. 62/1939, f. 86).

In the same time, the prefects had to take measures that 'in those towns and villages where there was no equipment, radios had to be installed in such a manner that the special broadcast of the Radio Bucharest could be heard by the entire population' (*Ibidem*).

In the same day, the commander of the National Guard of the National Renaissance Front gave the local Guard units instructions to participate at the Restoration Day: '1) Where the local authorities have organized the celebration, you will fit in their program, *participating with the entire formation* (those in uniform and those without uniform). 2) In the cities (county's capitals) where the authorities will not organize anything, you will take the initiative of officiating a Thanksgiving, inviting the authorities. In both cases, *the local formation of the N[ational] G[uard] will march* [our underline]. In the same day, you will send on behalf of the National Guard from that county, an homage telegram to H.M.S. the King' (National Archives, Vâlcea, fund National Guard of the national Renaissance Front Vâlcea County, file No. 4/1939-1940, f. 29).

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(<sup>1</sup>) On May 27<sup>th</sup>, 1939, Eugen Titeanu and Nissa Cămărășeanu, the commander of girls guardian's units arrived in Craiova to do an inspection for the day of June 8<sup>th</sup> (National Archives, Dolj, fund Royal Residency of Olt County, Administrative Service, file No. 28/1939, f. 108).

On May 24<sup>th</sup>, 1939, The Royal Aeronautic Federation of Romania sent a notice to representatives of the central power in the field, informing that during the celebrations of the Restoration from June 8<sup>th</sup>, the federation will organize an air race called 'The 2<sup>nd</sup> Great Prize of Tourism Aviation King Carol II' that will 'connect in flight, using tourism airplanes, the country's provinces with the capital, *symbolizing this way the durable and permanent connections that unite the entire country around the Throne* [our underline]' (National Archives, Dolj, fund The Royal Residency of Olt County, Administrative Service, file No. 53/1939, f. 200).

This is why, in the cities where the planes were taking off to Bucharest, necessary measures had to be imposed so that the action could develop in special conditions, with the participation of authorities, army and students. Also, it was suggested that a representative gift from that respective province could be offered to the pilot (a bouquet of flowers, a sheaf of wheat *etc.*), to be brought to Bucharest as an homage from that region (National Archives, Olt, fund Romanai County's Prefecture, file No. 46/1939, f. 85).

In Bucharest, the festivities started with the traditional celebration of youth on the A.N.E.F stadium, in the presence of military, religious and civil authorities, foreign delegations from Greece, Germany, France, Poland, Portugal, Italy and Spain (Carol II, vol I, 2003, 258–259; Buhman, 2006, 471).

The celebration program of the Guardians of the Motherland, deployed between 8<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>, had 3 stages. In the first stage, the guardians were aligned on the stadium, the King arrived, and a review of the guardians units was executed together with the religious service and the ceremony for raising the national flag. In the second stage, gymnastic demonstrations and national dances of the guardian's Legions from Bucharest took place. In the last stage, there was the guardian's march lasting an hour (S.A.N.I.C., fund Presidency of Ministry Council – Ceremony, file No. 287/1939, f. 214). After the youth's celebration on the stadium, it followed the dinner at the Royal Palace and, in the evening, the reception given by Teofil Sidorovici at the Military Centre (Buhman, 2006, p. 471).

King Carol II wrote in his journal the following: 'The Guardian's celebrations were very successful and made a great impression on the foreigners. [...] Seeing this strengthening of the movement for youth's education was a very,

very big soul satisfaction' (Carol II, vol. I, 2003, 259).

Also, in the rest of the country, according to pre-established programs, 'altars of praise' to the King Carol II were raised. For example, in Olt County, celebration of June 8<sup>th</sup> took place with special fast. In Craiova, in the afternoon, after the morning festivities from the town's stadium, there were national games played by the guardians from the town, two football matches and the taking down of the national flag (National Archives, Dolj, fund Royal Residency of Olt County, Administrative Service, file No. 28/1939, f. 38, 40–40v.).

In the evening, at 21:00 hours, there was the retreat with torches in the square of the residential palace, forming the closing formation of the Week of the Guardians. With this opportunity, 'His Excellency Mister Royal Resident spoke from the balcony of the Residential palace, presenting an homage to H.M.S. King Carol II and to the Great *Voievod* of Alba Iulia, Mihai, thanking the guardians and their commanders for all the work they did and for the beautiful success of the national holiday of June 8<sup>th</sup>' (*Ibidem*, 40v.).

According to the report made by the colonel Romulus Dimitriu, the prefect of Dolj county, 'during the entire of guardian's celebrations there was a good mood and an indescribable enthusiasm, the thoughts of everyone, from small to big, being directed deeply grateful towards H.M.S. King Carol II, The Great Guardian, the ruler of Great Romania's destiny and maker of all national hopes and aspirations' (National Archives, Dolj, fund Dolj County's Prefecture, Administrative Service, file no.3/1939, p.8)

In the day of June 8<sup>th</sup>, 'great day for Romanian kind', Drăgășani city from Vâlcea county was decorated with tricolours flags, with portraits of King Carol II and the Great Voivode of Alba Iulia, national carpets, flowers and grass, and 'the public from small to big gave this holiday a special attention, taking part briskly at the manifestations organized by the guardians units and by the entire mechanism of police and Administrative authorities' (National Archives, Vâlcea, fund Vâlcea County's Prefecture, file No. 84/1939, f. 29).

The priest Gh. Sachelarie, in the speech he held during the ceremony for raising the national flag, has underlined the fact that the day of June 8<sup>th</sup> 'is the day of Romanian solidarity', and the National Renaissance Front is the organism 'in which all the Romanians energies have to gather' (*Ibidem*).

The national holiday ended, in the Drăgășani city, at 23:00 hours, 'when the spectators remained deeply touched by the mentioning of the highest moments and living memory of our ancestors and of our kind and all that, with an indescribable enthusiasm for participating at the celebration of the highest day of June 8<sup>th</sup>, day of start and straightening of rebirth of the Country and Romanian kind [our underline]' (*Ibidem*, p. 28v.).

Petre P. Popescu, the commander of the guardian's stole from the city of Govora, Vâlcea county, showed in his speech that the day of June 8<sup>th</sup> means 'for all Romanians, the day in which we praise the King H.M.S. Carol II, protector of the entire Romanian nation and specially the guardians, of whom he is the supreme commander and who he loves with all the warmth of his heart' (*Ibidem*, p. 31).

According to the report regarding the deployment of the day of June 8<sup>th</sup>, done by the prefect of Romanați County, M. A. Dobriceanu, 'the manifestation was grandiose, very well prepared, took place in order and punctuality, generating enthusiasm for the public [...]. Thanks to those beautiful achievements of these manifestations of guardian youth, the day of June 8<sup>th</sup> remained in the soul of citizens as the greatest National day' (National Archives, Olt, fund Romanați County's Prefecture, file No. 46/1939. f. 106).

Besides the eulogies brought to King Carol II, the speech of the third Romanian monarch from June 8<sup>th</sup>, 1939 synthesized the socio-cultural and political standards, necessary for the new model of citizen. Below is a fragment from the respective speech:

'[...] The Guardians mentioned in their creed the primate of work, the primate of prosperity through all that is healthy in our people. In the soul of every guardian nowadays had to be implanted the saying that *all individual accomplishments are for general use*. The merit of everyone is an addition to the progress of the Romanian national entity. In this lies our moral power: individuality inside the community. This is the true constructive nationalism; this is the warrant of our progress. [...] We do not make parades, we shape souls [in the way of creating sentiments, moral features – author's note] and these souls have to be tempered in a creed, this creed is the real patriotism: gathering all efforts – each according to his powers – for elevation and straighten the true creative *romanianism*.

[...] A new layout has been given to Romania, placed on the foundation of work and faith: a new liberty has been given to the

Country, a liberty of progress making discipline. The rhythm of future Romania will have to be the one of faith that will be infused to you [the guardians – author's note]. [...] I wish that these words go beyond their margins, as wide as they could be of the organisation [The Guard of the Motherland – author's note] *and be seeded deeply in the soul of every Motherland lovers. The beliefs and sayings of the guardians will become the beliefs and sayings of my entire people. A true moral cannot be chained inside a small number of souls; it has to be spread in the subconscious of every one for the good of a Romanian Romania [our underline]*' (Negulescu, 1938, 37-39).

This speech was considered by the theorists of the regime as underlining the essential points of 'doctrine of national reconstruction' (*Ibidem*, 39), in the name of which King Carol II started the authoritarian regime.

In 1940, because of the situation from the international stage, the Restoration festivities have been organized with less fast than in the previous year, although, in this year, there would have been 10 years of King Carol's II ruling.

Nevertheless, the youngsters prepared intensively for the Day of Youth and Restoration. In March 1940, the Ministry of National Education sent to the authorities under their control instructions so that the celebrations 'to take place with special fast. Taking into account that the preparations and all preventive measures must be taken care of in time, we ask you to make it clear to the secondary and industrial schools in your County that during March, April and May 1940, the classes for sport and music will be used to prepare the demonstration programs and guardian songs' (National Archives, Dolj, fund 'Elena Cuza' Highschool Craiova, file No. 1/1939-1940, f. 262).

Also, the school doctors had to start a detailed examination of the students for a more exigent physically selection, and, 'if necessary, those who might not support eventual difficulties of the rehearsals program can be eliminated from rehearsals' prepared for participation on the celebrations of day of June 8<sup>th</sup> (*Ibidem*, f. 265).

The King's interdiction for organising major festivities on the occasion of the Day of Youth and Restoration was provided towards the end of May (Țurlea, 2006, 147), when youth's preparation for 'the great day' was nearly complete.

On June 5<sup>th</sup> 1939, the Ministry of Interior sent a notice to authorities under its control notifying them that, on June 8<sup>th</sup>, thanksgivings will be officiated in the entire country where all civil and military authorities had to assist. Therefore, the schools, civil and military institutions, including court houses, had to suspend their activity. Also, the shops, markets, factories, except the ones working for the army, were closed. National flags had to be displayed everywhere (National Archives, Vâlcea, fund Vâlcea County's Prefecture, file No. 32/1940, f. 19).

The Education and Propaganda from the General Commandment of the National Guards of F.R.N. sent on June 8<sup>th</sup>, to the local Guard units, instructions regarding the way of participating at the festivities for the celebration of 'ten years of peaceful and prolific reign of King Carol II': Day of June 8<sup>th</sup> had to be the day when we dress our soul with purity. We march, with no delay and with all enthusiasm, on the road that His Majesty The King has opened, on the road of duty, that lead towards the consolidation of the motherland' (National Archives, Olt, fund National Guard of National Renaissance Front Olt County, file No. 27/1940, f. 75). Also, all local Guard units had order to present telegraphic praises to King Carol II (*Ibidem*, file No. 39/1940, f. 92v.).

All over the country, June 8<sup>th</sup> was celebrated through thanksgivings, marches, speeches of the authorities, retreats with torches etc. keeping, though, a certain sobriety.

In Bucharest, a small gathering took place, at the Royal Palace, in the presence of patriarch and civil and military authorities from the capital (members of government, royal advisers and the commanders of military units from the capital).

In the evening of June 8<sup>th</sup>, the National Guard from Bucharest organized an 'imposing manifestation' in the square of the Royal Palace, the march being watched by the King from the palace's balcony (National Archives, Olt, fund The National Guard of the National Renaissance Front Olt County, file No. 27/1940, f. 80).

On the occasion of ten years of reign, a delegation from the National Guard of the National Renaissance Front, led by general Petre Georgescu, presented the King Carol II the homage of the National Guards, under the form of a parchment artistically handcraft, having the signatures of all Guard's commanders from the counties (*Ibidem*).

The text written on the parchment was the following: 'June 8<sup>th</sup>, 1930 – June 8<sup>th</sup>, 1940. Homage to H[is] M[ajesty] King Carol II. At the

beginning of the second decade of glorious reign, the FRN Guards lay at the feet of the Throne to mark the priceless devotion for their Sovereign, of who's thoughts and desires they fulfill for the good of the Motherland' ('Romania', June 12, 1940; Țurlea, 2006, 147–148).

In Craiova, the residence of Olt County, 'The Day of Restoration and Youth' started at 11 with a thanksgiving at the metropolitan Cathedral, officiated by the mitropolit of Oltenia, Nifon, and by a synod of priests, in the presence of all civil and military authorities (National Archives, Dolj, fund Royal Residency of Olt County, Administrative Service, file No. 38/1940, f. 69).

After the end of the divine service, of the mitropolit's speech and the review of the company with the flag honour by the royal resident, the mitropolit along with the commander of the 30<sup>th</sup> Infantry division and the entire assistance went into the park near the mitropoly, where all the guardians from the town were gathered. The royal resident, Dinu Simian, held a speech about the meaning of the June 8<sup>th</sup> for the Romanian kind (*Ibidem*).

The official telegram sent to King Carol II by Dinu Simian, on behalf of the entire Oltenian population had the following content: 'Together with the entire Romanian nation, the Olt County presents, in this holy day, its sentiments of deep respect and wide devotion and asks Your Majesty to receive the guarantee of the most respectful love, desirous of any sacrifice for the strengthening of the Country and for Your Highness satisfaction. May the days to come will be for Your Majesty the coronation of every day's struggle, to keep Romania from any dangers and raise it to unsuspected heights. May God All Mighty protect Your Majesty's steps and give you a long and immortal Reign. Long live Your Majesty!, Long live His Majesty Mihai, the Great Voievod of Alba Iulia!, Long Live Romania!' ('The Official Bulletin of Olt County', year III, no. 12, June 15, 1940, p. 42).

At 12 o'clock, the march of the band and the guardians started in the Unification Square, and, at the end, the guardians sang the royal anthem and two guardian's songs. The festivities ended at 13:00 hours. In the evening, at 21:00 hours, the retreat with torches took place (National Archives, Dolj, fund Royal Residency of Olt County, Administrative Service, file No. 37/1940, f. 43 – 43v.).

Starting with the afternoon until midnight, the fanfares of Regiments 1 and 6 Dorobanți sang in the Unification Square various tunes of



national music and marches (*Ibidem*, file No. 38/1940, f. 69v.).

In the rest of the Olt County, June 8<sup>th</sup> was celebrated through thanksgivings, with participation of civil and military authorities, the army, guardian's units, pre-militaries, and a numerous public. All over the place, the ceremonies 'ended with speeches and marches in the public's enthusiasm, and in the evening there was the retreat with torches' (*Ibidem*, file No. 37/1940, f. 43v.).

From the numerous speeches held in 1940, on the occasion of June 8<sup>th</sup>, we keep the one of the royal resident of Olt County, which constitutes a real homage to his sovereign and his regime. Below is a fragment: 'Today we celebrate ten years of reign of H.M.S King Carol II. All over Romania, praises to God are being raised, that he has seen us worthy to live in these times under the wisest and the most Romanian leadership that our Kind has ever enjoyed over the ages. [...]

Descendent of a noble and great Dynasty [...]; Born and raised on Romanian land [...], gifted with superior intelligence – was meant by God to be *a great Romanian and the most admired and loved King of Romanians from all times* [our underline]. [...] The operas achieved in this decade cannot be comprised in a speech. His Majesty King Carol II was called starting that moment – *The Consolidator* [our underline].

[...] This is why, today let us be happy, in the way the Christian is happy in front of the altar, [...], to promise and swear in silence that, neither with the word, nor with the thought will not disturb now, nor in the future, that we will make our life a living example for those to come after us; that we love and we will sacrifice for the Kind and King with the same passion with which the King rules and loves his people [...]' ('The official Bulletin of Olt County', year III, no. 12, June 15, 1940, p. 40-42).

King Carol II declared itself satisfied with the fact that he decided not to organize major celebrations on the occasion of 'Restoration', and also with the fact that 'so many manifestations of sympathy from all the corners [of the Country] and from every layers' appeared. Also, evaluating the decade of reign, the king noted the following: 'Here it came this day, which means 10 years of reign, 10 years of hard work and never ending worries. I have the conscience that I have done all that my powers allowed me to do and by the coup d'état from two years ago I have saved the country from destruction' (Carol II, vol. III, 1998, 196).

The 'Day of Restoration and Youth' represented, between 1938 and 1940, the affirmation of the cult personality of King Carol II and the association of youth – 'the citizens of tomorrow', 'the new man' of Romania – with the regime enforced on February 10<sup>th</sup>/11<sup>th</sup>, 1938. Staging the pre-established holiday programs allowed the display within wide public, of some disciplined 'cores' and propagation, of the idea of united nation around the Throne, devoted to King Carol II and his regime.

The monopoly of the central power over the organisation and deployment of the national holidays deteriorated the initial message of the anniversary events – the one of perpetuation at the level of collective mentality, of the important moments from Romania's history – by exacerbation, of the Ruler's cult materialized in the homages to King Carol II and the new regime.

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# Death and the System Perceptions of the Leader's Death in Stalinist Romania

Mihaela GRANCEA

Professor, 'Lucian Blaga' University of Sibiu, Romania

E-mail: mihaela\_grancea2004@yahoo.com

**Abstract.** For Marxists, death had a collective signification, an eschatological finality determined by the 'cosmology' of the social universe. This atheistic alternative to the salvation advanced by universal religions was realized in and through the mundane world and involved the victory of social space over the individual, everyone's participation to the building of the 'golden age' of global communism, and the minimization of individual and 'ordinary' (common, banal) death. The social fulfillment of the individual was the secular equivalent to the salvation promised by religion. Such eschatology completed, in a fortunate manner as it was believed, the system of continuity through biological reproduction, a reproduction accomplished in the idyllic environment of the socialist family, seen as the nucleus of society. The fear of death, seen as physical decomposition and definitive dissolution was compensated by the belief in the immortality of the human race, in 'nature and in history,' in the perpetuation (in the collective memory) of the images of individuals who applied (exemplarily) the social communist norm and who were involved in the accomplishment of the communist project, sometimes with great personal sacrifices, including their life. Moreover, death as a natural and objective phenomenon was considered a necessity, because only death made possible the renewal of generations, the emergence of individuals with new socio-creative abilities; the assumption of this representation was claimed by the process of individual and collective maturing, by the accomplishment of the communist vision about the world, history, and society. 'Communist death,' as a variant of 'democratic death,' was a product of discourse, a segment of ideology, an application of the fraternalist and egalitarian conceptions, a means/opportunity to cultivate solidarities specific to the internationalist and/or national-communist project (the old axiology that exalted heroism and honor were transformed according to the new intentions of legitimization of a political project or a representative personality for the egalitarian ideology). Any commemorative initiative took place (emblematically) under the ideological and discursive patronage of 'state ethics,' determining the individual to take refuge (at best!) in ritualism, mimicking the acceptance of communist mythologies, which, in fact, meant only conformism and alienation. This study encompasses several directions of investigation and analysis: the scenography of communist death, obsequies as founding elements and manifestations of communist identity, commemoration, communist death as heroic death, the death of the Enemy, the communist epitaph. Various sources: official documents, the press.

**Keywords:** Death, Leader, Communism, ideology, Salvation

## Communist ideologization of death <sup>(1)</sup>

Death had a collective significance and eschatological finality for the communists, obviously imposed by the 'cosmology' of the social universe. This atheist alternative to salvation, advanced by universal religions, was accomplished in and through the mundane world, involving the victory of the social space over the individual, everyone's participation to the construction of the 'golden age' project of global communism, and the minimization of the individual's death as 'common' death. Any kind of being was thought of as a contribution to the

progress of humanity; it was supposed to ensure a sort of satisfaction of the need to perpetuate the memory even of the most anonymous and harmless of the individuals. The social accomplishment of the individual was the secular equivalent of salvation, advanced by religion. This complex eschatology was considered, at best, the system of continuity by biological reproduction, undertaken in the idyllic framework of the nuclear socialist family. The fear of death seen as physical annihilation, as final dissolution <sup>(2)</sup> was compensated by the

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<sup>(1)</sup> This paper is an extended version of a subchapter in Grancea, 2007.

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<sup>(2)</sup> It is also interesting that there were no representations of spectral death or its personifications in communism, at least in its official iconography.

faith in the immortality of the human species 'in nature and in history' (Durand 1985) in the perpetuation (in collective memory) of the image of individuals who applied (in an exemplary way) the communist social norm and were involved in the achievement of the communist project, sometimes at the expense of great personal sacrifices, including even their lives. In addition, death as a natural, objective phenomenon was considered a necessity, as it was only death that made possible the renewal of the society, and the emergence of people with new social and creative skills; this representation was acknowledged in the process of individual and collective maturation and the accomplishment of the communist ideal of the world, history and society.

'Communist death' as a version of 'democratic death' was a discursive product, a segment of ideology, an application of the fraternalistic and egalitarian concepts, a means / opportunity to cultivate solidarities specific to the international and/or national-communist project; the old axiology which exalted heroism and honor was transformed based on the new legitimating intentions of the political project or of a personality representative for egalitarian ideology.

Any commemorative initiative happened emblematically under the ideological and discursive patronage of 'state ethics', determining the individual to take refuge in rituals, mime the acceptance of ceremonies which, in fact, was nothing else than conformism and alienation.

### **Communist funerals as foundation event**

The ideologists of communism, through narratives and ceremonies (secular feasts), fabricated and circulated the new mythologies and images of communist and messianic heroes (set up by mythological motifs such as the soviet soldier, the civilizing hero, the illegalist communist, the altruistic hero as an expression of humanist communism, the hero who has sacrificed himself for the happiness of others) as well as that of the Leader with demiurgic

attributes <sup>(1)</sup> and eponyms (doctrinal and institutional founders) such as Marx, Engels, Lenin, or Stalin. The funerals and commemorations of these 'founders' were opportunities of public reinforcements of communist axiology. As an example, on the occasion of his periodical commemorations, Lenin was defined as '...the guide of the progressing mankind [...], founder of the glorious Communist Bolshevik Party, founder of the first socialist state, the state of the most accomplished democracy' (Chişnevschi 1946, 1). In fact, in the years of the 'building of socialism', Marx, Engels and Lenin (and until his death and disavowal Stalin as well, as a 'father of communism') became emblematic figures of communist ideology and practice. Lenin, as the absolute representative of the Soviet Union, dominated this period, undergoing a process of abstractization (as any other character in fact who represented the motif of the eponymic hero). The idealization of Lenin's figure was most significantly occasioned in Romania by the 1949 commemorations of the Soviet leader. In a 'festive framework' at the Romanian Atheneum, on the 21<sup>st</sup> of January, in front of the leaders of the young 'popular' republic, they eulogized 'the genius of the working class and the great teacher of the revolutionary proletariat'. (These words were to be promoted by the entire press the following day, and applied, successively, to all future communist leaders). The death of the 'founding parent' also occasioned the installation of certain 'corners dedicated to the memory of Lenin' <sup>(2)</sup> (that is to say, 'places of memory'); more than that, such 'corners' would be dedicated to other 'heroes' from various 'echelons' as well: international, national, or local. After the elimination of Stalin's cult, Lenin's monument in front of the Casa Scânteii in Bucharest went on to dominate the space until March 1990, demonstrating that Lenin had kept his status of 'eponymic hero' of communism regardless of the instabilities of the system, and preserved it even in the time of national communism. The Soviet leader's death was transformed into a founding event of party- and state funerals (Petre 1997, 277), and his corpse became an important

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It was only seen as a phenomenon specific to the living, the organic, as something invisible. On the other hand, it was also thought that scientism would secure in the future the preservation of the body as well, or perhaps even the elixir of life. Lenin's mummification is, in this perspective, a manifestation of technicist exultation; so are cryogenic projects.

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<sup>(1)</sup> The development of this idea is found in Serge, 2001, 123-124.

<sup>(2)</sup> See the 22 January 1949 issue of the daily newspaper *Scânteia* vol. XIII, no. 1331.

‘symbolic body’ <sup>(1)</sup>. The fact that after almost thirty years the ritual was repeated at Stalin’s death (evidently, without the element of mummification, and with a couple of new details in the script of the funeral ceremony) demonstrates that this particular cult form was central to the communist political rites and constituted the substance of ‘communist funerary anthropology’ (as a form of symbolic legitimacy, then for Stalin and later for other communist leaders). It also functioned as a funerary cult which consecrated the pattern of heroic ‘communist death’ in its essence, even if communist leaders passed away simply as a result of the trivial manifestation of natural death. This approach seemed quite unequivocal, at least from the perspective of the logic of communism as an inaugural system. The cult of the founder / patron / eponymic hero became a source of political legitimation and infallibility. Lenin’s mummy was kept in a mausoleum with a threefold function: a funeral monument, a ‘place of memory’ functioning as a pilgrimage site for the Soviets and tourists from socialist countries, and a tribune for official parades. The corporeal immortality of the founder hero preserved through mummification is however an abuse of any eschatological initiative. The mummified Lenin (‘functional’ as a protective and ubiquitous figure) was conceived as an expression of the perennial communist pantheon, a proof of the system’s indestructibility (the process of building communism was considered an irreversible one, a Time in time, a Time that would radically change the course of history), and an essential place of collective memory. Lenin’s image was created by formulas such as ‘father of communism’ (alongside Marx, Engels and Stalin), ‘a giant of thought and will’, ‘Lenin – the prototype of the future man’. These samples of political liturgy came to be used obsessively, to saturation, any time a communist leader died who managed to keep his place in the system nomenclature until his death, and who by his image ‘applied’ the eponymic and eschatological model. At least this is how things look like from the perspective of propaganda. The language of obituaries practiced in the Soviet power space became a source of inspiration. Expressions from V. Mayakovsky’s poem *Lenin* were adapted or even copied in texts in the press written for the death of other communist leaders;

<sup>(1)</sup> This is a concept used by anthropologist Katherine Verdery in relation to the funerals of political leaders, in Verdery, 1999.

according to it, these deaths caused ‘an ocean of pain’, because those who ‘left’ only physically the life of the community were the most human of all people, just like Lenin about whom the Russian poet stated in 1924 that he was ‘the most human of all humans who have lived on earth’. Adrian Cioroianu thinks however that Stalin’s funerals were the ‘primordial’ model, copied at the ceremonies of other natural deaths <sup>(2)</sup>. Whether worshipped, hated, or regarded with certain detachment by his Romanian contemporaries, Stalin’s death marked, at least for a few days, the life of the Romanian society. Taking the risk that it may dilute the subject under scrutiny, I will still give some details about Stalin’s funeral, unpublished interviews as well as information from published sources. The texts I have reproduced in this study display the ways how the perception of funerary events and (most times approximate) chronologies vary, and how mental cut-outs functioned (determined, of course, by the intellectual and political background of the informer). The first account, short and relevant primarily for the manner in which the simple and quite uninhibited person perceived the event, indicates a certain kind of indifference and affective distance (the ‘witness’ seems to be bothered more by the Russian cold weather than by the funerary event): ‘I did my army service for 3 years, from 1952 to 1955. When Stalin died, we were sent to Moscow, we even sentinelled at his bier. Stalin died in March, it was a frosty winter, the snow was thick. I remember we wore padded coats and caps with ear protectors. There was a huge crowd. The funeral wasn’t a usual one, Stalin was guarded by the army, he was kept at the Kremlin, and buried at daytime. He didn’t really have any family to mourn for him. Stalin had no parents, wasn’t married any longer, people knew he had a babe in Romanian, the so-called ‘Lupoaica’ [‘She-wolf’]; some people were sorry for his death, others were happy for it. He was clothed in army clothes, had his weapon with him too, his face was uncovered,

<sup>(2)</sup> The author compares some sequences of the funeral of Gheorghe Gheorghiu Dej with the “canonic” ceremony imposed after Stalin’s death: “...guard at the mournful painting in the office of Dej in the building of the Central Committee, guard at the bier, the blazon of the RCP [Romanian Communist Party] placed higher than the blazon of the Republic, the “meeting of mourning” at the official tribune in the Piața Republicii, the funeral cortege, and the visiting of the monument in Parcul Libertății”. See Cioroianu 2005, 389.

he could be seen by anyone. The army carried him on their shoulders to the bier, that is, the place where he was buried, the mausoleum. We stayed six days in Moscow, until he was buried' <sup>(1)</sup>. There are plenty of complementary testimonies about the Romanian reactions as well, at thousands of kilometers away from the event. A memorial fragment by Dan Ciachir stands as evidence for the double discourse prevalent in Romania on Stalin's death: '4 March 1953... Finally. The news that humanity had been expecting for years, the news for which our people – with other peoples condemned to the same suffering – had been imploring the heavens day and night, desperately, with tears of blood – has arrived. Stalin was hit by the wings of death. He is not dead yet, but can be counted as dead. (...) At 8 in the evening, everyone knew: 'the communiqué on the serious illness of comrade Stalin' was broadcast on the radio. General rejoicing, jubilation, shouting in the families' [...] 'In Bucharest, of course, there is official grievance. But the people of Bucharest rejoice. Although the selling of alcoholic beverages was suspended – so that people shouldn't get drunk for happiness – I saw on the tram a drunken citizen who could barely stand on his feet. He stank of wine from miles. He got off at a bus stop. "Our father died", that's all he could say, and bang! fell off the stairs of the tram. But he got up quickly and while the tram was about to leave, the citizen greeted from the middle of the street the vehicle and the crowd on it with a long and significant "Hurray!" Nobody said a word, but everybody approved' (Pericle Martinescu *apud* Ciachir 2008, 5). The context produced other hilarious situations as well, because the 6<sup>th</sup> of March, when Stalin's death was announced, was also a day of national celebration for the Romanians (the Petru Groza government was imposed on 6 March 1945, which thus meant the outset of Romania's communism); therefore the authorities were hesitating – should they decorate in celebration the 'places of memory' of communism or should they lower the flag at half-mast? The death of the tyrannical Stalin, the oppressor of the Russian Orthodox Church, led to confusion also among the priesthood. Concretely, the priests of the Romanian Patriarchy should have had to ring the bells like for any funeral, they had to do it, and they did it on the indications of Patriarchal Vicar Bishop Antim Nica; they rang the bells for

Stalin, the author of the 'Red Holocaust', for Stalin, the failed seminary student who became a communist leader and killed thousands of priests and leaders of the Orthodox Church on the territory of the Soviet Union, demolished churches or transformed them into warehouses, silos, recreational areas for the 'working people' (ballrooms, halls for performances or sports), or, at best, into museums (only a small part of them, those for which their age or architectural-artistic value justified this status). Officially, it was suggested that collective suffering prevailed. The 'grief' was imposed by the official party press; in fact the only press there was in the country <sup>(2)</sup>. The *Scântea* and other dailies like *România Liberă* and *Contemporanul* announced national mourning for the days of 6–9 March. For that period, all radios of the 'communist camp' only broadcast funeral music. Petre Zoe, referring to this aspect of the funerals, claims that any symphonic music seemed too 'difficult' and depressing to the culturniks, but since it induced a state of sadness, it was considered appropriate for the period of mourning (Petre 1997, 272). However, it could have also been the need for legitimation, for seeking similarities with state funerals as they were organized in Europe and America ever since the modernity, with all possible solemnity. Articles about Stalin were published for a whole week (from the announcement of the dictator's death until 13 March). Among those who wrote the obituaries in the name of the Party and the working class, there were also Romanian writers who made compromises with the system and accepted to be the public voices of communist ideology, crediting it with the prestige they had gained in the time of inter-war democracy. Mihail Sadoveanu, for instance, wrote about 'The great genius of progressing mankind', G. Călinescu about 'A gigantic figure of history'. Writers Camil Petrescu, Geo Bogza, Cezar Petrescu, poet Eugen Jebeleanu (in addition to a host of official and minor poets), scientists C.I. Parhon

<sup>(1)</sup> The informer Petre Rădulescu is a 76-year-old pensioner from Caracal, Olt county, attended seven classes (interview made on 22 June 2007).

<sup>(2)</sup> The *Scântea*, the organ of the Central Committee of the Romanian Labor Party, announced on the first page, in black frame: 'Comrade Iosif Vissarionovich Stalin passed away.' Under the title there was the communiqué of Moscow and on the right side the photograph of Stalin, with an unsigned text below it, written in bold: "For the Romanian people, I.V. Stalin is the dear friend, the liberator, the provider, who has opened wide their way to happiness, helping with parental care to build a new, socialist life". *Scântea*, no. 2006 (6 March 1953).

and Traian Săvulescu constructed the image of a collective apocalypse with the pathos specific to 'wooden language', as if Stalin's death had been a milestone, a fundamental chronological reference point in the history of humanity. It was as if the world existed in two eras, before and after the death of Stalin; it conveyed the impression that a global existential crisis had been unleashed. When Stalin's body was laid to rest in the mausoleum near the Kremlin on 9 May 1953, 11 o'clock in the morning (Moscow's time), in Bucharest a 'meeting of mourning' was held in the Piața I.V. Stalin (today, the Aviators Boulevard), where at that time there was a statue of Stalin (at the entrance to Herăstrău Parc, which back then was still called 'I.V. Stalin Park for Culture and Relaxation'). During this while, any activity halted ('in factories and plants', in schools, even circulation stopped). Thousands of seemingly grievous people participated at the meeting. Commemorative speeches were uttered and the usual gun salute was fired. In Moscow, the delegation of the Romanian Labor Party took part at the funerals, led by the three most important people of 'party and state', Gheorghe-Gheorghiu Dej (president of the Council of Ministers), Gheorghe Apostol (First Secretary of the Party), and Petru Groza (president of the Presidium of the Great National Assembly). Although many analysts of the time argued that the Romanians were not affected by the death of Stalin, there are some testimonies to demonstrate that ideology and Russian influence was still efficient to some degree, and for some of the Romanians Stalin had indeed been a paternal figure: 'One of the members of the party committee in the factory, a simple man who could barely read, was crying and while his tears were running down his face, he lamented: <Why him, our father, why did he have to die?>' (from the memoirs of Ștefănescu, 2005, 42). Apart from the anecdotic, another fragment of memoirs catches the essence of the Romanian perceptions on the significance of Stalin's death: 'Here, lots of people and big fuss (the author, graduate of the Faculty of Economic Sciences, was in the faculty building to receive his graduation diploma, *a.n.*). Some have gloomy, if not really sad faces, and look as if struck by a deep pain. Others however, after composing a sad face, and ostentatiously displaying it, lighten up when they meet an acquaintance. You can never tell who experiences truly the graveness of the moment when they heard that Stalin exists no longer, and who simulates only this experience [...] We arrive at the Casa Scânteii,

where long queues of people dressed in mourning were paying homage to Stalin. They all walked in silence as it is proper for Christians to go to a funeral. Here and there one can see participants crying. Some women and children shed true tears. On our way back, we see that no more are seen of these forms of hysteria or perversion of the souls of some by those who, regarding themselves as opinion formers, were paid to glorify Stalin.' (Oprea 2006, 117-118). The writer of the memoir, as well as the author of this paper, finds interesting the opinion of a participant ('an elderly man') about the way people relate to the death of politicians, therefore to this substitute funeral: 'You are young, have no life experience, so you probably don't know that the people who cry today for Stalin's death tomorrow may recognize their naivety. It's not only about Stalin. Generally speaking, no tears must be shed on the day a politician dies, only later, after you find out who this man really was and if he deserves to be mourned...'

Stalin's funerals, regardless of whether he was worshiped or hated, offered not only a highly ritualistic political scenario copied as any foundational event, but also a memorable event which marked the end of an age. This is the approach of one of the journalists of the time, a participant and witness to Stalin's funerals (Toma, 2004): 'Stalin's death was perceived in the communist world – which then, in 1953, comprised a third of the world's population – as a gigantic cataclysm. It was almost incomprehensible for many people. How could He have disappeared, the Leader, the Friend, the Teacher of the world's proletariat, of the Soviet people, and the peoples of the popular democratic countries? How will it be without him? Members of one and the same family, some were truly grieving. Others, on the contrary, sighed relieved. Personally – I see no reason to hide it – I was very impressed. [...] A huge crowd headed to one hall (the Columns Hall, *a.n.*) to bid farewell to the great leader. The streets were blocked by big military trucks, ordered <face to face>, only leaving a narrow passage fitting only one, or at most two persons. Our delegation had the honor to stand guard twice near the bier, at a distance of six hours (this is the delegation led by the political leaders of the time, the 'leaders of the party and the state', *a.n.*). An endless crowd passed in front of the bier: men, women, soldiers, pupils. Many were weeping, especially women. After the funeral there were rumors that at some passage points at the above mentioned barriers so many

people gathered in time that the usual police forces couldn't stand up to them and called the militia cavalry. I found out much later, from a novel of a Soviet writer, what had happened in fact. She emphasized the contrast between the calm and grave atmosphere of the farewell ceremony in the Columns Hall and the brutality of the street, where the militia cavalry ran over, beat, crushed with the hooves of their horses the people who came to honor the deceased. The writer saw this horrible contrast as a symbol of the age that was coming to an end. (...)'. It seemed that both for the Soviets and the other peoples of the 'Eastern camp' Stalin was the Patriarch cementing the global empire of communism, an eponymic and tutelary figure <sup>(1)</sup>, a mythological synthesis of a promethean epitome and the power of the Fisher King <sup>(2)</sup>. The communist press of Romania seemed to be overtaken by a delirious pro-Stalinist discourse over the death of the dictator, the overloaded language being the most efficient part of the joint action of commemorating the Leader. The regional committees of the Romanian Labor Party decided the structure of the mourning manifestations even in the most insignificant settlements. Moreover, for small towns this was an opportunity to showcase the eager efficiency of their local party and state organs <sup>(3)</sup>. Evidently, on the large scale it has been attempted to connect consensually to the events in Moscow, where the days of 6-9 March 1953 were days of mourning. Therefore, starting with the 6<sup>th</sup> of March, in Bucharest 'tens of thousands of people' <sup>(4)</sup> signed the Register of the Embassy

of the Soviet Union on Kiseleff Boulevard, displaying their grief over Stalin's death. There were 'meetings of mourning' everywhere in the country, collective and individual letters were sent to the editorial offices of daily newspapers <sup>(5)</sup>. The editorials, commemorative articles, obituaries, poems <sup>(6)</sup> kept repeating the same words and formulas over and over again as a litany, speaking about the 'genial teachings' of the deceased, about the 'shining example' he embodied (considering that the exemplarity of the famous Leader urged the 'surviving' peoples to unity and celebration through Stakhanovite work.)

Those who definitely exulted on hearing the news about Stalin's death were, no doubt, the political prisoners. For them, the news was the equivalent of hope and salvation: 'the earth has taken daddy, let the devil have his cursed soul', the prisoners at the Danube Channel kept repeating this, in their anticipation of the collapse of the global empire (Cârjă 1993, 478).

Stalin's funerals are a generous subject for documentaries on malefic characters of 20<sup>th</sup>-century totalitarian regimes (see, for instance, films such as those produced by Discovery Channel) <sup>(7)</sup>. For us, they offer the chance of studying how the witnesses of the commemorative event related to the emotional load, real (let us think of phenomena of emotional contagion) or simulated, during the displays of mourning ('meetings') occasioned in Romania by the funeral of Stalin, a different kind of funeral, performed without the physical body of the deceased.

In most cases of communist funeral ceremonies, the death of the Leader meant his

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<sup>(1)</sup> Dej himself glorified Stalin, calling him: "The liberator and beloved father of peoples, our unforgettable leader and teacher, the genius of the working people" (see the text in *Pravda* no. 66, 1953, reproduced in the central and local press in Romania, too: *Flacăra Sibiului*, vol. X, no. 2287, Tuesday, 10 March 1953, p. 1.

<sup>(2)</sup> Before the time of the "great terror" when the fear contributed to the sublimation of the dictator, Stalin was worshiped as an ancient deity, a god of fertility.

<sup>(3)</sup> See in this respect a document issued during the days of mourning by the RLP Regional Committee Vâlcea (see *Raport de Activitate* [Activity report] Fond. 17, folder. no. 6, fl. 17.

<sup>(4)</sup> This phrase ("tens of thousands"), a "consecrated" approximation, was favored in all official documents and in the communist press, any time the number of participants to "epochal" events had to be assessed; this participation had to express, "to translate", in the language and perception of the age, the positive attitude of the

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society towards celebrations, commemorations and funerals.

<sup>(5)</sup> See also the letter of Iosif Cioni, the Stakhanovite locksmith ("Balanta" factory of Sibiu) or the telegram of Ioan Pașu ("member of the "Tractorul Roșu" agricultural husbandry of Cristian, Sibiu county). These texts were published in *Flacăra Sibiului*, vol. X, no. 2287, Tuesday, 10 March 1953, p. 3.

<sup>(6)</sup> See: "Tonight the dear light at the familiar window of the Kremlin, that we got used to silently watch over us until dawn, didn't light up. We know that tonight the hottest heart ceased to beat; a heart that for years, relentlessly, beat with a father's love. Our face is petrified with pain and our gaze is sad and dewy... [...] takes an Oath to take the inheritance further." (Avram 1953)

<sup>(7)</sup> See such documentaries at: <http://documentare.digitalarena.ro>



leaving the field of the profane and entering the space of political mythology.

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# The Soviet Hero-Making Process. Aspects of the Soviet Heroism

Olga GRĂDINARU

PhD Student, 'Babeş-Bolyai' University of Cluj, Romania  
Comparative Literature Department  
E-mail: olgagradinaru@gmail.com

**Abstract.** The present work is focused on revealing the heroic ingredient in the Soviet prose, tracing its origin back to the medieval heroic poem *The Tale of Igor's Campaign*, Russian folklore and continued by Russian writers of the 19<sup>th</sup> century that brought a change of accent. A conceptual evolution of the 'heroic deed' (*podvig*) is provided, as well as the analysis of the most important changes of the heroic and heroism in the Soviet literature, taking into account the great importance of L. Tolstoy's novel *War and Peace* and its defining traits, while depicting the Russian national character. The study analyzes the semantic and representational changes of heroism from L. Tolstoy's war prose to revolutionary prose, civil war prose and prose of the Second World War, highlighting the Soviet hero-making process.

**Key words:** Soviet heroism, heroic deed, Socialist Realism, Second World War, representation

The Slavic and Russian heroism is not an issue separated from the Indo-European heroic matters and heroism, since it has been influenced and shaped by both ancient Asian and European heroic epics and songs. Heroic accents from the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, passing through Homer's epics and the Greek tragedy are to be identified in the Slavic heroic epics and Russian Romantic poetry with patriotic tunes. The Russian pre-revolution writings and the Soviet times had contributed to some semantic changes of the heroic matters, leaving some ideological and political traces in the literary texts and in the mental perception of the people. Hegelian 'heroic century' gave birth to different perceptions of the 'hero' related to 'great historical personalities', and this is relevant on the Russian soil, as we have Leninism (and *leniniada* in literature), Stalinist era (and even Stalinist civilization), Khrushchev era (and Khrushchev's Thaw), Gorbachev era (and his *glasnost* and *perestroika*). It is obvious that despite Marxist conception of the state as an instrument of the class rule and despite the French Annals School vision focused more on civilization than on individual role certain personalities of the Soviet Union left their personal trace on certain historical periods. The undertaken perspective of this study is situated rather on a balanced vision between various heterogeneous elements of history with an accent on the literary area.

## Heroic deed – Conceptual Evolution

Before approaching the aspects of the Soviet heroism we must take into consideration the specificity of the Russian concept *podvig*, which is usually translated as 'heroic deed'. In his historical-linguistic study, V. V. Vinogradov reveals the meaning changes of the verb *podvigat* and *podvignut* related to other words from the same family – *podvizhnik*, *podvizhnichestvo*, *podvizhnikeskij*, related words that generated in Russian language terms like *podvizhnikeskaja literatura* (translated probably closer to its meaning as 'ascetic literature') and *podvizhnikeskij geroizm* (Vinogradov 1989, 253-263). The word comes from Slavic and it is of bookish origin from the 11-15<sup>th</sup> centuries, although the cognate words and phrases have usage in the spoken language as well, aspect that contributes to the multitude of meanings and usage contexts (especially in the case of the verb *podvizhat'sia* and the noun *podvig*). The author of the study mentions that along the 19<sup>th</sup> century takes place a 'gradual extinction of the meanings of the verb favouring the one accepted and used nowadays – to come to the front in a certain area, to act, to work, fact that generated the semantic break between the verb and the noun'. As for the noun *podvig*, it had a different semantic area, and a clear example of this would be A. S. Pushkin's poems where the noun has the meaning 'heroic deed, dignified deed' with some nuances that are also gradually forgotten. In order to testify this perspective, we might say that *Slovar*

*tserkovno-slavjansogo i russkogo jazyka* of the 1847 recognizes only one meaning of the related verb – ‘realizing an important, difficult task’, the meaning becoming widely used and being related to something great and significant (1847, 251).

Another researcher highlights that the Russian meaning of the word *podvig* is oriented toward the change of the negative state of things, having the echo of the mythical beginnings (and thus presenting a godly hero) or of the absoluteness of non-personal mythical figures (and presenting a diminished role of creative powers) (Trofimova 2007, 49). Trofimova points out the main Russian thinkers to approach the subject of the hero’s *podvig* – N. Mikhailovsky, P. Lavrov and then developed by S. Bulgakov, N. Lossky, S. Frank who reflected mostly Dostoevsky’s creative influence, concluding that in Russian national conscience the hero is destined not only for society education, but also for its energy mobilization. The hero and heroism issue is regarded from the Marxist position at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Relevant approaches to be mentioned are G. Plekhanov’s work and A. Lunacharsky’s study with incorporated revolutionary ideals. The dissonant note in this context is N. Berdyaev’s spiritual-mystical approach on *podvig*, its trigger and functioning. N. Karamzin points out the importance of being prepared to ‘heroic deed’ in Russian mentality, this fact being linked to the historical necessity of defending the land (Karamzin 1980).

The category of the ‘heroic deed’ – *podvig* – or of the ‘great deed’ at war has a double origin: the epic-historical origin with the climax in the realistic prose of L. N. Tolstoy and the revolutionary origin in the 19<sup>th</sup> century in the revolutionary writings, especially in the case of Chernyshevsky’s novel *What Is to Be Done?* (1863). The latter had a special development later with an ideological connotation. Modifying the meaning of the ‘heroic deed’ from the battlefield to the daily peaceful context takes place in the period of forming and introducing the Socialist Realism as the official method, doctrine and manner of representation in the Soviet Union. The daily reality of contributing to the construction of the desirable ‘golden future’ of communism is characterized by the daily ‘heroic deed’ of the simple Soviet worker or peasant, being involved in this so-called glorious process. The strategy of involving the masses in building something great, ideologically speaking, couldn’t have been

possible without the necessary propaganda of the daily ‘heroic deed’, presented in the Soviet product novels with subject from the daily Soviet reality. Making literature and art accessible to the masses was the main aim of the Socialist Realism doctrine and this involved the change of the subjects, motives and way of representing reality. Refusing the nuances, Katerina Clark mentions the fact that the Socialist Realist novel is a case of ‘modal schizophrenia’, as it is based on a ‘fatal split’: depicting ‘what is’ and ‘what ought to be’ (Clark 2000, 36-45). The daily ‘heroic deed’ from product novels coexisted with the literature of revolutionary inspiration and with the literature of the civil war with the revolutionary ‘heroic deed’.

This dual parentage of the Soviet ‘heroic deed’ (of medieval war origin and daily building future of revolutionary origin) is the explanation for the ambiguous and guileful character of what *podvig* became in the Soviet prose in general and war prose in particular. Actually, the Soviet literary discourse took over the form and gave it a new semantic meaning of ideological nature so that the result is a concept with strong patriotic meaning with different overtones than in the case of Leo Tolstoy.

The Soviet Encyclopedia (*Bol’shaja Sovetskaja Entsiklopedija*) points out the fact that ‘greatness of the heroic deed is not conferred by the abstract self-sacrifice of personality, but by its historic international content, participation at the progressive movement of peoples for the victory of Communism, which ensures peace, work and liberty to man’ (1971, 423). The ‘heroic deed’ of war times becomes daily, accessible, and peaceful and lacking the original heroism, brought in the environment of the daily fights and patriotic motivations of a questionable exuberance. The transmutation that intervened at the level of war actions is the result of the mental and emotional change of the category of ‘new men’ – a transformation like *metanoia* of *homo sovieticus*. The newly formed so-called Soviet people as the main character of the war writings is characterized by the ‘heroic deed’ of the new type with its new multiple ingredients, having its origin in the new Soviet patriotism.

### Introductory Elements

Speaking about the Slavic context, the main source of heroism may be considered *The Tale of Igor’s Campaign* (claimed to be from the 12<sup>th</sup> century) along with heroic tales (*byliny*) of

local heroes (*bogatyř*) and heroic elements that pervade the Russian fairy-tales. According to V. Propp the Russian *byliny* reflect not only historical events, but also people's ideals over centuries (Propp 1958, 7). On the folkloric realm we talk about military heroism and the heroes (*bogatyři* meaning 'God searcher', 'defender of God' of Asian origin or *vityaz`* meaning 'powerful, courageous man' probably of Sanskrit origin) are warriors, represented according to certain literary norms comparable to hagiographical norms.

Igor's portrait from the mentioned epic poem is built according to the traditions of the epic style of the medieval chronicles, representing the image of the *knyaz`* in superlative tone with highly valued traits. Even though the attitude toward the expedition is a critical one, the heroic perspective even in the case of Igor's death is the one that may be considered partly responsible for the later Soviet conviction that heroic doesn't admit failures, that there are no defeated dying people, only heroes, and there are no minor deeds at war, only great deeds. The character of a symbol of the hero dying in battle is depicted in this heroic poem with the help of the folkloric elements, and of great significance is Jaroslavna's mourn lament. The patriotism is present due to two main devices – the greatness of the Russian land (Russia-mother – *Rus'-matushka*) and nature, and the people represented as being in close connection with the land so that Russia seems a living creature, an organism. As for the author's intention, it was interpreted later that it exceeded the simple presentation of the military campaign in 1185. The patriotic tones may be the ones to contribute to the unification of the Slavic tribes, represented as being scattered and tormented by conflicts, also expressing the ideal of brothers' love (*bratoljubie*). Trofimova mentions in her article that Russian patriotism is always about defending Motherland, but although this may be true concerning the two world wars, it can't be true regarding Igor's military campaign and regarding the Soviet expanding political influence and Russian geographical borders (Trofimova 2007, 50). The Soviet return to medieval times and narratives is not an accidental approach, as the same strategy of representing Russia as the elder brother and all other republics as smaller sisters was used in the Soviet times.

The Russian heroism and patriotism of the later century was represented in the Kulikov cycle, especially in *The Tale of Mamaev Battle*, where the central figure is Dmitry Donskoy and

his great qualities and military capacities. The patriotic theme is the central one in the literature of the 19<sup>th</sup> century in the case of Nekrasov, Lermontov, depicting the outstanding heroism of the Russian soldier in battle and the heroism of the Russian people. *Borodino* poem brings into the foreground the glorious deeds of the Russian soldiers who died in 1812, becoming the symbol of victory in the conscience of the Russian people and a source of inspiration for Tolstoy and the battle scenes in *War and Peace* (1869).

A slight semantic change on the notions of heroic and heroism is brought by Chernyshevsky and his novel *What is to Be Done?* (1863), due to the suggested directions in the social-political area and searching of the traits of 'new men'. Thus, we may talk about heroism in the case of fighting against the cultural stereotypes, especially in the case of woman's place in society. Chernyshevsky's heroism is of a polemic nature due to doubting the bourgeois cultural norms of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, making place to other meanings and directions to follow ideally and ideologically. This modification that aims to presents another social order is responsible, along with other writings of those times, for a major cultural mutation that made possible the implementation of the socialist revolutionary ideas on the Russian soil, the Russian Revolution and, together with this, the redefinition of heroism and its proclamation as national trait for the new Soviet man.

### L. Tolstoy's Heroic Heritage

The heroism represented by Leo Tolstoy not only in *War and Peace*, but also in *Sevastopol Sketches* is connected to the Russian national character, becoming a 'national feeling' and hidden aspect of patriotism. The main character of *Sevastopol Sketches* (1855) is, according to the author, the 'truth itself' about the man at war, aspect that, among others, culminated in Tolstoy's supreme artistic achievement in *War and Peace*. The spiritual victory in Borodino battle from the mentioned novel is depicted as part of the patriotic feeling of the Russian people. The individual dimension and the personal deed (that became specific to the Soviet war prose) are lost in the bigger picture of a fighting people as united entity against the enemy. The fact that Andrei Bolkonski's soldiers continue to fight despite the lack of food and rest, loosing lives continuously, represents evidence of determination to fight and full dedication to the cause of Motherland defence. Accomplishing the duty of citizen and soldier is transformed in 'heroic deed' when

people who were of the upper class refused the comfort and protection offered by the social status and, as Bolkonski, got involved on the battlefield. We have access through Pierre Bezukhov to Raevski's heroism and we witness Bezukhov's amazement while losing personal identity in the army that is represented as a heroic entity and unity facing danger.

The image of the common man involved in battle reveals the ideologically unstained patriotism and the power of will and the Russian spirit. Inhabitants leaving their towns, soldiers being united by the desire to see their country at peace, partisans fighting in dangerous operations against the invaders, soldiers dying on the battlefield are as many aspects of a complete picture of the novel that became as many facets and arguments of the prevailing heroic discourse of the Soviet literary critics.

The profile of Mikhail Kutuzov, characterized by the interest for his fighters more than the victory itself, is used as an example and a prototype in the prose of the Second World War due to this sensibility to soldiers' needs and humanism <sup>(1)</sup>. Kutuzov is characterized by 'common traits of the old man' and an essential trait – 'popular feeling' – that contributed to a successful recovery of Russian territories. This commander is the embodiment of the simple Russian man; he appeared to be the simple and common man, talking simply and doing simple things, urging and encouraging through his closeness toward the people and powerful patriotic feeling. Kutuzov may be regarded as the ideal of the historical personality and ideal of the Russian man due to this inclination toward the Russian people and spirit of the army. He himself urges the soldiers to show mercy for the captured enemies, saying that when the enemies were strong, they needed to be defeated, but now they need to be shown mercy. In Berdyaev's reading this urge is the mirror of the Russian people's superiority, mentioning the biggest human temptation as the 'temptation of victory' and referring to the paradox of dialectics of power and victory (Berdyaev 1993, 306-311). While the victory supposes power and moral power, it can also transform itself easily in violence, destroying the moral character of power, leading to the central theme of the relationship between spirit and power. Berdyaev reveals the difference between

the 'totalitarian' and 'chivalrous' war by recognizing the human value of the enemy, an aspect that not only is not present in the Soviet war prose, but it is also replaced by the patterns and ideological models of war.

Tolstoy's patriotism is, at the same time, related to humanism, an aspect that may be attributed to the veracious and plausible character of the classic Russian Realism, distorted later ideologically by the Socialist Realism. The element of affective and patriotic unity of the man with the people is present in *War and Peace* especially in case of Pierre Bezukhov who realizes that the authentic happiness relies in this merger with the simple people, being part of its destiny. The fate of the Russian people in a difficult historic period, as well as the role of the people in overcoming this situation, is one of the main preoccupations of the author, being the reflection of his historical conception and his convictions regarding the importance of the people in modeling the history. In Tolstoy's vision, it is not the historical personalities who play the decisive role at war, but the will and involvement of the people, people's fighting spirit and unity fighting the enemy, aspects that contributed to perceiving the novel in the Soviet era as national epic of the heroic deed of the Russian people in 1812.

The patriotism of the Russian people is not represented by various decisions of the simple people facing the attackers, while the patriotic feeling is not depicted in superlatives and ideological explanations, but through direct and simple words and deeds. The war may be regarded as the supreme test that reveals national traits and highlights the spiritual strength of the Russian people, offering the status of the victor. While many Soviet writers pretended to have written in Tolstoy's tradition and many literary critics have praised similar attempts, few are those writers who may truly claim this literary parentage, being given the social and political changes, as well as the instauration of the Socialist Realism and its patterns of representation that were bearers of ideological content.

### **The Russian-Soviet Transition. Brief Analysis of the Key Soviet Literary Works**

The transition and transfer age of Russian national values on the politically new born 'Soviet people' were made with the help of some important names in shaping the image of the Soviet man – M. Gorky, A. Fadeyev, N. Ostrovsky, A. Tolstoy are just several names

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<sup>(1)</sup> An example would be Vaskov from B. Vasilyev's *The Dawns Here Are Quiet* (1972), who supports and trains the members of his troop, encouraging and admonishing equally when it was the case.

from the literary area to begin with. They contributed not only to modifying the role and nature of literature on the Soviet ground, but also to building a different type of literary hero to serve to newly established literary and ideological goals.

Before analyzing some literary ideologized aspects of the most important Soviet novels, we must state that most of the novel subjects were inspired by real events, real people and tend to represent the Soviet reality adding the structural opposition of ideal events and ideal people and disregarding some aspects of truthfulness and plausibility. In other words, the common men and women were considered heroes due to the new political and historical events and in order to popularize these singular and exceptional heroes literature, and especially novel, was used as being the most suitable literary form, contributing to the rise of the new type of popular novel such is the case of the popular detective or erotic novels. Besides, the role of the literary critics was to welcome such heroes and to present a generalized image of such simple heroes as being the norm and the usual phenomenon in the so-called greatest country of all.

Popularizing such simple men and women and their deeds (pretending 'heroic deeds') through media, literature and re-presenting everything in a patriotic and ideal manner aimed to contribute to the change in mentality of the Soviet citizens, regardless of their ethnicity or nationality. This cycle of taking popular or well-known heroes from reality and transforming them into literary heroes and symbols proved to be a tricky and complicated one, because the heroes and events underwent some ideological and idealistic changes, but it worked flawlessly concerning the designated role of shaping the Soviet character and conscience of membership.

This 'mass-copying' phenomenon is part of the task of Soviet literature – the myth-making or generating official myths to support the new social order. E. S. Seniavskaia mentions that the mass-copying process of literary examples (inspired by real life) resembled the 'mass edition of heroic deed', distinguishing between the prototype of the 'heroic symbol' and the 'symbol' itself (Seniavskaia 1999, 214-216). In the case of creating a symbol the social aspects were of no importance compared to the represented reality and the officially recognized events 'canonized' by the social conscience. In order to become phenomenon of mass conscience the symbol became popular among the people if the symbol was of literary origin,

while the symbol from the people gained acceptance and popularity through official propaganda. The researcher argues that these are the defining mechanism of the Russian wars of the 20<sup>th</sup> century so that the literary characters became means of re-affirming the social examples of heroism in the conscience of the people, transforming real events in symbol.

To begin the brief analysis of the main Soviet literary heroic works, we must admit that a decisive role in establishing the literary and ideological method of the Socialist Realism was played by M. Gorky's novel entitled *Mother* (1906) where we may find the seeds of the modified type of heroism. Moreover, the daily revolutionary 'heroic deed' is installed by the typical hero Pavel Vlasov of this novel, a fact that later became part of the instauration of a Soviet literary canon.

The revolutionary deed as a lifestyle may be found in the case of N. Ostrovsky's novel *How the Steel Was Tempered* (1932), defined according to main character's (Pavel Korchagin) adherence to Bolsheviks. Ostrovsky's heroism played an important role in defining the Soviet identity and patriotic conscience of many young generations, having an accessible didactic style and serving well the main idea of the Socialist Realism to educate the masses. Nevertheless, the heroism of this novel may be regarded with skepticism due to its final textual references concerning the protagonist's involvement in the noble cause for social equality, neglecting his own health: 'It proved that there's no heroism in this'. For most readers of the '30s, Pavel was 'the national hero' or the embodiment of courage, unconditional dedication to the Party and victory of the new social order. The main hero was described in Soviet textbooks as the typical representative of the young guard of Bolsheviks, while the novel was considered the biography of an entire generation.

The transformation of the heroism ingredients of the Second World War prose has as their basis the socio-political and cultural changes and the installment of the Socialist Realism. Although many Soviet writers claim their parentage from Lev Tolstoy, the introduction of the new literary ideologized canon of the master plot<sup>1</sup> and positive character construction contribute to perceiving false notes in the heroic notes. Each decade after the Second

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(<sup>1</sup>) See Katherina Clark's comprehensive analysis of the 'master plot' as the defining trait of the Soviet novel in her book *The Soviet Novel: History as Ritual*.

World War, entitled 'Great Fatherland Liberation War' or 'Great Patriotic War' brings new literary devices and elements to the established canon, as well as liberating attempts from the censorship. The climax of this process may be considered V. Grossman's novel *Life and Fate* written in 1959 and published on Russian soil in 1988. An important literary event of the after war period is considered I. Ehrenburg's novel *The Thaw* (1954), which gave the name to the Soviet cultural movement after Stalin's death. Other important literary events of the Soviet Union are Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn's novel *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* (1962) and Boris Pasternak's *Doctor Zhivago* (1957), which determined Geoffrey Hosking to divide the Soviet literature until this period and after it, mentioning relevant cultural and literary changes (Hosking 1980, 29-49).

As for illustrating the change between only two decades of hero making characteristics, two important war writings may be brought into our attention – V. Kataev's *Son of the Regiment* (1944) and I. Bogomolov's *Ivan* (1957) (with the famous film adaptation by A. Tarkovsky in 1962) – that are examples of opposite types of heroism depicted and understood. We underline a romantic perspective in Kataev's case – representing a child hero on the battlefield with his heroic deeds, while in Bogomolov's case we witness a silent and restrained heroism. In both cases we may discuss about the 'heroic deed' at war, but its components are different and so are the trigger factors that contribute to child character's involvement in the battle.

A special case of the literary representation of the Soviet heroism is A. Fadeyev's *The Young Guard* with two versions – 1946 and 1951 – depicting the real events in Krasnodon in 1942. The second version of the novel was written due to the harsh criticism regarding the absence of the mature communist leaders to support the activities of the underground organization fighting against the German occupiers in Krasnodon. The author added ten chapters to respond to this ideological necessity, creating new heroes near those who were inspired from real teenagers and pupils. The artistic creativity was directed and restricted at the same time – although the author had full access to all documents that presented the events, the category of 'what ought to be' gained more importance in the propaganda view. Hence the non-historical and ideologically inspired (in the strict sense of the word) heroes of the novel. On the other hand, only the characters inspired from real heroes of those historical events

became symbols and were canonized by the social conscience. Although the heroism of the second version should have seemed complete, offering the explanations of the moral springs and party membership motivations, it appears false and too ideologically charged. Regardless of the rewriting fact, the novel fits into Fadeyev's work due to author's aim of representing 'heroic aspects that characterize Soviet people' (Bushmin 1983, 178-179).

After Stalin's death (1953) the cultural atmosphere changes and the censorship is less vigilant in imposing the established literary canon, a fact that made possible for many Soviet novels to offer a realistic representation of war and heroism, influenced by the psychological trend and by the desire for authenticity. Sholokhov's novel *They Fought for Their Country* (1969) brings a change in the representation of the Soviet fighter, being focused on the destiny of simple Russian people, their heroism and, according to Soviet literary critics, 'well-known Suvorovist qualities', revealing 'potential readiness for the heroic deed' (Zhuravljiova 1978, 99-100).

K. Simonov is considered the founder of the panoramic novel of the Second World War, continuing his vision from the short story *Days and Nights* in his trilogy *The Alive and the Dead* (1959-1971) where heroism is the daily element of the battles, not only the expression of the final battle or of successive victories. To mention only several relevant facts on the reception of the depicted heroism in this trilogy we may highlight the dual criticism – either the artistic poverty, the lack of heroism (Kuzmichev 1973, 203) or convincing depiction of heroism due to representation of various facets and conflicts of reality (Fink 1983, 267-268). The second approach is far more dangerous, because it tends to generalize and to claim a heroization of almost all the characters and ignores the Soviet traditional and canonically demanded heroization, de-heroizing by presenting the 'truth of the trenches' (*okopnaja pravda*). The reason for the first critical approach is Simonov's concept of the 'harsh truth' that modifies the heroic vision and brings important changes in shaping the Soviet heroism.

Bondarev is part of a new stage of the Soviet war literature and due to his temporal distance concerning Stalinism his novels – *The Hot Snow* (1969), *The Shore* (1975), *The Choice* (1980) – reflect the echoes of psychological literary trend and are more focused on the war consequences and its social-philosophical issues than on the war matters. In I. Bondarev's novels



heroic is associated with tragic with the focus on the ethic and philosophic aspects of war (Fed' 1988, 13). The critical reception of his works during the Soviet period was a biased ideological one, with heavy reminiscences of the established canon of the Socialist Realism, situating Bondarev's heroism in a far more depreciative position than in Simonov's case.

We reach what we entitle the climax of the literary Soviet demystification of the heroic reality – Vasily Grossman's *Life and Fate* (1969, published in 1988). We consider that only in this case a truly literary and ideational parentage from Tolstoy and Chekhov is real, given the fact that both authors are interested in 'loyalty toward truth, no matter what its bitterness is' (Lazarev 1990 in Grossman 1990, 661). Grossman offers a representation of the heroism of the war and the national misery with its forbidden facets, taboo zones of the Soviet war reality. We witness a drastic change of presenting the heroic deed, as well as a change of the patriotic tone – everything being minimal, authentic and direct. The simplicity of Grossman's heroes and the special character construction determined the critics to admit that the hero is a 'man among people' (*chelovek sredi ljudej*).

Taking over the Russian national traits and assuming them to the 'Soviet people' may be analyzed in the context of taking over the ideas of the 19<sup>th</sup> century Pan-Slavism before the First World War and cultivating intensively these ideas during the Second World War. The feeling of unity and national membership as a reaction to the French influence in the 19<sup>th</sup> century are Pan-Slavism ingredients that are used as political tool by the Soviet Union giving the impression of security by belonging to the new people as a reaction to the German threat during the two world wars. The artificially formed new Soviet people couldn't miss the heroic trait, being given the great national interest facing the double threat – territorially and ideologically. Berdyaev mentioned the fact that heroic trait and other great human qualities are closely connected to wars that trigger the high instincts of the human nature, the self-sacrifice and love for the country, requiring a fearless attitude toward death. Aspects of this discourse are to be found in the Soviet ideological discourse that supports the heroism and greatness of the 'Soviet people' in the 'Great Fatherland Liberation War' and in the proclamation of the heroic united people against the enemy.

While the Russian national cohesion and spirit can't be questioned, the collocation 'Soviet

people' can and must be questioned from various perspectives. According to the dictionary *Nauchnyj Kommunizm* the 'Soviet people' is 'a new historical, social and international community that appeared in URSS based on the Socialism victory, overcoming the class and national oppositions, coming near to various classes, social groups, nations and ethnicity, and harmonious relations among them' (1983, 278-280). It is clear that this definition is situated more on the 'what ought to be' side than on 'what is', mixing the reality with the ideal and mythical people. The same source states that the formation process of this people was 'long, difficult and complex' in two essential stages: 'the transition process from capitalism to socialism' and 'the period of building the evolved socialism'. Another relevant aspect is the mentioning of the 'national pride', which is the main source of heroism in case of facing the enemy, be it the class enemy or the external enemy.

The contemporary critical approach proposed by A. Lazarevich on the so-called 'Soviet people' supports the element of the 'cultural isolation' as being necessary to the ethno-genesis of the 'last people that appeared on the planet', reaching its maturity in the Stalinist era<sup>1</sup>. Nevertheless, the politicized name of a presumed 'new people' raises questions concerning the process of ethno-genesis, while the mentioned two staged process of formation from official Soviet sources reveals no will of the involved peoples and ethnic groups, which situates this ethno-genesis in the active (or even aggressive) category with inclusive policy towards other nationalities, but imposing a strong Russification process. From this critical perspective we may talk about a Russian socialist military and political heroism with various literary and ideological patterns of implementing heroic prose and changing the mentality regarding heroism, while bringing new politicized semantic meanings to the existing cultural and mental forms.

### Preliminary Conclusions

The dynamics of heroism on Russian and then Soviet soil is a comprehensive process, captured in historical periods mainly according to the ruling political figures with greater influence on Soviet literature – Stalin and Khrushchev. The reflections of the 19<sup>th</sup> century hero-revolutionist literary type are briefly

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(<sup>1</sup>) [http://technocosm.narod.ru/k2f/Sovietia\\_toc.htm](http://technocosm.narod.ru/k2f/Sovietia_toc.htm)  
Accessed on October 10, 2013.



analyzed in the pre-revolutionary and revolutionary years together with the semantic changes to heroism itself, while the formation and installment of the Socialist Realism canon (1932-1934) stabilizes the new heroic patterns. Each decade after this literary ideologized event has specific heroic representations and the Second World War literature takes over the existing matrices of dual nature (military and ideological). After the cultural Thaw we may speak about stages of ideological de-heroization and recovery of the patriotic heroism in Tolstoy's perception, while assisting to a shift in the literary hero's construction from the 'positive character' from Chernyshevsky's tradition to the character reflecting the classic Russian Realism canon with several psychological insights and moral-philosophical tendencies. From Kataev to Grossman we've analyzed the main transmutations of the heroic and heroism, offering a glimpse of Soviet hero-making process.

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# The Intellectuals in the Evangelical Churches during the Communist regime

Marius SILVEȘAN

PhD, Theological Baptist Institute of Bucharest

E-mail: marius.silvesan@yahoo.com

**Abstract.** This study addresses aspects of cultural life in Communist Romania with specific reference to evangelical intellectuals. For the purpose of discussing this subject, I used original documents from the Archive of the Department of Religious Affairs, which provided information about neo-Protestant (evangelical) intellectuals, their actions, attitudes and statistics. The information in the archival documents was supplemented with those provided by monographs, articles, and interviews with evangelical intellectuals who had a cultural activity during the communist period.

**Key words:** neo-Protestant intellectuals, neo-Protestant cults, Department of Religious Affairs, cult Inspector, communism in Romania

It is important to know our past, which is why I provide an insight, through this study, into the cultural life of the evangelical communities in Communist Romania, analyzed through a short history of representative intellectuals. Therefore, in addition to the information related to cultural life, in this study there are also issues related to the freedom of expression, and, in some cases, even to persecution. I mentioned this because many times these two elements are intertwined in the life of evangelical intellectuals during the communist period. Since the direction of research aims at aspects of cultural life, I sought to present in this study both general and specific issues, by highlighting the fact that, in the communist period, evangelicals (or neo-Protestants) had a cultural life and did not limit themselves to religious matters. Neo-Protestant intellectuals were noted both in the areas in which they were educated (theology, medicine, Romanian language and literature, music) and in defending religious rights and freedoms from the inside or the outside of their community, irrespective of the denomination.

To highlight the *Zeitgeist* <sup>(1)</sup>, in this study I chose the terms neo-Protestants and evangelicals. According to a definition given by George Hancock-Stefan, neo-Protestantism 'is a term for Romanian Baptists, Nazarenes, Pentecostals, Evangelicals and Seventh-day

Adventists <sup>(2)</sup>. The term suggests that they did not come to Romania at the same time as the Reformed church and the Lutheran one' (Hancock-Stefan 2003, 21).

Because we refer to evangelical cults, a term with different meanings within the Romanian territory as compared to the West, we must know when and how they appeared in Romania.

Thus, the first church whose history I shall present is the Baptist one which was founded in Amsterdam, Holland, in 1609. The first Baptist Church in modern Romania was established in 1856 in Bucharest. In the interwar period, Romanian Baptists faced persecution, although they had the legal status of a religious association even after the passing of the Law of Cults in 1928. They were able to obtain the status of a religious cult, for the first time, in 1940. Shortly after that, between 1942 and 1944, in the context of the international circumstances and domestic pressures, the Baptists were banned, but after August 23<sup>rd</sup> they regained their legal rights. In the fall of 1944, their religious cult status was recognized by royal decree and this recognition was reiterated by the Law of Cults of 1948 and the Decree 1203 of 1950. The latter legal norm enshrined the operation and organization's status made in accordance with the Law of Cults of 1948 (Silveșan, Răduț manuscript; Silveșan 2012, 40-80).

*Seventh-day Adventists* appeared in 1870 with the visit of the Polish pastor (former

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<sup>(1)</sup> *Zeitgeist* (spirit of the age or spirit of the time), <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zeitgeist>, accessed on 17.07.2013. By using this term, we wish to rebuild, to highlight issues related to the mood of the era under consideration.

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<sup>(2)</sup> The Seventh-day Adventists are not part of our study.

Catholic priest) Michael Bellina Chehonsky. (History, <http://www.adventist.ro/index/>). From the Adventist Cult, two groups emerged: reformist Adventists and protestant Adventists, both outlawed by Decision no 1636 of 3 July 1951 of the Ministry of Justice (Răduț 2010, 93).

*The Brethren* came at the end of the year 1899 as a result of Eduard H. Broadbent's mission from England and of Francis Berney and Charles Aubert's mission from Switzerland. Bucharest hosted the first meeting of preaching the Gospel originally in French, and then it spread throughout Romania. In 1939, under pressure of the authorities, they agreed to merge with Christians according to the Scripture<sup>1</sup>, but the latter broke away in 1990 to form the Romanian Evangelical Church (Răduț, 2012, 34-39).

The onset of communism had various consequences on neo-Protestants. Thus, in addition to maintaining the recognition of this religious cult, the state interfered with the internal life of the Church, which affected the functioning of the institution, the religious service, the believers and the religious personnel. The intellectuals were directly targeted, monitored by the Department of Religious Affairs and the Securitate<sup>2</sup>.

The intellectuals are the elite of a country or community, in this case, of the neo-Protestant churches in Romania. For a clearer understanding of this term, I consider it appropriate to mention that the Romanian explanatory dictionary defines the term 'intellectual' as a person who has thorough specialized training and works in arts, sciences, technology *etc.*; a person belonging to the intelligentsia'. (DEX – 'Intellectual'). As I mentioned before, the Department of Religious Affairs and the Securitate monitored religious life and the intellectuals, especially those who were actively involved in the church life. In the statistics and reports of the above-mentioned institutions it is obvious that the label 'intellectual' is used quite flexibly, including people without university education (Mănăstireanu 2009). There was monitoring, and

there were also persecutions of the Baptist intellectuals caused by the fact that the communist regime was afraid of them. The communists feared the power of the personal example which was taken as a model by the believers; they also feared they could create opponency to the regime. Moreover, since they were educated, they had a different understanding of the political, social and economic events. The communist state considered religion to be opium of the people, and this should also be taken into consideration. The Marxists thought that 'that religion is the opium of the people. They carried on agitation at every level to discredit religion and the Church. Intellectuals were told that to hold any religious beliefs is to regress to superstition' (Raikin 1984, 281). The mentioned aspects can be found summarized in a document of the Department of Religious Affairs of the year 1980. It labeled as negative a series of general manifestations of neo-Protestant intellectuals (Baptists, Evangelicals, Pentecostals and Adventists). The document refers to the following: the negative influence on youth, the advocacy of the religious freedom in America, attempts to send memories abroad. (ASSC 1980, Pondere elementelor intelectuale, ff. 2-3). The fight for the freedom of thought, worship and expression of neo-Protestant intellectuals is a feature of the years 1970-1980 of Romanian communism. This desire for freedom also meant, in some cases, sending protest memoranda to Radio *Free Europe*, the U.S. Congress, and also to other international bodies which had a role in monitoring the respect for the rights and freedoms of the Romanian citizens, including religious rights. Compared to the situations referred to in the document mentioned above, the senior territorial inspector of the Department of Religious Affairs of Argeș county listed a number of measures to counteract the actions of the neo-Protestant intellectuals in the county: 'We acted directly on the believers who are party members, very few in number, through educational factors, party and public organizations, resulting in temporary clarifications and a rarer participation in meetings of worship. [...] Greater attention was given to countermeasures in social media: industry, health, construction, cooperation, where the number of employees with a high cultural level is high.' After reviewing these activity areas, the inspector refers to the school system. 'The results were generally prompt and positive; the manipulations in different forms of party education and in pedagogical councils manage to fight the ill

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<sup>1</sup>) A movement started in Bucharest, in the 1920s around the former Orthodox priest Teodor (Tudor) Popescu, and which extended to other places; in 1927 it took the name of Christians according to the Scripture. Also known as tudorite movement, named after the founder.

<sup>2</sup>) 'Securitate' is the name for Department of State Security (the secret police agency of Communist Romania).

mystical and religious manifestations' (*Ibidem*). For an overview of the situation of neo-Protestant intellectuals in Argeş, I quote the same document of the senior territorial inspector of the Department of Religious Affairs in the county which also presents statistical information. Thus, 'in the religions of Argeş County, the neo-Protestant cults have a rate of 0,6 % of the population of believers' (*Ibidem*, f. 1).

The same document entitled 'The rate of intellectual elements among the neo-Protestant believers and the effects of their implication in community life' provides comparative information regarding the intellectuals from the neo-Protestant denominations in the county. '1.9% of the neo-Protestants from Argeş County are intellectuals, a higher percentage being found within the Open Brethren Church. The number is 47 out of 2495' (*Ibidem*).

When speaking about neo-Protestant intellectuals, we take into account those who were medical doctors, professors, poets, engineers, musicians. Therefore, the communist authorities regarded those who earned graduate degrees as intellectuals.

The Department of Religious Affairs of Argeş provides a personalized statistic for each denomination, outlining the activity of the intellectuals from that religious cult. For instance, according to the official reports, among the Open Brethren we can distinguish '12 medical doctors, 16 engineers, 11 economists and 10 faculty members.' The difference between the number stated above, namely 47, and what we find in the reports about intellectuals, according to their activity, can partially be explained by different sources of investigating the available data and its centralization within the Department of Religious Affairs, as well as due to the fact that not all the activities associated with intellectual work have been approached. 'Within the Seventh-Day Adventists – 8 professors, 6 economists, 4 engineers, etc. Within the Pentecostals – 7 engineers, especially in the wood industry, 12 faculty members. Within the Baptists – 3 engineers in the energy industry' (*Ibidem*, f. 2).

There is a similar document issued by the Department of Religious Affairs of Arad on August, 06<sup>th</sup>, 1971. So, according to the legal norm 5.067/1971, regarding the children of Evangelical believers pursuing university degrees, a report was issued for the Department of Religious Affairs, Bucharest Division, for Monitoring and Control, stating the following:

'We have made researches, approaching 4 pastors from the Baptist, Pentecostal and Seventh-Day Adventists denominations, with the result that 19 young people belonging to their families attend different Colleges.' It is stated that they study medicine, engineering, pedagogy and music (ASSC 1980, Către Departamentul Cultelor, f. 1).

Regarding the number of neo-Protestant intellectuals from Arad, the Department states that they managed to identify 20 believers with degrees, working as medical doctors, engineers, professors, lawyers (*Ibidem*).

Professor **Vasile Talpoş**, headmaster of the Baptist Theological Seminary in Bucharest between 1988 and 1990 and president of the Baptist Theological Institute in Bucharest between 1990 and 2011, expressed his opinion, during a conversation that we had on October 8<sup>th</sup> 2013, about the Evangelical intellectuals during communism and about his personal cultural life. He also said that **Lidia Talpoş**, his wife, sang for many years in a choir at the State Philharmonic of Cluj. She used to sing different musical pieces, in their original language (German, Italian, etc.) and her husband attended various concerts of the Philharmonic. He told us that during the communist regime, he would go to concerts and listen to musical works, such as Beethoven's Symphony no. 9 or Giuseppe Verdi. We should mention that a part of Symphony no. 9 is also being sung in the Evangelical churches as *We adore You joyfully*. Also, he enjoyed reading and going to theatre, provided that the various plays would not dishonor God and were not an attack against religion and Christian faith. Professor Vasile Talpoş also talked about these facts in an interview that he was taken in 2003, in Bucharest.

When talking about high school, where the intellectual young man was being formed, he mentioned how he used to spend his spare time and described the cultural atmosphere of the 60s. Professor Talpoş also talked about the books one could find in that period and said: 'You could find books belonging to the Romanian classic literature and they would become plays performed at the theatre. I enjoyed going to theatre, as this was also a part of our cultural program' (Vasile Talpoş, 2003).

Among the plays one could see at the theatre in Cluj, at that time, he mentioned *The Sunset*, an arrangement of the work with the same title written by Barbu Ştefănescu Delavrancea, and *Hagi Tudose*. Vasile Talpoş said that these plays had been originally literary

works by Romanian authors, and others belonging to foreign writers were also played at the theatre. Out of the Romanian writers we can recall Ion Luca Caragiale, Vasile Alecsandri and others. At that time, people were open for movies, dramas and other works that belonged to both Romanian and foreign authors (*Ibidem*).

I asked Professor Vasile Talpoș to speak shortly about the academic life in Cluj at the end of the 60s. In this context, he mentioned about Babeș-Bolyai University, The Medical School, the Engineering College and Polytechnics with various branches. 'There were also some schools that prepared students for different technical branches – these schools required only 3 years of studies.' Those who graduated from these schools had chances to find good jobs. 'Also, continues professor Talpoș, we had colleges where people studied Economic Sciences and Politics.'

When discussing about these educational opportunities for the youth of that time, Professor Vasile Talpoș emphasized something interesting concerning the Evangelical Christians. 'Some colleges, as Economics, Law and Psychology were not open for Christians, but only for those recommended by the Party.'

Professor Talpoș recalls that only some colleges required the personal file of the candidate for admission. 'Technical Colleges and Medical School would not accept candidates on the basis of their personal file. The file of a prospective student would only be taken into account if that person didn't have a healthy background. That means if his family was poor or if he had any political endeavor against communism. This is why many Evangelical Christians managed to be admitted into Music School, Medicine, Engineering and Technical Institutions, whereas one could apply for the other Colleges only on the basis of his personal file' (*Ibidem*).

The information received from professor Talpoș is confirmed by the reality of that time. Another intellectual that was noticed during the communist regime was the medical doctor **Silviu Cioată** from the Brethren Church. Born on June 9<sup>th</sup> 1931, in Ploiești, Prahova County, in a Christian family, he became a believer himself during high school, in 1946. (Silviu Cioată, 1997)

He graduated the Medical School in Cluj in 1956 and became a radiology specialist in 1963. On July 9<sup>th</sup>, 1957, he got married to Elena Hotăran and they had three children: Cristiana, Silviu and Ionuț. While practicing medicine, he also received training in theology and became an

apologist of the Biblical truth, writing regularly in 'Calea Credinței' [The path of faith], and the periodical of the Brethren Church. Between 1985 and 1992 he took courses in Biblical Education by Extension, and between 1992 and 1994 he took courses in Advanced Training Study. Also he taught a course on Christian life, first at 'Timotheus' Biblical School (1990-1993) and then at 'Timotheus' Theological Institute (1993-1997).

During the communist regime, in April 1977, he was one of the subscribers of the letter of the six neo-Protestants, and, as a result, he was investigated for six months (Răduț, 2012, 51-53). At that time, he was also the personal doctor of pastor Joseph Tson. Between 1981 and 1982 he was involved in transporting and distributing Bibles and Christian literature, activity for which he got arrested, investigated and sentenced at five years and a half in jail. However, due to external pressures he was released after nine months (*Ibidem*, 59-62).

While being released, he was asked what he was going to do in the future and his answer was: 'The same as I have done so far.'

Right after the revolution in December, he was elected, in January 1990, as the president of the Open Brethren and was reconfirmed in that position in 1994. Also, during this time, he was the general secretary of the Romanian Evangelical Alliance (1990-1994) and then vice-president between 1994 and 1997. On October 20<sup>th</sup> 1997, he passed away at the age of 66 (Silveșan, Răduț, manuscris).

Doctor Silviu Cioată was an intellectual by formation and he got involved in various endeavors, aiming at freedom of thought and expression. We can mention as an example his involvement in signing a *document of protest* against the communist regime, entitled *The neo-Protestants cults and man's freedom in Romania*, document that was read at Radio Free Europe on April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1977. This act of protest was signed by the following six Evangelical intellectuals: Joseph Tson, Pavel Nicolescu, Aurel Popescu, Radu Dumitrescu (Baptist), Constantin Caraman (Pentecostal), Dr. Silviu Cioată (Brethren).

Dr. Cioată proved through his actions that he had more than a medical and theological culture; he also had a humanistic culture, springing from his understanding that the soul vibrates with the pluriform expressions of arts and beauty.

**Pavel Nicolescu** is a Baptist pastor, an outstanding intellectual (Caravia 1999, 12) and one of the Evangelical leaders in the Communist

Romania. He was born on April 27<sup>th</sup>, 1936, in Ploiești, Prahova County, in a Brethren family (Speaking with pastor Pavel Nicolescu, 26). Between 1961 and 1965 he attended the Baptist Seminary in Bucharest and graduated first in class. After graduation, he got married in 1966 with Rut Pădeanu and they had three children (Pavel Nicolescu 2006, 26).

In 1969 he began his studies at the Philosophy College in Bucharest. Being a graduate of a Theological institution and also a Baptist, he was expelled from College, just two weeks before finishing the fourth year, as could be read in a legal norm, number 177 from April 6<sup>th</sup> 1973, issued by the rector of the University of Bucharest, which, however, didn't mention the specific reason that led to this measure.

Together with other five subscribers (Joseph Tson, Constantin Caraman, Aurel Popescu, Radu Dumitrescu and Silviu Cioată) he sent abroad to *Radio Free Europe* a memoir entitled *The neo-Protestant cults and the human rights in Romania*. In order to write this memoir, Pavel Nicolescu gathered information about the international treaties signed by Romania, concerning the State's commitment to respect human rights and the fundamental freedoms. Joseph Tson testifies that Pavel Nicolescu was an expert regarding these laws (*Ibidem*).

After reading and hearing about him, but also after having several conversations with him, I can mention that he was not interested only in theology, but also in history, philosophy and law, with the result that he used to speak differently than other pastors.

Also, his training and skills allowed him to be involved in various actions concerning the religious freedom and the freedom of conscience. Although he was persecuted and investigated for six weeks, after the document was read at *Free Europe*, he did not give up his commitment to defend human rights. Consequently, in 1978, the Romanian Committee for Defending the Religious Freedom and the Freedom of Conscience was founded [ALRC, in Romanian] (Dobrincu 2003, 215).

This committee joined Paul Goma's movement of protest and other international organizations. Something interesting about this Committee is that although its members were mostly Evangelical (neo-Protestants), they pleaded for the release of the Orthodox priest Calciu Dumitreasa.

**Joseph Tson** is a Baptist pastor born on September 30<sup>th</sup> 1934, in Gârbovița, Alba County. He attended the courses of the Faculty of Letters in Cluj (1951-1955) and also those of

the Baptist Seminary in Bucharest (1955-1957). After graduation, he taught Romanian language in Cluj (1958-1968) (Iosif Țon 2013).

In 1959 he got married to Elisabeta and they had a daughter, Dorothea. Between 1969 and 1972, he studied theology in Oxford, thus being able to travel abroad, due to the fact that he worked as a guide for ONT (National Department of Tourism).

Between 1973 and 1974, he was a professor at the Baptist Seminary in Bucharest and then he worked as a pastor at the Baptist Church in Ploiești (1974-1977). While being a pastor in Ploiești, he wrote two papers that led to some measures of retaliation on behalf of the Securitate: *The one who will lose his life* and *The place of the Christian in socialism*, known also as *the Christian Manifest* <sup>(1)</sup>.

In his second work, Tson pleaded for integrating the Christians into the communist society. His works were written in 1973 and 1974, being published abroad in 1975. Then, his works were secretly spread in Romania, as they denounced the abuse of the State against the Evangelical Christians (ACNSAS, Fond Documentar, Dosar Nr. 13087, vol. 28, f. 83, *apud* Răduț, 2012).

In 1977, after the document concerning the human rights was on *Radio Free Europe*, Joseph Tson was arrested and investigated along with the other subscribers (Silveșan, Răduț, manuscris).

Between 1977 and 1981, Tson worked as a pastor at the Baptist Church in Oradea and then, in 1981, he emigrated in the USA, residing in Wheaton, IL. In 1982, he became the president of the Romanian Missionary Society, translating books on theology, printing them and bringing them secretly into Romania. Also, he used to preach at *Radio Free Europe*.

Through his sermons and published works during the communist regime, and also due to his training in the humanistic area, Joseph Tson had a major influence upon several generations of pastors, both during 1989 and thereafter.

His vision concerning the involvement of the Evangelicals in the cultural life of Romania, was materialized through the foundation of Emanuel Bible Institute in Oradea – which became Emanuel University in Oradea – the foundation of the Romanian Evangelical Alliance, the radio station 'Voice of the Gospel' and the publishing house 'The Christian Book' [in Romanian, *Cartea Creștină*].

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(<sup>1</sup>) As Karl Marx wrote *The Communist Manifest*.

**Ioan Bunaciu**, pastor and professor, was born on January 7<sup>th</sup> 1925, in Gurba, Arad County. He is known as one of the most remarkable Baptists, with a strong contribution in forming pastors and ministers, doing this under the difficult circumstances created by the communist regime.

In 1951, Ioan Bunaciu got married to Otilia Turcu from Almaş, having together a son, Otniel Ioan Bunaciu, currently dean of the Baptist College in the University of Bucharest, the president of the Romanian Baptist Union and the president of the European Baptist Federation (EBF).

Ioan Bunaciu studied Economics (ISEP) and graduated in 1949, attending at the same time the Baptist Seminary in Bucharest (1947-1950). After finishing his studies at the Baptist Seminary in Bucharest, because it was not accredited at a graduate level, Bunaciu attends the Reformed Theological Institute in Cluj (1951-1956), receiving a Bachelor's degree in Theology (1956). Then, he continues his studies and becomes a doctor in Theology, in 1974, receiving his degree from the Reformed Theological Institute in Cluj, such an achievement being something new for the Baptist church in Romania. At that time, Ioan Bunaciu was the only Baptist to receive a degree from the Reformed Theological Institute, the only Baptist who received a PhD degree in Romania and the only Baptist pastor and professor with a PhD degree in Theology (Bunaciu, Silveşan 2013, 65-68; Ioan Bunaciu 2012).

He began his academic career as a professor at the Baptist Seminary in Bucharest in 1955 and continued to teach until 2010, the Seminary becoming the Baptist Theological Institute in 1990. He was director of the Seminary between 1970 and 1988 while between 1990 and 2010 he was a professor at the Baptist College in the University of Bucharest.

When I interviewed him in 2012, professor Bunaciu mentioned that he taught at the Baptist Seminary for 55 years (1955-2010) and worked as a pastor for 60 years (1950-2010) (Ioan Bunaciu 2012). We should mention that after 1989 he worked as a professor at the Baptist Institute in Bucharest, the Baptist College in the University of Bucharest and Emanuel Institute in Oradea, which became Emanuel University.

Pastor Ioan Bunaciu is not only a professor, but also a historian and writer. During the communist regime he published 12 books among which we can mention here: *The history*

*of the Holy Scriptures, Systematic Theology, History of the New Testament, Preaching the Word in the Baptist Churches, The History of the Spreading of the Baptist Christian Faith in Romania, Biblical Archeology*. He continued to publish after 1990, being known as a remarkable historian of Baptist Christian Faith, by the following books: *History of the Baptists* (1993), *Baptist Christian Churches in Romania between 1944 and 1990* (2002), *History of the Romanian Baptist Churches* (2006), *Episodes from the History of Preaching the Gospel in the Baptist Churches in Romania 1874-1984* (2011).

**Emil Bulgăr**, a Pentecostal pastor, was born in Ulieş, Hunedoara county and became known as an engineer (offering his knowledge and expertise for constructing church buildings), as a pastor of the biggest Pentecostal church in Bucharest, as a president of the Pentecostal Cult (1990-1994), director of the Pensions Institute of the Cult, president of the Romanian Evangelical Alliance (1994-1998), as well as a poet and Christian writer (Aso, 2013).

His poems were distributed secretly in the Evangelical churches, knowing that the communist regime didn't allow the printing and spreading of religious literature. Among his poems that were published in an anthology we could mention: *The first love, A love letter, At the Meal, The Harvest, The Rain, Autumn*.

**Cristian Vasile Roske**, a Pentecostal pastor and poet, is another intellectual that we want to mention in this paper. I had the opportunity to listen to him on the occasion of a religious and cultural event, organized in December 2012 in Bucharest. While celebrating the Constantin Caraman and Costache Ioanid Centenary organized by Philadelphia Pentecostal Church in Bucharest, pastor Cristian Vasile Roske mentioned that the Pentecostal Church organized in Crângaşi area of Bucharest, in the 70s, a meeting for religious poetry. This proves that during the communist times, the neo-Protestants were involved in the cultural life.

Pastor Vasile Roske also mentioned Maier Ioan's desire of creating an anthology of Christian poems and although he asked for approval from the authorities, his project was denied. Vasile Roske himself had sent a poem to Maier Ion for the anthology he intended to publish, and as a result, Roske was questioned by the Securitate. Among the poems written by Cristian Vasile Roske we could mention: *Turning back* (May 25<sup>th</sup> 1950), *Flowers for the wedding day* (February 1954), *Meeting with Jesus* (August 1960) (Ciobanu 1994, 444-460).



It is worth mentioning **Maier Ioan's** desire of making an anthology of Christian poems, as another evidence of Evangelical intellectuals' involvement in cultural life. His endeavor was something totally new inside the Evangelical cultural life, although unfortunately, the project could not be completed.

I refer to this fact, especially because in that anthology, the author wanted to collect in one book the Christian poems and songs under the communist regime. Facing many obstacles, Ioan Maier wrote a new memoir and sent it to the State Council of the Socialist Republic of Romania, to the Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party, to the Department of Religious Affairs and also to 'the authors of Romanian poetic creation (poems and songs) (ASSC, 1978 Memoriul lui Maier Ion, f.1)

In this memoir, Maier Ioan, being a Theologian '(three years at the Baptist Seminary), poet and Christian writer', testifies about his constant aim 'beginning already in 1975, of creating the first interdenominational collection of Christian poems, (poems and songs), by means of developing an anthology of Romanian poetic creation and publishing it in different volumes based on specific writers. Also he aimed at founding an interdenominational periodical of Romanian poetic creation' (*Ibidem*).

The data presented above are also synthesized in a report made by the Department of Religious Affairs, and according to them, Maier Ioan mentions the following: '1. Since 1975 he has been working to make the first collection of Romanian Christian poems (poems, songs etc.), in order to publish it in an anthology based on several volumes and specific writers; 2. He wants to create an interdenominational monthly periodical, with the purpose of publishing the Romanian Christian poetic creation; 3. He shows that, so far, he managed to collect over 60 notebooks – volumes containing over 5 600 poems gathered from all Christian denominations in the country; 4. He asks for approval for typing each volume in 90-98 copies, which then to be distributed to churches around the country, the cost for each volume being equivalent to the cost of typing them.' (ASSC, 1978, Referat)

In his memoir, Ioan Maier speaks about his previous endeavors for creating an anthology of Christian poems, which did not receive a positive answer from the authorities. Still, he did not give up his project. Thus, after collecting for three years the poetic manifestations 'springing from the unknown deepness of the soul of a

Christian nation as ours', Ioan Maier believed that 'the need of knowing this treasure of Christian creation is more and more necessary' (ASSC, 1978 Memoriul lui Maier Ioan, f.1).

Although Maier didn't receive the approval for making that anthology of Christian poems, we believe that his struggle was something new for the Evangelical cultural life under the communist regime.

**Cristian Caraman** is a choir director, vocalist, and a remarkable representative of the Romanian Evangelical music. He graduated Ciprian Porumbescu Conservatory in Bucharest in 1986 and collaborated with important musical institutions from Romania and Europe.

In 2005, after advanced studies, Caraman received a PhD degree in music from the National University of Music in Bucharest. His doctoral dissertation is entitled *The Protestant Music*. Since 2006, he has been working as an associate professor at Timotheus Institute in Bucharest, becoming a lecturer in 2010.

In 2011, he publishes the results of his academic research at the National University of Music: *Terms of reference in the history of Protestant Music; Modern Protestant Music, Genres of Protestant Music* (Caraman, 2012).

During his musical career, he performed 'important roles in opera and vocal-symphonic shows' (Caraman 2013, 144, 146). Speaking about his family, we find out that he has a Luxembourg-Saxon genealogy, through his grandmother, the countess Elizabeth von Golden Egmond. His father 'was an officer in the Romanian royal army until the beginning of the communist regime' (Caraman 2013, 144).

Cristian Caraman got married to Mariana Catană and they have two children, Emanuel Cristian and Dorothea Lidia. In the communist times he was a tenor in Craiova. Thus, since he was still a student in Music, he became a vocalist at Line Theatre in Craiova and then, towards the end of the communist regime (1986-1990), he was hired as a vocalist at the Opera Theatre in Craiova. Then, after a competition that took place in February 1990, he moved to Bucharest, as a vocalist at 'Ion Dacian' Operetta Theatre and as the lead-vocalist at the same institution (*Ibidem*, 145, 148).

Cristian Caraman composed several religious musical parts, the most important being a collection of sacred songs, using the lyrics of his friend, the poet and Romanian Baptist pastor Petru Dugulescu, who passed away. This collection of songs was written between 1983 and 1985, being the result of an intensive

collaboration with Petru Dugulescu (Caraman, 2012).

His musical activity during the communist regime was acknowledged by the musical critic Iosif Sava himself. In one of his TV shows, he referred to this tenor, saying that 'the voice of Cristian Caraman is an instrument full of elasticity and of colorful clarity' (*Seară muzicală*, TV 1984, apud Caraman 2012).

Cristian Caraman was actively involved in the cultural life of the Baptist Church, but also of other Evangelical churches, especially Brethren. Since he was 15, Caraman sang 'in the mixed choir and the men's choir of Mihai Bravu Baptist Church in Bucharest, and played the violin in the orchestras of several Baptist Churches: Mihai Bravu, Popa Rusu, Ferentari and 23 August' (Caraman 2013, 145).

Other musical activity in the Romanian Evangelical churches: 'In 1980, after being admitted at the Conservatory in Bucharest, he becomes an orchestra director in Golgotha Baptist Church from Bucharest and, after two years, the orchestra had 60 musical players' (*Ibidem*, 146).

Because he was against the communist regime and refused to become a Party member, Caraman will not be seen anymore on TV, and after graduating the Conservatory is sent to Calafat. He moved to Craiova only because the director of the Lyric Theatre from Craiova insisted on requiring him in order to become a lead-vocalist (Caraman 2012). In this context, he also became the director of the orchestra and the choir in the Baptist Church from Craiova (*Ibidem*).

After the revolution in December 1989, he comes back to Bucharest, leading the musical ministry in *Nădejdea* [*Hope*] Baptist Church, founding also in the 90s a violin orchestra. At the moment, he is a lead-vocalist at 'Ion Dacian' Operetta Theatre in Bucharest, a music teacher at Logos Baptist High School in Bucharest, choir director at the Baptist Theological Institute in Bucharest (starting with the academic year 2013-2014) and lecturer at Timotheus Brethren Theological Institute in Bucharest.

### Concluding remarks

By presenting some general aspects regarding the religious life, some historical terms of reference about the neo-Protestant cults and the portraits of some Evangelical intellectuals, we aimed at creating a general perspective about the perception of an Evangelical intellectual during the communist regime.

As a result of this research we discovered that, during communism, the Evangelicals had a cultural life defined by their intellectual activities, their desire for education and their involvement in different cultural areas. The presented portraits belong to different Evangelical cults and bring to the light various activities of those we call our intellectuals; the ones who wrote poems and Christian songs, being musicians, medical doctors, professors *etc.* and being involved in the cultural life, in spite of the persecutions and struggles they faced.

*Translated by Silvia Pătru,  
Costel & Cristina Ghioancă*

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# ***Provincia* Magazine, Identity Projection and Regionalism of the Transylvanian Intellectuals**

**Marian COMAN**

Graduate Student, 'Lucian Blaga' University of Sibiu, Romania

E-mail: coman\_marian@yahoo.com

**Abstract.** In this article we have tried to analyze the identity discourse promoted by the group of Romanian and Hungarian intellectuals around the magazine *Provincia*, which occurred during the three years between 2000 and 2002. It is a coherent discourse that emerges through the awareness of the need for a constructive dialogue between the members of the two ethnic groups trying to promote a trans-identity, peculiar to Transylvania. Cultural, historical, economic and political arguments are invoked so that they would support and, especially, would help to crystallize it. We shall show, finally, the limits of the identity project of *Provincia* and the causes that led to the failure of such a unique initiative in the Romanian space.

**Key words:** Transylvania, multiculturalism, national identity, identity construction, decentralization

## **Background**

After 45 years of ideological state monopoly, the collapse of communism led to the crystallization of the first alternative discourses in a society deprived of any democratic exercise. Redundant, with violent slippage, apocalyptic, stigmatizing, exclusive, the post-revolutionary discourse of the early years had rarely owned the tone and availability of a real dialogue. In this unfavourable context that lacks coherence, it will nevertheless help in the formation of the first political identities, social and cultural rights. Beyond political apologies, debates on various economic and social projects and the support of foreign policy, the identity discourse is given much importance. Ideas democratization entailed a democratization of identities. In totalitarianism, an affirmation of membership was confined to unifying concepts, monolithic, that could not stand dissidents. Everything was subordinated to the idea of communism and Romanianism and what was beyond these concepts was passed into the insignificant register. Competing identities were suffocated by a totalitarian vision and the difference was suspected and considered to be obscure. Reassertion of identity becomes, after 1989, a priority for both majority and for all those communities or minority groups whose specificity could not be sustained.

Redefining the national identity oscillated between an extremist nationalist approach and the relation to a European dissolving

construction. Within these poles, the identity of the Romanians is either reasserted or assumed, despised or condemned. It was constructed by reference to the communities living abroad, but also by reference to the emergent identities that were competing within. The identity polyphony is not always arising harmony. For a significant part of the society, breaking the identity monolith was equal to unacceptable national-state dissolution and therefore all the so called separatist tendencies had to be eradicated, together with the promotion of an integratory discourse that could restore the initial order. Historical, juridical, political evidences were appealed to, together with violence. All the approaches that were not circumscribed to the centralist vision were questioned, and those who promoted them were called 'the Enemies of the Nation and the Country', the opposers pursuing 'occult', 'foreign' interests. The most sensitive issue was undoubtedly the Romanian-Hungarian relations in which the moment of the ethnic clashes from Târgu Mureş in 1991 was the highest point of tension. The shock generated by these events made the society become aware of the necessity of a rational approach by which the minorities should benefit from the right of cultural identity, with all it entailed. Democratic Union of Hungarians in Romania (UDMR) became an influential political actor and the participation to the act of the government in 1996, together with the Democratic Convention, was an important

stage during the democratization of the society. Minority rights legislation extended and contributed to the normalization of the relations between the majority and the minority largest ethnic group, although the nationalist-extremist accents could still be heard. The discourse emphasizing the irredentist and separatist danger allegedly coming from the members of the minority experienced periods of radicalization whenever their rights were debated. The Great Romania Party (PRM), the Party of Romanian National Unity (Unity Party) and the Social Democratic Party of Romania (PDSR) are the main sources of radical messages, without omitting the fact that even the centre-right parties had nationalist accents and suspicions regarding the real intentions of the Magyars. This is, roughly (*grosso modo*) the general picture of the first post-Decembrist decade that allow us to argue our further approach of this subject.

### 1.1. Identity, identities

The problem of identity is extremely important in order to understand the aims of *Provincia*, especially since their attempt is very courageous. Identity is a very contentious primarily because the reviewer has to do with the individual and the community. These two structures, the person's psychological and cultural-structural community, are dynamic and multidimensional and their operationalization involves a dispensing with this complexity. We do not intend to define this notion because it would exceed the aim of the study and the researches on this subject are quite numerous (For further details, see Rusu 2008).

We only mention the two most important theories, the essentialist <sup>(1)</sup> and the constructivist <sup>(2)</sup> one that conceive identity either as a given or a created structure. There are authors who try to reconcile the two perspectives, considering that each side is right (Salad 2001, 34). Beyond these differences, there is unanimous regarding the fact that, at the same time or at different moments, each part actually assumes multiple identities that ensures one individual the

possibility of self-identification with different social categories or groups. A person can be defined as Romanian simply because he lives there and speaks Romanian, but it could also consider himself Orthodox, Moldavian or/and socialist or/and intellectual depending on the context in which it is placed and the relationships with others. As Charles Taylor says, these identity assumptions are due to our very fundamental 'dialogical' foundation because 'we define our own identity in a permanent dialogue with others, sometimes in conflicts with them because their things together with their significance do always affect us' (quoted by Carpinski 2010, 70). When taking into account the community identity, the stress is on the idea of the nation as an 'ideal' of community. Nation will require a model and will be the subject of the most important works concerning identity. It will become the main actor of the international politics in the last centuries and will be the basis for 'ethnic' and civic nationalism' based on the location where it is defined. The way such a community arises will become the subject of numerous studies explaining the identity theory accepted by the author and the elements that are considered crucial in defining identity.

The modern national state dominated by a single culture, whether born of historical experience, time, and type of ethnic communities or from assumed experience and learned civic community type will be increasingly challenged. It is considered that it does no longer correspond to the multiple identity reality of the postmodern society. Multiculturalism promoted by Will Kymlicka or Charles Taylor become increasingly influential. The first focuses on the necessity of granting more rights to the cultural and national minorities, taken as a whole. From his point of view, the individual identity cannot be achieved beyond the freedom of significant manifestation of the culture to which he belongs. The cultural group becomes the centre of the notion of identity it supports. Romania followed the classic path of the identities appearance. These are defined by the early 18th century, especially as far as the Transylvanian Romanians are concerned (Mitu, 1997). They are the first to carry out this identity mission since they feel compelled to counterbalance the nascent Magyar identity then. This is one more example that an identity group is obviously related to 'others' and is right there where the communities compete. Sorin Mitu points out that the self-

<sup>(1)</sup> Essentialists believe that identity is a natural and universal given entity that pre-exists the social actors based on biological, psychological, cultural and regional considerations and is shared by all members of the community as a whole (see Rusu 2008, 81).

<sup>(2)</sup> Constructivists see identity as a social, instrumental, dynamic and contextual construct (see Rusu 2008, 88).

image of the Transylvanians will be further taken in all its aspects by the inhabitants of other Romanian provinces.

It is also true that Magyars in Transylvania and Banat participated and were the subject of the construction of the Hungarian nationalism. They identified themselves with the State with its centre in Budapest until 1918. The shock will be significant when thinking that one region, considered as their homeland, becomes part of a state where they were minority. They had to refold in a different identity, without abandoning the idea of the 'unitary character' of the Hungarian nation (Vereş 2010, 136).

We therefore deal with concurrent reinforcing forms of ethnocentrism that support each other because of the territorial proximity and their obvious relation.

At the beginning, the communist regime appealed to the internationalist discourse and tried to deconstruct the idea of the 'Bourgeois' nation, but failed in its last decades of existence into the so called 'nationalist communism'. Ceauşescu's nationalism strengthened its mythology linked to the idea of the national, unitary and indivisible state and strongly ethnicized the public message.

### *1.2. The problem of regionalism and the Transylvanian specificity after 1989*

Regime change raised a profound reformation of Romania at the structural and institutional level. The Constitution adopted in 1991 will confirm the 'national, unitary and indivisible state', but kept unmodified the old administrative structure of the country. Public agenda will require in debate the need to rethink the way the centralized administration was designed. Decentralization was an important issue in all programs of the political parties, but the implementation of such a major project was delayed. The political inability to launch a substantial reform ultimately led to frustrations on the part of the local administration that could not benefit from its autonomy in relation to the central administration that was dependent on. On the other hand, the civil society was exasperated by the inefficiency of a rigid, bureaucratic and ossified system.

Given this political environment, the Moldavians Party was founded on Mayor Constantin Simirad's own initiative in 2000, who wanted to be the legitimate voice of that disadvantaged region of the country. The process falls into derision because there were no

followers and was justified by an economic frustration only. Reactions were minimal and ridiculing about the attempt of the mayor of Iaşi and did not stimulate a real debate on the issue of decentralization, much less one focused on the idea of a possible regional identity.

More reactive was the civil society and the political elite to the article published by journalist Sabin Gherman in 1998 that brought into discussion the issue of Transylvania as a region separated by the rest of Romania that should have the right of becoming autonomous on behalf of this difference. Beyond the virulent accusations, the injuries or the contempt he was met with, the journalist managed to impose a very debatable subject on 'the market of ideas'. How legitimate is the claim of the province to separate from the centre? What are the reasons that legitimate the separation? Is Transylvania different from the rest of Romania? If so, by what exactly? The answers to such questions were vaguely stated within the dispute regarding Sabin Gherman since the dominant tone was incriminating, without any right of defending himself. Terms like 'irredentist', 'anti-Romanian', 'alienated', 'exponent of Magyar interests' were attached to the author of the 'infamous' article; still, some voices appeared and tried to explain, if not to support this position.

Transylvania's specificity as against the rest of the country was a subject arising from Samuel P. Huntington's book, 'The Clash of the Civilisations and the Remaking of World Order' (Huntington 1998). The American political scientist drew a line following the Carpathians dividing the Western Catholic civilisation from the East-European Orthodox one. Romania was 'torn' between two different cultural and historical traditions, though irreconcilable, but with different foundations. History placed this province under the influence of the Western Catholic Union from 1918 and, since that time, the period elapsed could not counterbalance one thousand years of parallel evolution as compared to the other Romanian territories. Huntington did not try, in any case, to plead the cause of those voices that demanded the separation of Transylvania and its annexation to Hungary. He tried to radiograph a territory that was at the confluence of two civilization patterns, a 'grey' zone. Moreover, the frontiers he suggested were relative anyway. He does not claim to surgically split something that cannot be naturally separated. Since the mutual influences cannot be

denied, eliminated or overviewed, he avoided to be peremptory in this respect.

Reactions to Huntington's book were numerous, including either analyses of scientists that were rationally arguing their views or nationalist vituperations that rose 'alarm signals' against the attempts of destructuring the national Romanian state. It was again brought into discussion the special character Transylvania enjoyed as an area of religious confluences within which Orthodoxy, Catholicism and the Evangelic or Lutheran Protestantism made up an ethnic mixture consisting of Romanians, Magyars, Germans and Serbians, a tolerance territory, a good example of peaceful coexistence. All those sporadic debates and discussions, counterpoints to various realities, frustrations or opinions, had nothing programmatic, no ideatic system and were just isolated voices that replied and disappeared from time to time. Those involved in such controversies are politicians, intellectuals representing the civil society, sociologists, political scientists, journalists who had no claim than making their opinions heard.

In 1999 appeared the book *The Transylvanian Problem* edited by Gusztáv Molnár and Gabriel Andreescu. It consists of several reactions of intellectuals regarding the article of the Magyar political scientist, who actually gave the title of the book. Molnár's study is based on the observations made by S. Huntington about Transylvania and tried to demonstrate, using the voting behaviour during elections, which indeed in this particular area was established 'a specific cultural identity'. He thought that the right solution for Romania was to encourage this specificity of Transylvania that could have played an important role in the country's European future. The authors of the other articles included in the book 'dialogued' or controversial views as compared to Molnár's. The book is significant much the more as it was a novelty and an example of the way such a sensitive issue could be discussed.

### **The *Provincia* Magazine**

The first issue of *Provincia* came out on April 2000, as monthly supplement published by two regional dailies appearing in Cluj, in Romanian and Magyar at the same time: *Ziua de Cluj* and *Krónika*. *Provincia* was published in both languages and was edited by Alexandru Cistelean and Gusztáv Molnár. The editorial board consisted of members of the two ethnic groups: Ágoston Hugó, Bakk Miklós, Mircea

Boari, Marius Cosmeanu, Caius Dobrescu, Sabina Fati, Marius Lazăr, Traian Ștef, Szokoly Elek, Daniel Vighi. The topics were various <sup>(1)</sup> and supported different approaches. Other reknown researchers from Romania and Hungary joined the group, collaborated and answered the inquiries the editorial board launched <sup>(2)</sup>. From the outset the goal of the magazine was clearly stated, on behalf of the Editorial Office: 'The time for building a strong commune authority in the public space of Transylvania and Banat has come, the time for an authority that has to lead the dispute and enter a real dialogue. Taking the responsibility of a new beginning, we are convinced that the divergent history of this area can become the point of convergence of constructive differences, not conflicting. We look back with no prejudices or inhibitions. But still we do not want the past – antireflective or manipulated – to block the nowadays alternatives. We aim to see the other as a partner of ideas, of action, of cohabitation. We no longer want our province to be viewed as a second-hand area in the hands of a third-hand country. We want Transylvania to become a centre. Not over the other provinces, but equal to them in a partnership of the centres. We want a Transylvania where the religious, ethnic and cultural differences can complete each other for the benefit of the entire region. It is far from our concern to revive – and even less to provoke or promote – a localist Transylvaniam beyond or against the Romanian, the Magyar or the German difference. We want to promote a European Transylvania that should integrate these different traditions and identities in a consociational, close spirit of Europe in the process of unification' (Provincia 2000).

This concise motivation outlined some of the values the signatories were to pursue. First of all, there was the strong will to consecrate a new type of communication centred on dialogue. It is a dialogue in the true sense of the world, a 'speech' that is made 'between', that brings

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<sup>(1)</sup> Ágoston Hugó – journalist, Bakk Miklós – political scientist, Mircea Boari – political scientist, Marius Cosmeanu – journalist, Caius Dobrescu – writer, Sabina Fati – journalist, Marius Lazăr – sociologist, Traian Ștef – writer, Szokoly Elek – director of Pro Europa League, Daniel Vighi – writer.

<sup>(2)</sup> Alexandru Zub, Renate Weber, Gabriel Andreescu, Livius Ciocârlie, Ștefan Borbély, Vintilă Mihailescu, Sorin Mitu, Lucian Boia, Daniel Barbu, Lucian Nastasă, Kántor Zoltán, Smaranda Enache, Visky András, Ion Simuț.



together all the parts able to share their views, listens to each other with confidence with the certain sense of building something. Therefore, *Provincia* turned this necessary principle of two-way communication into the only way of making possible the emergence of that community that would value the difference. 'The aim of the publication regarding the construction of what it was called 'the commune authority within the public space of Transylvania and Banat' was to leave «the dispute era» and enter into «dialogue». Undoubtedly, the dialogue is itself a form of cultivating diversity at the level of ideas and attitudes; otherwise it risks becoming a monologue and possibly a ferment of a prospectless authoritarianism/totalitarianism (...). It should be added that «the responsibility for this new beginning» is one of the most important resources in effective transparency of all the intentions, together with the social and political attitudes and aspirations: there was nothing ambiguous or subversive at the level of the semantics or facts, just as the opponents of 'the responsibility of this new beginning' claimed (Vighi 2002 b).

It should be noted that such complex dialogue requires a different language. Terms like radicalism and exclusivism can no longer be accepted in the context of the collaboration demand. The emotional or mystifying approaches are avoided and replaced by those empathetic that can make the link to the one who is different. Gusztáv Molnár is very much aware of the paradigm change made by the magazine: 'The courage of *Provincia*, its destructive and remodern character is that trying to express or explain the Transylvanian singularity not by some kind of regional or mystical, but making use of the European language of the post-national discourse as a natural means of regional communication' (Molnár 2001, 1).

The openness to communication must mediate the recognition of common denominator, to find the elements that unite in order to create or recreate a general valid 'profile': the shared identity. The outlines of defining a Transylvanian solidarity was in stake. Miklós Bakk speaks, on one hand, about 'a historical Transylvanian character', 'complete and dissonant', dominated by the tone of ethnic radicalism, and a 'Transylvanian character about to be born', on the other hand, but unquestioned. He also considered that: 'As for the program of *Provincia*, the most important is the constructivist point of view of a Transylvanian character *in statu nascendi*. It is also based on realities that

are parts of developments and can be and are to be interpreted, but that is the reason they become elements that would enlarge the political imaginary and its inner needed constructiveness. Among realities of this Transylvania *in actu/in statu nascendi* we can mention, for instance, the data of electoral geography within a much more developed Transylvanian civil society (which is even statistically demonstrable), the wider relations of the local administration with the Western structures, the map of the foreign investments and so forth. Therefore, this constructiveness is the only way different past periods can be related to each other' (Bakk 2000b, 4).

Beyond the conceptual and identity valences, *Provincia* proposed a political project: changing the political and administrative status by abandoning centralism and supporting autonomy as an appropriate solution of a crossroads Romania. The way the autonomy had to reveal itself differed from one individual to another, but there was an unquestionable unanimity regarding its necessity. This claim was the utmost concern of the editorial board of *Provincia* and their later crucial action: the Memorandum that was to be issued by the Romanian Parliament regarding the regional construction.

In the following chapters we shall try to analyse the way the idea of a Transylvanian identity developed and how it should be set in a regional political autonomist project.

### **The identity discourse**

Our identity discourse analysis is structured around three types of arguments that we have identified in the pages of *Provincia*: the cultural-historical, the economic-administrative and the political argument. All of them come to support the legitimacy of the view that this region must be valued in a new state-administrative project. As Daniel Vighi writes: 'beside the economic and administrative dimension, together with the political practice of regionalization, we add one that seems to me to be the most difficult among all: the clear definition of regions as entities with common history and destiny' (Vighi 2002 a). All these facets of an evident particularity are taken by the Transylvanian intellectuals that had in view to demonstrate that 'Transylvanian character' was a reality that could not be ignored.

### *Cultural-historical argument*

Any approach of the identity as a group must start from cultural particularities shared by its members. Boundaries separating social groups are set primarily by fundamental attributes of a person: ethnicity, language, religion. Secondly, sharing a common historic tradition could unite the individuals with common characteristics. Yet, it can also separate people that speak the same language or it could unite those that are quite different.

Since Transylvania and Banat were regions of ethnic and linguistic diversity, the authors of the articles in *Provincia* insisted on this particular aspect of identity and its integrative effect of a commune historic experience that could fade the ethnic and cultural differences. In fact, the authors tried to identify those features that made this region stand out from the rest of Romania. Uniqueness needed to be appealed to, but first of all it had to be demonstrated. What made Transylvania claim the difference, its peculiarity? Beyond the existence on this territory of an important number of Magyar and German minority population, evidence that could justify the claim to uniqueness was required. These were identified by the emergence of a trans-ethnic culture that was built in time and made a Transylvanian Romanian be closer to a German or a Magyar rather than a Romanian beyond the Carpathians. 'Transylvanian character is a particular kind of knowledge, interpreting the world is based on knowledge and respect other people's language and culture that should never be considered in terms like an excess or a privation, but as cultural and moral basis that make us review either our own advice or the help coming from the mother-nations with a critical Transylvanian eye. And the ethnological miracle was possible only because of the individual and collective self-confidence of the Transylvanians. That is the reason why in Transylvania cannot occur terrorist movements like those in Serbia or Palestina' (Hajdú, 2000, 8).

It was also invoked what Kymlicka called 'societal culture' that included 'all aspects of social existence, except from the cultural or religious traditions, life styles or particular life forms characteristic to the small communities or families' (Salat 2001, 106).

The societal culture is required an official language, but it does not depend on it only in so far as shared values are disseminated through it. The common values were transmitted whether

German, Magyar or Romanian was the official language. They built a specific mentality that should be recoverable, as recommended by literary critic A. Cistelean: 'What *Provincia* could really do is a restoration and, simultaneously, a resemantization of the *Transylvanian specificity*. It is a cultural recovery operation, made not so much by museum criteria but with an actual consciousness of an effective *aggiornamento*, an effective upgrade and reconsideration (...) *Provincia* can operate an identification of Transylvanian values (cultural, religious, historical, social, even political) as a previous stage for their recovery within in a current model (of behaviour, society or organization). It is naturally a valuable asset inventory, not of anachronistic values, but of those that give provincialism a trans-provincial vocation' (Cistelean 2001a, 1).

And yet, what are the values that make a Transylvanian, either Romanian or Magyar? Some of the authors of the articles have tried the reconsideration of certain behaviour patterns and positive moral specific coordinates when placed in contrast with those of the Răgăteni (<sup>1</sup>). Tolerance, reliability, labour worship, the obvious community spirit, accuracy are the few qualities emphasized in the pages of *Provincia*. 'Having your own land, your own house, your own church is the ultimate value of the Transylvanian. Knowledge, ownership and dialogue (especially the confessional one) with the Occident placed him worthily in history. These led to a higher degree of intellectuality of the Transylvanian middle class. What a Transylvanian could really want is not utopic: good laws that allow him to get to self-development by his own efforts, good collecting of taxes, good functioning of the institutions, the elimination of bribery and intercession from the public life, although they actually manage quite well under these circumstances, but they have to go to Bucharest and exchange marks for dollars' (Ştef 2000, 1).

Common historical development is the primary condition of solidarity and it can indeed stimulate the emergence of behavioural patterns distributed in a society ethnically fragmented.

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(<sup>1</sup>) The name was used by the Romanians from the Austro-Hungarian Empire (including Transylvania, Crişana, Maramureş, Banat and Bucovina) when speaking of the Romanians from the Romanian Kingdom before 1918 (The Old Romanian Kingdom).

But can it also generate a common intellectual culture? In other words, do we deal only with a 'societal culture' of a kind Kymlicka speaks of or is it something more? *Provincia* tried to give the necessary answers when dedicated a series of numbers whose surveys focused on the literature and history of Transylvania. When ethnicity or language is not a cultural bond, the unifying elements are required and they should come from the headspace of the creative act. We have in view the cultural act aware of itself that is assumed as such: 'Cultural relations have indigenous mediation virtues', said Ion Simuț, and future political openness 'cannot be reached without passing through an intermediary stage of a significant cultural openness' (Simuț 2001, 5). The way the history and literature are created can justify such trans-ethnic bound especially when it can be proved that there are channels of communication between Romanian, Magyar or German writers and historians. The respondents to inquiries were personalities belonging to all these ethnical groups, but their answers were equivocal.

Historians can only note with sadness that 'the Transylvanian historians elite refuse to play its role: to put their intelligence and competence to review the provincial past' (Pecican 2001, 7) and that 'we expect our descendants to write only the requiem of a multicoloured region that once had the virtualities of the Eastern Switzerland' (Zoltán, 2001). The 'Transylvanian histories' were talked about in the same distinctive manner as the 'Transylvanian literatures.' If a common historical work was hampered by the 'excessive applying of the national criterion' (Egyed 2001, 12), an approach of social issues and cultural background rather than the political view was proposed by Harald Roth and Lucian Nastașă. Nastașă is convinced that such an approach is very fertile for a new way of history researching: 'Transylvania should become a an experimental space for avant-garde historiographic constructions by finding and introducing new variables and new social and historic references that make possible the comprehension in truthful terms of the evolution of a multicultural society due to the fact that the area region its particularities such as the pluri-ethnic and pluri-confessional dimension' (Nastașă 2001, 9).

The attempt of identifying the vectors that could establish an identity peculiar to the region is the reason why *Provincia* initiated such surveys for Transylvanian intellectuals. How can regional claims be supported when there is no

linguistic unity like that of the Catalans, Provensals, the Basques or the Flemings? They base their claims on the self-determination of a minority ethnical group and do not have to prove its cultural cohesion. Thus, *Provincia* had a difficult task: to confirm the existence of a commune cultural life of people who belong to two or more different traditions. It aimed to prove that Transylvania, a space of Romanian, Magyar and German cultural interactions, was not a scene for competition and adversity, but of confluences and mutual influences. There would have emerged something new, very different from what had already existed in Bucharest, Wien or Berlin. The Transylvanian German writer Eginald Schlattner thinks that this specificity can be explained by the impossibility of self-defining apart from others: 'Therefore, the author, who writes or composes within Transylvanian region, or describes certain regional life aspects, cannot ignore this particular phenomenon: besides me or my fellows, there is always 'the other', under the imperatives of a common history, a commune political regime, common incidents included in the same destiny, under the of protection of the same God' (Schlattner 2000, 4).

The argument is based on the same cultural and regional patterns that were invoked by *Provincia* throughout its existence. We dare say that such considerations that *Provincia* took as the basis of its direction functioned as arguments for the construction of a political particular identity, together with economic efficiency and justifications that required changing the administrative structure of the state.

### 3.2 The economic-administrative argument

Related to the Central Europe by a common history, Transylvania experienced different economic tradition quite different from that of the Romanian Old Kingdom. The economic relations oriented to Budapest and Wien were contaminated by the speculation and imposture of Moldavia's and Wallachia's. In 1918, Transylvania brought the most important industrial contribution to the economy of Romania and here are initiated the first movements of the Romanian workers. Therefore, the tradition of a regional solid economy is significant and was always invoked when the region's superiority was highlighted. Despite the attempts of the communist regime to balance the economic potential at the level of all the historic Romanian provinces, Transylvania

and Banat continued to assert the primacy of prosperity. The economic and administrative system promoted after 1989 disadvantaged the counties with a good economic situation for the poor, in the name of solidarity. As substantial contributors, the Transylvanians were at the bottom of the list including the beneficiaries of the government budget and could not enjoy the benefits of their efficiency. The way the budget funds were distributed – by obscure criteria for most of the times – was considered an abuse of the corrupt power circles from Bucharest that managed maintaining their influence.

This centralized economic system generated frustrations primarily because it was perceived as unfit for the Transylvanians and also propagated a system built on inefficiency and illegality. Daniel Vighi recommended that ‘we have to stimulate within the Province the development of a western popular capitalism by the formula *the more it is, the more people get it* instead of the southern pattern, *the least it is to as many as possible*’ (Vighi, 2001). The Transylvanian writer identified the source of evil in Old Romanian Kingdom. Henceforth, the immature economic vision was put in contrast with the Western capitalism, traditionally peculiar to the region. Transylvania was obliged to bear inconveniences of a central incompetent administration because its potential was ignored: ‘So far, no party has come up with a program to demonstrate clearly that Transylvanians, whether Romanians, Magyars, Saxons or Serbs, could have been determined to (re)discover their huge potential or to live better by self-managing without the approval of Bucharest, such as the way of making quickly and effectively the decisions they needed, but above all, how they could have had the chance to demonstrate all these things being loyal to the Romanian state that ensured their security’ (Fati 2002, 1).

Economic disadvantage is a consequence of how the Romanian political class conceived an administrative structure as a single unit, undifferentiated, depending on the centre responsible for all the aspects of social life. Economic centralism is nothing but the result of the administrative centralization. The centralized vision is a constant feature of Romanian modern political thought that identified any autonomous tendency with the danger of national dissolution. ‘Since 1918, the centralization was the instrument the authority from Bucharest and has shown its omnipotence over the last decade under the disguise of democracy and transition. The administrative decentralization is always

related in the same equation to the unity of the state, and the issue of unity implies a kind of geographic mythology the local politicians cannot get rid of’ (Fati 2000a, 5).

The specificity of Transylvania is mentioned again because of the past. Over time and in different historic contexts, this region fortunately experienced an autonomy that led to the emergence of a reflex. The special status that Transylvania had during its history saved it from the inflexibility typical to the nationalist centralism: ‘Transylvania has a different politic tradition related to the Habsburg Empire, far more generous and complex, deeply rooted in the European tradition than the enthusiastic attempts of the Romanians and the Magyars, peculiar to the periods of assertion of rival national states. This aspect gives tradition certain topicalness’ (Molnár 2000b, 7).

#### *The political argument*

Other dimension of a regional identity is determined, as far as *Provincia* is concerned, by the political orientation of the Transylvanian voters after 1989. This aspect derived from the results of the elections between 1990 and 1996, when in Transylvania and Banat the right and centre-right parties, in other words, parties perceived as reformist and democratic by intellectuals, achieved a significantly higher percentage than in the other regions. This observation was followed by explanations for this phenomenon offered by analysts, sociologists, political scientists and politicians since the early 90s. *Provincia*’s editors tried to gloss on this issue. They brought forward the peculiarity of the votes from Transylvania in order to support their identity theory. Al. Cistelean is convinced that the political elite admitted ‘a certain dignity of the vote here that has more nobleness resulting from the «rational» judgement rather than mystic and visceral identification of the vote in the other provinces’ and, even if the political forces ‘gain in Transylvania, but lose at the level of the country as a whole, there is the consolation that the Transylvanians voted for the most European among the Romanian provinces’ (Cistelean 2000b, 1).

The political scientist Gusztáv Molnár is the one who gave the utmost importance to this aspect and he believes that ‘both Transylvania and the Old Kingdom can be considered as politically homogeneous macroregions’ (Molnár 2000c, 3). He uses percentages of elections results together with the results of the surveys in

order to demonstrate, first and foremost, a qualitative difference of the vote in Transylvania and Banat: 'The political difference between the Transylvanians and the Southern Romanians is not their ethnicity. The minorities that are not Magyar (5,63 %), the Magyars (20,76 %) and the Transylvanian Romanians (73,6 %), together and separately, have a pro/Western orientation than the Răgățeni. The political difference between the Transylvanians and Răgățeni is not great, but sufficient to value the regional block voting of the Magyars in the favour of pro-Western forces. If - hypothetically speaking - the Transylvanian Romanians would have exactly the same options as the Răgățeni, 'the Magyar factor' would not be sufficient in order to maintain - even in Transylvania - a pro-Western majority' (Molnár 2000a, 6).

G. Molnar shows, on the basis of the ciphers, that the Transylvanian Romanians and Magyars are oriented towards the same type of vote to the same political class. He argues, relying on results, that voting has an ethnic connotation seeing that the Romanians do not vote for UDMR, while the Magyars do so in an overwhelming proportion, but it is more than that. It is a vote for a particular policy because the values promoted by CDR do not differ much from those of UDMR. Regardless of ethnicity, the Transylvanian vote reflects an option for a certain political vision. Therefore, a Romanian Transylvanian is closer to a Magyar than a Romanian from the Southern part of the country and it reveals the existence of a common political identity and M. Cosmeanu thinks: 'Therefore, the 'qualitative political differences' of Transylvania, as G. Molnar called them - are part (with the economic aspects, reporting to work, life style, to mention only the best known) of a specific societal culture and, most importantly, it reveals the potentiality of the region to find its regional and consequently (Central) European vocation' (Cosmeanu 2000a, 9).

The orientation of the Romanian electorate from this particular region to the pro-Western parties demonstrates, in fact, the pro-democratic a capitalist attitude of the Transylvanian majority. Unlike the ('Răgățeni'), contaminated by political byzantinism and paternalist tendencies, the Transylvanians were a more critical mass able to trace a pro-European direction. Historical tradition linking Transylvania and Banat to the Central Europe can be capitalized by skilful policy in the integration process. And yet, a significant degree of

autonomy was required. Only under these conditions the political particularity could assert itself here, too much suffocated by and the balkanism of Bucharest. Autonomy was for the benefit of Transylvania because it could demonstrate its potential, but even Romania can take advantage by the europenization of one of its regions that would entail and accelerate the process of integration at the level of the whole country.

In cases when the vote of the Transylvanians seemed to contradict the pro-democratic image of electoral behaviour, the editors of *Provincia* offered different explanations. Ioan Mușnea believes that the votes gained by Gheorghe Funar when he ran for mayor of Cluj are justified by a majority of 'people that were not from Cluj or had just moved there' (Mușnea 2000, 3).

Miklós Bakk refers in this context to 'slum voters camp - especially Mănăștur and Mărăști - built as a result of the policity arising between 70's-80's' (Bakk 2000a, 1). G. Molnár tried to offer a more elaborate answer when considering the outcome of the general elections of December 2000. It was that particular time when the nationalist Corneliu Vadim Tudor, the Great Romania Party candidate (PRM) had significant scores in Transylvania and contradicted the theory of the pro-democratic vote of the electorate. The political scientist makes the same qualitative difference between voters in Transylvania and Banat and 'Răgățean': 'while in Transylvania, which belongs to the historical and socio-cultural Central European, the current domination of the post-communist parties is fleeting and circumstantial in nature, in the Old Kingdom it is more important and can be considered as a given structural specificity derived from Eastern European historical and socio-cultural conditions there. Dominance of center-right parties in 1996 there was circumstantial and temporary in nature' (Molnár 2000e, 6).

In this context it is worth mentioning the observation of Zoltan Kantor who noted that all the initiatives that have been developed the Transylvanian topic were elaborated on several fundamental elements: UDMR's program, the Memorandum, the Transylvanian Programme of the ruling party (PSD), developed by members of the Social Democrats in Cluj and the inevitable slogan 'Bucharest is their enemy' (Kántor 2002, 5). Inability of the centre to develop regional policy, to set up developments specific for each case is suspect and

unacceptable for Transylvanian intellectuals. Antonela Capelle-Pogăcean sees in 'ritual reiteration of this fidelity' in the national unitary state, which 'occurs in a society where integration, social cohesion, and solidarity of its members are extremely low,' 'the inability to form a political community' (Capelle-Pogăcean 2000, 7).

### **The regional political project**

As mentioned above, the aim of *Provincia* was clearly expressed from outset: the autonomy of Transylvania, a radical political project in the context of centralism that no important political has failed to separate. The identity arguments came to give consistency to an idea that was regarded with suspicion, if not with hostility. The existence of the autonomist project did not mean that the people that assumed it also shared a coherent and identical vision of what it really implied. Autonomy was imagined in various forms, from decentralization to federalism decisions. Pleas for one or other solution were presented and disputed in the pages of the same magazine just by virtue of the dialogue assumed by the authors that they never failed. The unconvincing arguments were being resumed together with certain ideas, depending on the evolution of events in Europe, such as the adoption in Hungary of the law concerning the statute of the Magyars from abroad or the declaration of Voivodina's autonomy. In principle, these can be summarized by a statement of G. Molnár, who conceived the region as 'a territory which constitutes a historical identity or, more precisely, is established as a political issue in a nation-state to which it belongs and in the context of supra-national European Union. Thus, the political region functions as a constitutional framework for sub-national political community that - if the case of Transylvania - is also one transnational and trans-ethnic!' (Provincia 2002, 6).

Means by which to achieve the intended result was also disputed. Opinions were divided on the steps to be taken. There were voices proposing the introduction of the consociational model and deemed appropriate the setting up of a trans-ethnic party able to represent the interests of the region. Whatever the positions of the signatories, they caused frequently reactions in public. If the problem of Transylvanian space's own identity caused no reactions, the sensitive issue of autonomy was not without echoes and the most important came from *Memorandum for regional construction of Romania* that people

from *Provincia* have addressed the Romanian Parliament, the political parties and the European Parliament (<sup>1</sup>).

### *Regionalism and autonomy*

Agenda of *Provincia* was clear from the outset. The points of view on the reason that brought together these intellectuals, both Romanian and Hungarian, were clearly exposed in the first issue: 'We want Transylvania to become a center, but not above others, but on equality and in a partnership centers' (Provincia, 2000, 1). Autonomist claims are not just a selfish calculation. Centralism is considered ineffective in principle on the whole. Decision-making power should be lowered to levels as low as possible to become more effective. Daniel Vighi believes that 'regional exclusivity' must be avoided at all costs and this can only be done 'through an open approach and maximum clarity public event framework. The open approach is intended to avoid any possible enclavizations and exclusivities in the sense that, respecting regional specificities, what is valid for Transylvania should be the same for Dobrogea' (Vighi, 2000).

As we have mentioned before, Transylvania's autonomy is considered an appropriate solution in mediating the relationship with Europe. Romania, which tries to connect to the Community bodies of the European Union, should take into account even its political and administrative requirements. A Europe of regions, a local decision space claims the same from its future members. In addition, this question arises more acutely in Transylvania because there is a stronger identity that can support the administrative autonomous construction. Once the region will take advantage of their administrations, 'Transylvania must regain identity, have a driving role in the issue of integration into the European Union' by 're-creation' of the values 'specific to the civil society' (Bakk 2002, 1). István Rostas has the perspective of a community rid of the national rhetoric, an identity assumed by the Germans, the Hungarians and the Romanians as well, which were subordinated, firstly, to a civic and uniting principle: 'If we indeed want in Transylvania a functional political society, a citizen community with proper institutional system that naturally fits into the Romanian state, in this case we must

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(<sup>1</sup>) The Memorandum was signed by several dozen intellectuals, Romanian and Hungarian.

stand above the national sphere. Of course – and I stress upon it – without denying the national identity. National dimension is a vital issue, but in my view it starts to go into the private sphere, as happened much earlier with the religious identity. The peculiarity of the situation in Transylvania is that building political and legal system able to ensure the right to national identity, together with its preservation and development, might be only one trans-ethnic' (Rostás 2000, 10).

On the other hand, there are voices convinced that the Hungarian minority can finally assert its cultural heritage satisfactorily. Ethnicity cannot be ignored, in their opinion. 'Political nation's fiction, released from its ethnic size' is dangerous, 'the citizen integration' of the individuals will not be possible at this juncture, but the sensitive issue of 'cultural nation' can cause the formulation of the cause of Hungarians from Romania as a matter of public right that can be reconciled with the reform of state structures regarding the future of Romania in the European Union'; moreover, it will appear as 'a constitutional solution that would allow integration of the Transylvanian Hungarians as a national community' (Bakk 2002, 1). G. Molnár reconciles, in a way, the two concepts when recognizes in Transylvania 'something like the German Heimat, but not in the traditionalist sense, but in consonance with what the European Union means by 'constitutional regions', a term contained in our Memorandum. There is not an exclusive homeland, but one that fits in and relates to other higher homelands. Since I am a Hungarian from Transylvania, I am a Transylvanian and, in a certain sense, also a Romanian, having in view that the Hungarians consider me this way, but I can also assume this identity if Romanian homeland refuses me the right to my region, and I am and trying to be European. You can have more homes, but you have first of all a country-region to set out from that has a primary legitimacy. Only a Transylvania thus conceived can restore the home feeling to the Hungarians here. It remains to be seen whether the Romanians think - or at least if they are Romanian and who can think and feel - the same. Because on this depends the success or failure of this concept' (Provincia 2002, 6).

Beyond this cultural-anthropological argument, the motivation of each of the signatories of the magazine articles differ from each other. For many of them, the economic

factor occupies an important position. Disadvantages arising from the inability of central authority or lack of sufficient political will are quite obvious, as plainly and simply Traian Ștef justifies: 'For these particular reasons, regionalization is better. Dl. Mitrea has no longer to decide whether we need new road in Transylvania, or when, or where, or whom (he likes the partnership of the Italians). If there are many things done with our money, at least we shall not be the last...' (Ștef 2001, 4). For his part, Ioan Buduca has a more complex view because the economic dimension is closely related to a political one. For him, the economic and the political latencies may be issued simultaneously by the provincial regime change that will 'become again a source of political liberalism and, therefore, of national welfare if the national problem will spill, all in great? Will the European community will its name? I shall go back to the historical value options. Only two appear to be on the table. Others have not been invented yet. Either federalization of the country or devolution of the Transylvanian region' (Buduca 2000, 5).

As a consensus on the need for autonomous provinces, there is unanimity about the fact that this province must remain within the borders of Romania. As for the legal form that the autonomy must take, the Transylvanian intellectuals are making, in my view, only proposals. That fact that they talk about federalism or devolution does not mean that they support either of the options. They want, first of all, to discuss this possibility, to bring it to the attention of the public and political agenda of parties as a significant problem, using a current and balanced language. This degree of autonomy bears variations from each of the authors. Gusztáv Molnár believes in the possibility of devolution, unlike Gabriel Andreescu, O. Pecican Sabina Fati. Existing regional European models such as Scotland, Catalonia, Kosovo, Vojvodina are discussed and are presented different systems of organization of the states that practice, in one form or another, autonomy from Britain and Switzerland to Germany and Italy.

This problem is related to the initiative to develop *A regional construction Memorandum of Romania* summarizing in 10 points the ideas that have been the subject of so many pages of the magazine. This document addressed to the Parliament and political parties caused reactions ranging from remarks such as the Prime Minister Adrian Năstase, who catalogued the signatories

as 'lost' until benevolent reading. We shall not do here a summary thereof, but it must be said that it was the highest 'audience' point that *Provincia* enjoyed.

The authors did not have the naivety to believe that the Memorandum will produce immediate changes, nor that the public opinion dominated by 'sacred nation' and 'myth of unity' will suddenly consent to these requirements, but they wanted to 'create a precedent idea, to create a history and, at the same time, they want it out of the arsenal of political adventurers such as Sabin Gherman' (Vlad 2002, 2). Autonomy is no panacea for all kinds of problems facing region is confronted with. They have enough lucidity to avoid absolutist statements and idealized projections on an idealized future: 'The models proposed in *Memorandum* – Catalonia, Scotland, Bavaria – and others have to be seen, as I said, in the particular context of the current Romanian frames. Among Romanian regions there are similarities and differences, interference, for each has its potentialities, aspects of which we start in elaborating the *Memorandum*. Regions that the signatories of the Memorandum represented are, in turn, specific evils. We did not say that Transylvania is like Bavaria and Catalonia, we are perfectly aware of our limits. We've got trains, roads, mayors, corruption, balkanization and so forth. It is just that we believe these can be directed quickly by delegating responsibilities and management issues at the regional level, in short by subsidiarity' (Cosmeanu 2002, 5).

Here, in this plea for autonomy of the Transylvanians, one can identify all the reasons that contributed to the construction of identity discourse and how they were made in support of this grievance. Whether it was claimed on behalf of a specific culture, an economic emergency and the principles of effective policies, provincial autonomy cannot be separated from identity discourse.

#### *Trans-ethnic politics*

The trans-politics that the members of *Provincia* talk about, aims at two specific times, or rather, two contexts. First, it is currently connected (2000-2001) with the *de facto* situation that the status of Transylvania holds in a centralized state system. It is the 'primary' form of this type of political action and the very one that can get clearer in an immediate period of time. As for its achievements, no major changes in the political system are required. In

an early form it requires a collaboration of elites of the ethnic groups and, in a more acute form, the rising of a promoter of trans-ethnic interests in politics. It aims at setting a strategy of the Transylvanians to amend the statute, to consequently achieve autonomy and is, therefore, a necessary step due to the need for change. Inertia of the system, its inability to self-reformation imposes the emergence of new political actor to push things in the direction of the real reform. Specifically, we discuss the possibility of *Provincia* to establish a regional political party.

On the other hand, this concept is linked to the special character of Transylvania. The multicultural and multiethnic tradition of the province, the existence of significant minority groups requires those seeking 'reinventing' its policy to adapt to this context. Here we are dealing rather with a view on how the policy should be at the level of autonomous provinces. In this situation, power relationships are totally different and traditional formulas can no longer meet reality on the ground. The political foundation has to be modified and reinstalled based on a model that satisfies all the groups that make up the new structure. At this point, the discussions at *Provincia* focused on the necessity to adopt a consociational political system type.

The idea of a policy to unite members of different identity groups arises naturally by *Provincia* itself, bringing together Hungarians and Romanians. The magazine is the first step in finalizing a possible future joint political action. Lack of adequate response from the political class to the idea of autonomy will convince the Transylvanian intellectuals of the need for new approaches. The results of the general elections of 2000, when the parties with nationalist message had very high scores, convinced the intellectuals of *Provincia* that their message will have the opportunity to be heard. The absence of a political 'vehicle' to take their message is the very cause that gave birth to the idea of a party: 'Let us ask now if such a party is needed. The answer is clear: there is no need since the existing party would respond by its platform and events to the regional grievances' (Ștef 2002, 1).

However, such an opinion is not shared by everyone. Ovidiu Pecican believes that a political movement would compromise if it would come into the play of political parties, so he prefers a civic movement (Pecican, 2000, 4). Sabina Fati has the same view and believes that the emergence of such a party could strengthen



the parties' position by a nationalist discourse (Fati 2000b, 4). In turn, Antonela Capelle-Pogăcean shows openness to such an approach, but does not believe in its chances of success (Capelle-Pogăcean 2000, 7). The most enthusiastic supporters of a political party are also members of Hungarian origin group of *Provincia*: Gusztáv Molnár, who launched this idea, and Miklós Bakk, who is very empathetic when approaching the topic: 'Transylvania has two solutions, either autonomy or it should establish a regional party "trans-ethnic" which, tearing the originary centralism of the party system in Romania (...) will change the structure of the Romanian public' (Bakk 2002, 1). Equally convinced of the legitimacy of such a party is Adrian Docea, who contradicts O. Pecican when asserting that an action that clings to remain in a civic expectation will have no chance. Politics is that there has the levers and this is the level where it has to be operated: 'Outside political activity, any cultural movement, pro-European, pro-Transylvanian or any other cannot bring human welfare. And well-being comes from a strong economy, a strong economy exists only where the environment allows. Political role is to create this environment; the role of a regionalist party to bring prosperity in Transylvania, the role of *Provincia* is to launch such a party. We must take responsibility for the welfare of the region for the sake of the people who expect a change' (Docea 2001, 4).

Discussions around this project were numerous and were not limited to the question whether its existence was necessary, but were also extended to its strategy, to the way it should have been situated on the political scene and its purposes: 'In short, a trans-ethnic Transylvanian party should assert on the outset that builds not against anyone – Bucharest or Budapest, or UDMR, even if they come into power with these poles, for obvious reasons - but for something. Not for accelerating social disintegration, but to redefine solidarity on a more fair foundations and thus restore its meaning. It is a question of solidarity among Romanians in various provinces, but also between Romanians and Hungarians in Transylvania. Such a party would aim to strengthen democracy in Transylvania and the rest of the country. A Transylvania benefitting from increased democratic competences in an authoritarian Romania falling into chaos does not seem a credible future perspective' (Capelle-Pogăcean 2000, 7).

Discussions around trans-ethnic policy capable of managing existing relationships and

reality in a multiethnic space were much deeper. They are related to the particular situation of this region as it is recommended to apply the consociational model of democracy according to the model described by A. Lijphart, based on 'the pillars' of subcultures who want to coexist and consequently institutionalize themselves. This model cannot be applied at the level of the whole country, as Gusztáv Molnár believed, but only regionally (Molnár 2000 d). Again, the historical tradition is called upon to support the present political identity. On the other hand, Kantor Zoltan is not convinced by the optimistic outlook that ignores the fact that while Hungarians can be considered as members of a subculture, Transylvanian Romanians have not yet made such a structure. Only when its formation is certain, the possibility of consociationalism can be seriously taken into account (Kántor 2001a, 7). But the same author hopes that *Provincia* should help strengthen the Transylvanian political identity: 'In my interpretation, in the first numbers, as further results of the article *The Transylvanian Issue*, the emphasis is put more on regionalism and federalism, while the real question is a new way of thinking, trying to seek the common notes inside Transylvania and also substantiate the possible actions and policy frameworks that are fed from such a perspective. Numbers of *Provincia* dealing with the Transylvanian literature, civil nationalism and trans-ethnic history aim at the formation of a common political culture, and the idea of a party and the consociationalism model can lead to the policy framework and a common political action' (Kántor 2001a, 7).

This is, in our view, the observation that summarizes the issue best. Recognition of a common political identity, Hungarian and Romanian, must precede the idea of a party and a consociationalist future. And these may evolve over time to a policy wherein ethnically and culturally different element might become secondary considerations. No matter how important the common agenda of these intellectuals is, it will always be subordinate to the more complex issue of the necessity of the public consciousness transformation.

### ***Provincia* as a model**

Time has proved that the objectives settled by the Transylvanian intellectuals of *Provincia* were not materialized. Obviously, the reasons for this failure are due, first of all, the context in which they are conceived: the rigid political-

administrative system, the political class lacking will and coherent, and also a society dominated by suspicion. Nobody can ignore these realities and the fact that they made impossible to put into reality the project of autonomy, but there is, in our opinion, another set of causes that could explain the failure, deriving from the very argumentative structure of *Provincia*. Analysis of endogenous causes of 'failure' will contribute to a complete picture of the *Provincia* 'phenomenon'. Analysis of the weaknesses, inconsistencies and contradictions will be made separately from the identity discourse and political project.

#### *Identity discourse limits*

The idea of a separate identity, which history has created here, occupied a central role among the magazine. The reasons why this happened were presented in Chapter 4. Now we shall try to show further what the limits of the identity project were. Was there a 'Transylvanian identity'? Did the ages attenuate ethno-cultural differences between the Romanians, the Hungarians and the Germans? The answer was obvious to everyone: no, they didn't. The type of identity they had in view was a 'supraidentity', a common cultural consciousness settled on a different ethnic background for each community. Differences must not have been erased, but faded. There were still Romanians and Hungarians, but all along, they were all Transylvanians, and this must be the foundation of the social and politic consciousness. We talked about the arguments that would prove its presence, without mentioning the imminent delays and doubts.

The main reason why it could not occur is history itself, which never reconciled parties. Transylvania is a history of conflict, of the roughness and segregation. Shortages meant the rights of others, and the neighbourhood was perceived rather as a curse than a blessing. History, regardless of who it was written, tended to divide us. Therefore, the call to the past is selectively targeting only those isolated moments that brought them all together. In the investigation on the possibility of writing a history of the province in a form acceptable to everyone, respondents are not convinced of the feasibility of this approach. Their detention comes from the fact that the past history of this region is composed of separate histories that cannot be reconciled and could 'lead to blocking the present alternatives' as is recognized in the

text of the first number that speaks of the goals of the magazine.

Vilmos Ágoston is very firm when expressing his view: it was never possible to speak of a common identity and 'the reason this goal could not be achieved is that the people of Transylvania did not live their own national dramas at the same time' (Vilmos 2000).

Miklós Bakk speaks of two types of Transylvania specificity. The one that belongs to the past, 'in vitro', as he calls, 'is peculiar to the histories somewhat ended. This is made up of the body of stories that contradict each other and need not be talked about, and at the discursive level are stories that need to be discussed or disclosed by each other.' But it cannot build the present because it no longer exists. Neither the present perspective is better because the Transylvanian specificity 'in vivo', the one we live in today, 'is more refractory to the constructivist point of view. The central issue of this rejection is that communist hegemony permanently deleted social and civilizational characteristics that gave Transylvania specificity and therefore, the modern Transylvania specificity as the regional strategy has lost its foundations' (Bakk 2000b, 4). For Bakk, neither the past nor the present could synthesize the solidarity peculiar to an autonomous community.

Things seem to be the same in terms of 'high culture'. We refer here precisely to the creative act, to art itself. Are the intellectual elites able to cross ethnic and cultural boundaries, set frames to the culture of the region? If this level is found such realities, there is still hope. Intellectuals, elites are the ones who must take the first step and 'pull' masses behind them. This is the meaning of Transylvanian literature survey about which I have spoken. In the absence of popular culture, hope must withdraw behind the 'great culture' that is open to the other by definition.

Responses of the writers seem to show, however, two things. The first is the existence of a parallelism between 'literatures' evolving from separate lanes. It is not a matter of different approaches, thematic or stylistic, between speakers of different languages, but rather of neglecting the other, especially when the Romanian writers do not know German or Hungarian <sup>(1)</sup>. Linguistic distances are, in this

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<sup>(1)</sup> This is especially obvious in Hungarian language literature. There are very rare the cases where the

case, insulated and there were only timid attempts to overcome them. Then, most are reluctant to speak of a 'Transylvanian literature', either because they cannot identify, either because they fear being placed in an area of cultural provincialism, of petty localism. 'Few things have turned out clearer than the shame of being Transylvanian. And beyond shame, there is also the anguish of being Transylvanian. Hence the need to exorcise and to suppress, as much as possible, the fatality or the accident of fate. Rightly Few writers participating in the survey questions and issues rightly taunted them because, in literature, there is nothing more compromising than the label of 'Transylvanian writer' (Cistelecan 2000a, 1). These investigations have shown that cultural identity stops where 'strong values' of modernity emerge. Multicultural postmodern identity, as Daniel Vighi call it, remains a goal for the future. Language and the idea of nation are boundaries that have not been exceeded. It is generally true that cultural act in general is claimed to be universal and eludes labels that would 'reduce' it, but we cannot ignore the sharp reality from Cluj, as the writer Ion Moldovan stated: 'There are writers like Romanians, Hungarians, Germans (so many abroad) living in Transylvania and almost all ignoring each other' (Moldovan, 2000, 6). The reason there is no unity is that 'writers who create works here intend to be – by the national language and traditions – parts of the national literature as a whole, of its vital functions – so to speak. Moreover: minority culture can be conceived in such terms, for Magyar language is not part of those 'cultures with more language centers' (Borcsa 2000, 6). In the articles of the editors comes up again the observation that the identity is linked to a Transylvanian Romanian and one Hungarian identity, to the different visions of Bucharest and Budapest respectively. These are the centers that regulate sensitivities and attachments and would struggle against each other. In order to coagulate a 'Transylvanian spirit', the region must have been developed beyond their influences.

The attempts to demonstrate the uniqueness of the Transylvanian failed to convince. Surely, there are certain characteristics and traits that cannot be ignored, but they are dominated by the traditional national attachments and the discussions on this identity did

nothing but to prove that this is so: 'The conclusion I could draw from the latest issue dedicated to literature is that we are dealing with a literary rather Romanian, Hungarian and German from Transylvania than of a Transylvanian one. So, the alchemy of the articles published in other numbers reveals not "trans-ethnic" Transylvanian character, as Gusztáv Molnár desired, its main protagonist, but a Transylvanism mainly Romanian and Hungarian' (Cosmeanu 2000b, 11).

Beyond these cultural and historical realities, a problem is represented by the different way in which is the identity. In the magazine there were divergent views on its central attributes, especially when bringing forward the civic nation as against ethno-cultural nation and the abroad Hungarians status law adopted by Hungary. For Hungarian intellectuals, the initiative is welcome and necessary (Bakk 2001a, 1; Kántor 2001b, 6-7), since the states where they live cannot be 'neutral in terms of ethno-cultural'. This concept is common to those theorists who claim the right of minorities to autonomy, such as Will Kymlicka, and believe that you cannot ignore ethnic group size. Ethnic as identity joint overrides other characteristics and must be supported by positive measures. Zoltán Kántor believes that 'an uncritical taking' of multiculturalist concepts can harm and eventually cause nationalistic tendencies (Kántor 2002, 5). Against them stands some voices like that of Gabriel Andreescu, who considers this conception retrograde and problematic: 'The Hungarian bill introduces a completely different vision. The national spirit is invoked in order to mobilize all the Hungarians in Central-Eastern European region. He enters, in international law, the "Hungarian nation" in the ethnic sense. As a result, he "will crush" the constitutional patriotism logic from the surrounding countries. Project opposes obviously the multicultural spirit that expresses not only the difference, but the principle of coexistence interest. Multiculturalism should be understood as meaning the need for a degree of integration of minorities in the wider society, as well as a degree of separation of their right to enjoy the "deprivation" (a similar community concept is needed!). Necessary fairness of the society comes from a right balance between the two trends. The Hungarian project encourages separation of the minority from majority, with no constructive elements towards integration' (Andreescu 2001, 4).

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names of the authors expressing in this language are even mentioned.

Andreescu is the proponent of 'the civic community' which is formed by democratic individual ownership of the common interests that would make way to the association of cultural and normative bases. It is essential for such a community that it puts the ethnic values in the background, without ignoring them, however (Andreescu 2000a, 6). Romania has to follow this particular path that would make the approach lighter as far as the issue of autonomy is concerned.

These differences of opinion mark the existence of major problems: the lack of substantial consistency. Calm dialogue and openness to the other cannot compensate for the lack of a common vision of what Transylvanian is supposed to be. As far as we have seen, there is a quasi-unanimous part that considers that Transylvanian identity has not had the opportunity to define and overcome earlier national loyalties and that it must be born as soon as possible. But this potential identity cannot be built without an agreement on what form it should take. Failing this, any program is bankrupt.

#### *Failure of political project*

What were the chances for the project of autonomy of *Provincia* to be accepted by society? UDMR in government with PDSR, a nationalist party after the 2000 elections, could be a sign of normalization of the situation, and integration into Euro-Atlantic structures signifies the transition to another phase of political orientation. However, Transylvania and Banat, like other historical regions, continued to be parts of the same centralized administrative system.

The reasons *Provincia* did not produce the desired change are directly related, as I said, to the political context. But as the idea Transylvanian identity has proven its internal weaknesses, the political approach also has its own difficulties. Of course, they are related to several aspects that we shall take into account. First, such a political program requires the mobilization of major political resources – and here I refer to what experts call 'social capital', which refers to 'features of social organization such as trust, norms, social relationships, namely those relations that can improve efficiency by facilitating coordinated actions' (Putman 2001). Or, *Provincia* failed to establish that trust and solidarity between those who had to stand up and support such a policy. There was not enough trust between Romanians and Hungarians, on

one hand, as there was not between Transylvanians and Răgăteni. Each party suspected the other of hidden interests. So, solidarity has not proved strong enough in order to entail the formation of a sufficiently critical mass that could assert the plan. We must not forget that the Transylvanian intellectuals are not politicians, do not have the exercise and abilities of such fighting profile. Let us turn each of these two issues.

The main problem is the ethnic differences. *Provincia* is aware of this. Many articles indicate the different approaches the Romanians and Hungarians have. The ethnic cleavage of Transylvanians is transposed between the editors. It is true that here it has this other – more diluted, 'tamed' – form, yet remains visible. 'While Hungarians Transylvanism is of political nature, aspect stressed at the meeting the editorial staff had this summer at the University Bálványos, the Romanian Transylvanism is mainly cultural. This difference between the Hungarians the hard speech of the Hungarians and the soft one of the Romanians is given, in my opinion, by the degree of ownership of the options, by the limits up to which the two discourses aim to reach' (Cosmeanu 2000b, 11).

We would like to note a difference in speech between Romanian and Hungarian editors. The regionalism of the formers is motivated first of all on economic and political arguments, while that of others has a strong identity particularity (see Ștef 2002, 1; Sereș 2001, 7; Fati 2000a, 5; and Bakk 2001b, 5; Kántor 2002, 5 on the other side).

Kántor Zoltán remarks a covering current reality in Romania, profound both in mass and in the circle of intellectuals: 'There are, of course, interests beyond ethny or the nation, but they seem to be provisional, dependent on a given politic situation. Instead, as soon as there is a conflict ethnically relevant, the temporary collaborations cease and the consolidation on ethnic grounds is again decisive' (Kántor 2000, 2). Validity of this statement is symptomatic and can be easily verified. There is not only a difference of tone between *hard* and *soft*, but the option, either. This evidence was obvious when I referred to the discussions around Hungarian status law abroad. In debates, Hungarian intellectuals argued to support the validity of the document, issued by the Hungarian state. Romanian editors, when did not stand up against it, were in a defensive position.

Although the differences of opinion between the editors cannot be overlooked, they are not the major obstacles because were assumed by each of them and passed into the background to the advantage of the idea of regionalization. The biggest problem is the absence of a reaction from the population. *Provincia* fails to mobilize people around its project; the public reaction is minor and limited to a few intellectuals adhesions. The interest in autonomy is even lower among the majority, especially if we consider the information that edition in Hungarian of *Provincia* is sold better than the Romanian (Cosmeanu 2000b, 11). When speaking of consociational system and of the fact that it is based on the existence of subcultures that support 'pillars', Kántor Zoltán notices that such a Hungarian subculture exists, but 'behind the narrow circle of the Romanian Transylvanian intellectuals who participated to this debate, there is still no subculture to support this group' (Kántor 2001a, 7).

'Silence' around *Provincia* brought to the table the idea that a trans-ethnic party as a vehicle could activate activate the latent popular reactions. The intellectuals' work is not sufficient and therefore *Provincia* must become more than it is: 'Unfortunately, it is not enough. *Provincia* has not proved that they have the strength to play an important role in Transylvania. Moreover, the magazine addresses only to intellectuals and media impact is very low, therefore the minimal effect on the population. Transylvania has no time to lose. Transylvania has no time to talk. Specific Transylvanian intellectual passivity has never brought practical results' (Docea 2001, 4).

Hence the idea of Gusztáv Molnár and Adrian Docea's call for creating a party. This initiative is born after the 2000 elections have shown the willingness of the electorate to nationalist message and removed the idea of the exceptional Transylvanian voter. It also indicated that *Provincia* must change its strategy. It should come out of provincialism, to seek support from outside the region in order to become truly influential. The strategy is proposed by Caius Dobrescu as a solution to the lack of popular support: 'I think we should understand from these results that the Transylvanian Romanians are trapped in the clan laws culture as Omerta (to quote a brilliant formula of Ovid Pecican) and will never be on our side; on the other hand, those illustrating the political culture type in the extracarpethian liberal provinces (and they are not few) are truly

our allies. I think *Provincia* should remove its very provincial specific character, expand the dialogue on decentralization across the country and become a forum of discussion for all the intellectuals interested in this project, and focus on demonstrating the idea that devolution has significant benefit not only to Transylvania, but *for Romania as a whole*' (Dobrescu, 2000).

Lacking a positive reaction from Transylvania, the Romanian-Hungarian solidarity 'on the ground', without strong arguments for identity issue and unitary vision neither, the concepts of autonomy remains out of the reach of the well-meaning intellectuals, but without the ability to pass it into reality. The project remains in the politically courageous concepts, but a conceptual reality without actual transposition: 'In so many controversies, without the chance to reach a conclusion, the idea of federalization is gradually trivialize, even if it tends to arise passions and fears. Since there is likely to be viable, blocked at the design stage, it has all the attributes of a utopia' (Sereş 2001, 2).

## Conclusions

After two years and 24 issues, the magazine ceased to appear. People who formed the editorial board continued to speak to the media on this topic or have left to pursue other things. The distinct voice demanding, on behalf of a separate identity, autonomy region disappeared, broke and lost in a noisy and deaf society. *Provincia* editors know that there were not an immediate success premises, we shall not imagine that they were naive to believe in a Transylvanian autonomy that would have made it overnight.

It is extremely difficult to build an identity that would overcome the ethno-cultural foundation. Moreover, we could not find in the specialized literature or contemporary debates on different autonomous regions a similar case. Construction of identity, the right to self-determination, and the relations within a multicultural state are based on the premises of a community that differs from the majority by its ethno-cultural components. *Provincia's* uniqueness relies on the evidence that it aimed to overcome this pattern. The fact that it failed to demonstrate the existence of a 'Transylvanian spirit' was the sign that the support for independence could not be achieved. History of this part of the world tells us that national identity precedes the national state. Such is the case here.

The most important achievement of *Provincia* was to show that dialogue is possible. Seemed so different the parts involved that seemed so different could sit and discuss issues that concerned all of them, without passion, without reproach, without eluding. Each of the participants in this dialogue have assumed the risk of an opprobrium from their fellows that would have accused (and actually accused them!) of the ‘fraternization with the enemy’, but they did so in order to help establish a state of normality in the Romanian society. László Fey presented in an article this particular reality, the unpleasing position of those who believed that the others are not enemies, but partners: ‘The advocates of dialogue – both Hungarian and Romanian – are between a rock and a hard place. Organizations such as The Association for Interethnic Dialogue are regarded with bewilderment and disbelief. The mildest objection is that they are unnecessary because they are ineffective. Others are of the opinion that they are even harmful, because feeding illusions they would distract the attention from the real task: the resolute, radical fight against the “eternal enemy”, the defeat of the Hungarian revisionists, respectively - *mutatis mutandis* - the Romanian oppressors. Perhaps many have this opinion about *Provincia* itself. But time is working for the benefit of us, the bridge builders. Although some people do not want to join Europe, European thinking gains ground, it is the very future. Today we are still in the minority as compared to the Romanian majority, that is the Hungarian minority, but we trust that, in time, will increase the number of followers of the dialogue will increase and change the balance of forces in our favour’ (Fey 2001, 8).

Time has proven optimistic. Even today there are but several voices to support this identity construction. It is obvious that many of those who denounced the threat of a Romanian-Hungarian partnership fortunately disappeared.

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# An Indication of Option: Bio-Power

Viorella MANOLACHE

Researcher, PhD

Institute of Political Science and International Relations of the Romanian Academy

E-mail: vio\_s13@yahoo.com / viorella.manolache@ispri.ro

**Abstract.** The present study (a preliminary research of an authored book approaching *Repere teoretice în biopolitică [Biopolitics. Theoretical Approaches]*, in order to be published in 2013) proposes to disentangle the threads firmly gathered around *bio-power* [not in fashion, not outside it, undertaken and equally remade, by its political philosophy (*hard* or *soft*) operating contemporary extensions] – a hybrid concept. This establishes that, within *bio-politics*, discourse and its program are maintained as Foucault approaches, by excellence. Discursively, the study considers as a starting point bio-power as a *weird term* (Foucault 2009, 11). The overall stance of fundamental biological mechanisms are the features which, by transplanting within political strategy (overall strategy power), organised other indications of options for modern Western society. The concept of bio-power is closely related to the technology of power. Against this active and reactive background, Michel Foucault's option to insert the term inside security devices is not at all surprising. An analytical overview could not omit the typical marks of this stake: *the security space*, the problem of handling the *random* aspect, the normalization form specific to security and security-population technical correlation. They establish in Foucault's key that when sovereignty capitalizes a territory, the major problem is the location of government. The discipline orders space architecturally through hierarchical and functional distribution of the elements and security has the role to arrange the *environment* – as notion dependent on the regularized series within a multivalent and transformable frame. Moreover, setting (conveniently) bio-power between the *natural* and *artificial* dimensions, or between the *technical* and *mechanical* ones, this study will reaffirm that Foucault's discourse is a discourse *about power* in the hypostasis of behaviour wizard, and of reorganizer of the useful space – effects returning in force as diagnosis and characteristics of contemporary world.

**Key words:** Biopower, Biopolitics, Michel Foucault, Naturalness vs. Artificiality, Technique and Mechanics of Power

## Bio-power – between naturalness and artificiality

*Bio-power* is considered a crazy term used for the first time by Foucault in 1976, in its overall hypostasis of the mechanisms constituting the fundamental biological features which, by transplant within political strategy (the general strategy of power), holds different *indications of option* for modern Western society. (Foucault 2009, 11) *Bio-technological power* remains closely linked to power. Against this (re)active background, there is no wonder that the option of philosopher Michel Foucault is to insert the term within the security devices, as an analytical over flight that does not dismiss the typical marks of this stake: *security space*, the problem of handling the *random element*, the form of normalization specific to security and the technical correlation *security-population*. This aspect constitutes evidence for the fact that, in Foucault's key, when sovereignty capitalizes a territory, raises the major problem of the

location of government, and the discipline articulates the space through the hierarchical and functional distribution of the elements, security has the role to arrange and prepare the *environment* – a notion dependent on the regularized series in a multivalent and transformable frame.

In an attempt to clarify the terminology and operationally settle terms in the pigeon holes of bio-political analysis, *the environment* represents the space where series of random elements are running, by the remote Newtonian action of a body on another body. Translated into Lamarck's language, *the climate, the place and the environment* are but *circumstances, mechanistic influences, penetrating forces* (Foucault 2009, 30). Within this open-circuit, *the population* (a multiplicity of individuals who are deeply-essential and biologically related to the materiality within which they exist) produces events interfering with the quasi-natural ones. The eruption of the *naturalness* of the human

species in the *artificial environment* of the politics remains the strong foundation of *bio-politics* and *bio-power*.

If, in a functional scheme, the *city* relates sovereignty to land, the eighteenth-century sources confirm the transformation of sovereign in an architect of the disciplined space, a kind of a ordering agent of the *environment* where there is no question of setting limits / fronts or of determining locations but, in a structuring key, the imperative of circulation comes first (Foucault 2009, 33). *City-shortage-epidemic* becomes a triad equivalent to *street-wheat-contagion*, a balance clearly united by the city phenomenon: the problem of *wheat / shortages – city-market – place of the rebellion*; the problem of *contagion/epidermal diseases- city- the source for the outbreak of diseases - place of odours and of death*, accounting for the characteristics of the *city-security mechanism*. The three problems (inter) relate to that of *movement* (a philosophical question retrieved since Machiavelli) as safety of territory having at disposal (as branching) the processes called *physical* by the physiocrats (*natural / elements of reality*), in fact means of imposing arbitrary limits, thus reducing governance to the necessary and sufficient action of the governing forces (Foucault 2009, 63).

M. Foucault intended to depart from the issue of the opacity of the legalistic voluntarism of the sovereign and held the opinion that population is a phenomenon related to *naturalness*. Translated into the language of the physiocrats and economists, this naturalness (characteristic to the population) is accessible to the agents and processing techniques, through an approach of penetrability. The idea of public management of the population starting from the *naturalness of desire* <sup>(1)</sup> and the *spontaneous*

*producing of the collective interest* (opposed to the old ethical and legal conception of governance and exercise of sovereignty) is to claim the overthrow of the assertion from Rousseau, who noted *the dependence of the naturalness of the population on regular phenomena*. This way we can interpret also the manner in which political community (universal and unique) becomes (in the context of classical republicanism) (re)ordered by the historical arbitrary, following the path of the philosophical-utopian project, on the line of Rousseau and/or Fichte, of the *process of naturalization*. Only in this context we can understand the failure of classical republicanism (re)placed between the landmarks of modernism – (re)defined by/through capitalism and territorial state – this resulting in a split of the civic and equal community, and, bio-politically, the nation becomes *matter*, and state, *form*.

Harmonizing the theories of Palazzo, Chemnitz or Naudé, Foucault (2009, 214) discussed the idea of a republic to mean *domain, territory, jurisdiction environment (laws, rules, habits), set of states* (individuals who are defined by their status) and the stability of the republican principles. For Palazzo, the 'reason of state' is the rule ('art') that provides the means to achieve integrity, peace or the peace of republic. Such a theory betrays the canon defining the *raison d'etat* as a political point of view to which any decision or action relate in a republic, to arrive by happy and prompt means (not ends) to *summum finem salus / incrementum Republicae* <sup>(2)</sup>. According to Chemnitz, the 'state reason' has to order, not following the laws, but by accommodating them to the current status of the republic.

Seen as an *unpleasant* term (Foucault 2009, 101), governance relies precisely on the specificity of a certain type of power. In the footsteps of R. Castle (1976), Foucault placed

<sup>(1)</sup> Translated in the language of Samuel Pufendorf, the 'fix rule', which is opposed to the diversity of inclinations and desires, is the only one able to entertain a voluntarism vision. Considering *socialitas* – the learning of utility, for Pufendorf, in a mixture of Aristotle's scholastic and critical Kantianism, the 'equality' has to be deduced from the natural obligation to practice the rules of sociability. In a different register (Kantian, obviously!) this concerns the admitting of 'general harmony' between what the moral world requires and what can be produced by the political world. There must be, as a consequence, a foundation for the unity of the 'supra-sensible', found at the basis of human nature, with the 'practical content' of the concept of liberty. The right and the duty of the citizen to preserve his life, to dispose of 'self-

defence', the relationship of each with his or her own self becomes 'quota-part' of a mental construction (Samuel Pufendorf, *On the Duty of Man and Citizen according to Natural Law*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1991).

<sup>(2)</sup> In this sense, Foucault (in *Securitate, teritoriu, populație*, [Security, Territory, Population], Romanian translation, Editura Idea Design & Print, Cluj, 2009, pp.214-225) appeals to the texts of Palazzo (*Discorso del governo e della ragion vera di Stato*, Napoli, 1604), Chemnitz (*Interets des Princes d'Allemagne*, 1647) and Naudé (*Considérations politiques sur les coups d'Etat*, 1667).

the argument in the shade the notion of institution to replace the overall view of the technology power, as *the institution* is becoming conceptually unsatisfactory given the dangers posed by the concomitant internalization of the individual, the community and the rules that govern them. Key provision remains the power imbalance through the dispositions of power, networks, trends, and relays, as well as points of support or potential differences.

Deinstitutionalising or defective power relations can work to accomplish their genealogy inventory by lineage (and not genesis), by management, and by techniques with operational value in multiple processes. Unstable, the technologies power are immobile, reaching overall effects also possible by local attacks, lateral or diagonal, with general economy as a global stake.

According to Foucault, 'as if examining the disease status and the privileges of medical science in the modern world, we also have here to get behind the hospital and medical institutions to try to find again the procedures for taking into general care life and disease in the West, 'biopolitics' (Foucault 2009,106, our transl.).

Resumption constantly the idea of *pastoral power* remains at Foucault an approach designed to re-discuss the status of power that is exercised on a multiplicity/territory and leads to an end, serving as an intermediary aim in a hypostasis of *finalised* power, and which is at the same time targeting all equally. The *pastoral* (an equivalent for *parochial power system*) sustains the functional scheme of governance, through the diagonal action (law-salvation-truth), by the specific creation of the subject – a decisive moment in the history of power in Western societies. The theme of eschatology, Scripture, mysticism, community and asceticism become counter-conducts of Christianity, border elements in Foucault's view, found again in the permanent use of tactical details relevant in anti-pastoral combat to the extent that marginally; they are also part of the general horizon of Christianity. The perspective of power recovers the very difficult relationship of elements that are external to each other. To run the world (in a pastoral manner), would (co)imply clearly that the world is subject to an economy of submission (and salvation, too, an economy of the open book, with ciphers ready to be decoded).

At first analytical attempt, *the nature* – translated by *principia naturae* –appears

separated from the topic of governance, tolerating (only) the rule of reason. For Botero (Foucault 2009, 201), the state exerts a firm dominance over the population beyond the exercise of the territorial state or province or kingdom, on this population the state reason being the knowledge of the proper means to establish and then maintain and increase such a rule. In terms of method, *principia naturae* and *ratio status* are benchmarks of the sciences and techniques available to modern Western man.

According to P. Veyne (1995) in establishing an objective relationship between governors and governed, the fore is taken by *energetism* (an understanding of individual activism in terms of energy) as a gift made by the individual to the community. This is an indication for the many consequential motives of what Foucault named the model of a historical practice hostile to the causal type explanation and concerned with the individualisation of the event. The real challenge of the new governmental rationality stays in keeping the dynamic development of the diplomatic and military forces and police devices – *elements of the security mechanism*.

Beyond the profile of the artificial construct of governance and reason of state that seems to render everything else artificial, Foucault distinguishes between the naturalness of the mechanisms (as opposed to political artificiality of the reason of state and police) and the naturalness specific to human relations. Society as naturalness represents a sort of conceptual launching platform for the notion of civil society – government thinking mechanism, and necessary corollary of the state. The state manages society, including the civil society alternative – a fundamental shift from the primacy of reason of state, of the rationality of police who continues to be interested exclusively by the individual perceived as a collection of subjects.

The new government and the new horizon of social *naturalness* justify an external scientific knowledge, essential for good governance. In this (re)ordered context the population is a reality both specific and relative (for salaries, for job opportunities or for prices). Especially the regulation of territory and subjects sets in motion several mechanisms related to the economy or to the population management, with the role to increase state forces and a device or a number of tools to prevent or suppress disorder, irregularity, illegality or delinquency.

According to the attempt of Michel Senellart to position the lecture of Michel Foucault within the bio-power issues (as power over life, a capital mutation in the history of human society), bio-politics has an anatomical reference to political body <sup>(1)</sup>. This is a referential attribute concerning the development of power over life, a relationship intermediated by the transition from or to the *machine body* (this profile is marked by the raising, and the increasing of skills and forces of extortion, which are the procedures of power) toward the *body – species*, as support of biological processes.

Subsumed to the whole series of interventions and regulating (*bio-political*) controls of the population, these passages actually organise effectively the power control, held over life itself, through the body disciplines and the effects translated by the adjustments of population. ‘What would remain to be studied, therefore, is the manner in which the specific problems of life and population were formulated within a technology of governance that has not always been liberal, but that has never ceased to be haunted by the problem of liberalism since the end eighteenth century until today’ (Foucault 2009, 312, our translation).

*The management of bio-sociological processes of masses* goes beyond the frame of the limited institutions (school, hospital, barracks, and workshop) and (co)involves the state apparatuses, complex organs of coordination and centralisation by the bio-controlling action of the state. Foucault’s

examination of governance does not imprint a gap within the process of theorisation, but it (co)involves bio-power, the concept of government replacing that power by sliding, as a kind of the extension of a new object – the state. In light of this change of view, population (re)gains the place of emergence, either by diverting police technology, or by a direct correlation with the birth of economic reflection, and by liberalism as specific form of rationality of bio-political control devices. Transposed into the language of the new government rationality, liberalism (as a general framework and a condition of intelligibility for *bio-politics*) represents the most effective care for the act of governing less, in accordance to the *naturalness* of phenomena.

Gabriela Crețu (2004) noticed precisely the conceptual innovation of the double *pouvoir-savoir* (ulterior to *Kehre*), due to movement of the object of research from the training systems to the speeches toward their origin, from the ‘separation and description of types of speech’ to the ‘relation between these grand types of speeches [...] and the historical, economic and political conditions of their occurrence’. The study of Foucault’s genealogy would concisely presuppose a ‘pragmatic analysis of the formation of modern subject in some of its aspects: normalisation, sexualisation, work, etc.’

The interrogation aiming at the identification of models where the development of the abilities of the individual are separated from the intensification of power relations (in the context of the Enlightenment enunciating and denouncing the privileged status of the individual) is answered at Foucault by an ethical spectrum (of the categorical imperative of formulations) and by a moral of the good will of a subject (self) configured and opposed to the active power structures. This (apparently) double answer takes into account the fact that we cannot have access to power in its general dimensions and that limited by the historical requirements, the critical approach is determined historically, too, contingent and never complete.

### Technical and Mechanical Bio-power

Relating *bio-politics* and the discussion of *bio-power* within these either positive or negative systems of thought of Lévi-Strauss, Foucault’s approach is deliberately distanced from structuralism (*structuralism is but a method of analysis*). This particular approach reviewed the stages of power as transition from monarchy (political system in which power was

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<sup>(1)</sup> Integrated in the ‘polymorph techniques of power’, *the will to know* serves as denouncing support and instrument for the perversity of power, by the organisation of a counter-discourse. This manner of politically thinking parts of the world to subject them to political theories, triggers and sustains the reticent attitude vis-à-vis the ‘fight against any form of power’, a fight that, according to Foucault, is on the one hand generalised, and on the other commendable. The perfect neurotic is surrounded by power relations; the *zoonpolitikon* of Aristotle is re-described by Foucault in the hypostasis of political animal whose life stays under the sign of uncertainty. Asking what are the schools, colleges, workshops, etc., the discourse of the *History of Sexuality* offers as answers the referential of ‘diverse and numerous techniques meant to subject the body and control the populations’. Foucault’s approach (self) denounces the ‘analytical’ status, especially by that appeal to the counter attack against the device of sexuality, and in fact, against the power.

exercised by someone who had acquired power hereditary) – to government's knowledge (knowledge of economic, social, and demographic processes) – and to the hospital model (the groups have therapeutic power as, a function of adaptation by appeal to social orthopaedics and to medical therapy as a form of repression). The analysis seems to faithfully reproduce the model of interest on the philosophical and journalistic line of Nietzsche (beyond the obsession with timeliness), as (self) definition with the daring stake of *imposing radical journalism as core philosophical enterprise* (Foucault 2005).

Fixing as hypothesis the privileged types of punishment, Foucault distinguished between societies of banishment (from the Greek society), and societies of redemption (as in the German society), societies of marking (the Western societies from the late Middle Ages), and societies of imprisonment (the current societies). This classification is an excuse to configure the radical politics of the prison, beyond its 'ideological' genesis.

The modifications suffered by the concrete and conceptual prison, by the assault of the *history of bodies* (of the unmarked body and of medicine as a science of the normality of body) consider the reconversion of penalty (in a history of relations between political power and bodies) into a *physical power*. A *new optic* joint with a *new mechanics* are based on the existence of an organ of constant and generalised supervision instilling a discipline of life or time or energies.

Foucault's power games are trends of character or propensities toward obsessive neurosis (Foucault 2005, 31). These are small, singular, and marginal power plays (in a fashionable term today, soft power plays). They are integrated into the fabric of daily life and into the reality of the discourse of tragedy (power games around madness, medicine, illness, sick body, around the penalty and/or imprisonment). This view is based on the fact that beyond the monopoly of the revolution [with all the side effects of collateral despotism, destabilization – endless, apparently – of the mechanisms of power (which do not capitalise reformism)], both capitalist or industrial societies, and the modern forms of State which accompanied and supported them needed individualised procedures and mechanisms of religious shepherding.

Beyond the disputes of vocabulary (for instance, Machiavelli vs. Anti-Machiavelli, or Governance vs. government), and placing the

economy within the exercise of power (on the filiations of ideas Rousseau, where economy means smart family government, Quesnay, where economic governance implies good governance or Guillaume de La Perrière, who saw government as right arrangement of things, etc.), power is organized, according to Foucault, right at the core of governance. If the instruments of sovereignty derive themselves from sovereignty itself, the aim of governance is (by the appeal to different tactics) perfection, maximising and enhancing processes which it conducts (Foucault 2005, 64).

Unlocking the art of ruling from the rigid frame of sovereignty and from the limited frame of the idea of economy recovers the idea of *population* as definitive removal of the family model and refocusing economy on other levels. The concept of governmental capacity is accepted simultaneously by Foucault as: a *set* (consisting of institutions, procedures, analyses, reflections, calculations and tactics that allow the exercise of this form power that targets – the population, the major form of knowledge – political economy and as a technical tool – the security devices), *trend, line of force, sovereignty* or *discipline* (by the development of whole number of specific governance devices) and/or *process/outcome* by which the administrative state is rendered governmental (Foucault 2005, 71).

Considering power as self-report of techniques, Foucault related it to the precept *epimeleisthai sautou* <sup>(1)</sup>, designating 'taking care of oneself', 'to be concerned with oneself', a principle of the city, an essential rule of social - personal conduct, brand of active political and erotic states. Problematically integrated within the multiple relationships between the care of oneself and political activity, self care and pedagogy, self care and self knowing, the concept of *epimeleisthai sautou* is undertaken by Foucault exactly in its substitution version that Plato set between the pedagogical model and medical model, with all that was implied by the reinvestment of the body with decisive attributions <sup>(2)</sup>.

<sup>(1)</sup> *Epimeleisthai* means a real activity and not just an attitude; on the contrary, it describes the care for goods and one's own health.

<sup>(2)</sup> Herbert Marcuse, developing the Freudian theory of repression used and reused also by Serge Moscovici, considered that any form of social, political and cultural constraint constitutes *de facto* the premise of progress. The capacity of man to 'consciously alter reality', in conformity

The theme rules the philosophical preoccupations of immediate consequence. Starting from the Hegelian concept of *being*, E. Lévinas in *Otherwise than Being: or beyond the Essence* (2006) relates inextricably this concept to the concept of *essence*, a notion implying both the game with being and with nothingness as being is not compelled to develop by detour his immediate realm. Placing the subject *outside*, within a different *manner of being*, Lévinas invests it with the destiny to evaluate the necessary terrain between truth and ideology. The difference between *me* and *another* presupposes the non-indifference toward the *other*. Especially beyond the *essence* is where Lévinas situates the entire history of the West, wearing at its *margins* the trace of History astray from its meaning, in a noble stoicism of resignation in front of Logos.

In conclusion, within the field of *bio-power*, by a connection of the exception to the legal and natural or biological state, the systems of power or of knowledge rethink common phenomena in their irregularity, denouncing the analysis of the historic-political categories of the effects of power, from the instance that produces these effects. The mechanisms that require, at the end of the nineteenth century, the defence of society (final point for Foucault's research), follow the path of traditional legal procedures of repentance and of the system of knowledge and power of normalisation.

For Czobor Mihaela Lupp (2000), starting from Foucault's assault on modernity (not an attack that submits and not a critical one, or seeking alternative definitions of the Enlightenment and *investigative*, for the purposes of the mechanisms that maintain a possible answer given for the difficulties of modernity), modern reason is oppressive, reductive, coercive, neither emancipation, nor progressive advancement, in the context in which modern society still remains marked by disciplinary links to the detriment of the contractual ones.

The same double theoretical approach can be seen in a perspective distancing Foucault from the liberal doctrine (in his conception of society and political power, by reaffirming the dispersion, and micro-contextual infiltration of power within the social field) and the Marxist

one (conflict is local, informal, infiltrated in the arteries of social existence).

Foucault's response may be that human agents are either passive and 'manufactured' or active (dominated by the logic of power relations), concerning the distinction between *domination* (solidification of power, limiting the space of resistance) and *power*. Operating with the rationality, the end and the effects (which do not coincide with purpose), with the actual use or with the strategic configurations, Foucault analyses political institutions and the relations among them, actually retracing the firm lines of separation between institutions and practices (the autonomous place of connection for the rules imposed and the rationales offered).

With the hypothesis implied by the interrogation 'Why is Foucault's discourse one of power?', and considering that in the case of power relations we must talk about agonist states, a possible answer offered for Mihaela Czobor Lupp, should consider Foucault's position inside the *recessive relation of behaviour* (a stable mechanism, a substitute for fight, a report of confrontation) and *conduct* (act of ruling, governing, in conformity with some coercion mechanisms). In order to maintain its advantage and in its hypostasis of power exercise and dominant term, power involves the management behaviours.

Apart from organizing the limits and the extremes, power and discipline coexist, redirecting individualized type of power toward salvation from mundane items (health-hygiene, welfare, security, protection), or body (since body subjected is body useful). Organizing the useful space, the discipline of power establishes the place, the distance, the rank of the bodies in the distribution, as well as their circulation in a network of power relations (Foucault 1997).

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# Miniature Memories. 'Small Patrimonies' in Romanian Post-Communist Memoirs

Andi MIHALACHE

Researcher II, PhD, Institute of History, Iași, Romania

E-mail: andiadx@yahoo.com

**Abstract.** This article assumes that we are less affixed to objects than we are to the place that these objects occupy for a long time. This is the reason why we make a distinction between remembering when they let fall objects' names and when they evoke interiors as a reason. In the author of an autobiography we can see either a memoirist who refuses that time goes by (and he still lives in the beginning of his house lost in time) or one who is surrounded by objects he gathers in order to assure himself that he will have some recollections (that he can easily anticipate already) – some prefabricated melancholies. Each one of these takes his home to be a 'pedestal' of himself. This paper is a kind of apropos of French «petit patrimoine». Small patrimonies' include items that are not part of any museum and are not inventoried in any way. They do not have any market value, carrying only sentimental value for their owners. They present strong identity, family, memorial and trans-generational features. Symbolising very accurately intimacy and privacy, they do not belong to the famous *mémoire des lieux* category, but are among the so-called *lieux de vie*: the fireplace, the window from the living room, the favourite room wall etc. 'Small patrimonies' survive over time due to those who consider that they share a particular object.

**Key words:** interior decor, memory, nostalgia, bovarism, post-communism

The manufacturing of replicas of ancient works of art, resulting into frills, began in 1739 (Haskell 1999, 125). However, at the time they were not considered to be decorative items, but 'evocations' of Greek masterpieces. Paradoxically, the miniature copy became a *reminder*, a kind of 'monument' dedicated to the large-scaled original. Thus, when he came to Strasbourg in September 1830, Johann Peter Eckermann bought an opal scent bowl representing Napoleon's bust for Goethe (Eckermann 1965, 412). Did the great scholar have such tastes? Who knows, maybe the Germans treated their fear of the 'little Corsican' like that, by miniaturising his posterity. The episode might have remained a simple anecdote if we had not found similar examples in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. For example, Doina Uricariu mentions the popularity Soviet decorations and uniforms had acquired in the West after the fall of the Eastern European communism (Uricariu 2010, 48-49). Moreover, there are other cases of various regimes or leaders, politically dead, but still remembered on a fetishist level <sup>(1)</sup>. Bad

taste can also produce culture due to the fact that fears that are collectively defeated are later made to appear as individual victories. Thus, the fears are gradually transformed into medals in the course of time. We take pride in them: it seems that if we managed to survive them we also managed to defeat them.

Things do not simply exist by themselves, but to the extent to which we entrust them with a sort of consolation mythologies. However, we wonder: do their age, real or imagined, automatically attract a certain type of words or is it that memories claim some older objects as necessary background ingredients? Are the people from older times implicitly associated with an *old fashioned* decor, 'being posted at the end of the Florentine table in the living room'? <sup>(2)</sup>. The present paper attempts to be a kind of *à propos* for what the French call 'small patrimony'. The term is not only a metaphor, but it is becoming a more and more well-defined concept. Jocelyne Bonnet-Carbonell relates its occurrence to a certain revolution that had taken

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<sup>(1)</sup> For the manner in which the westerns turned Soviet symbols into clothing brands out of

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sympathy for *Glasnost* see chapter *The Lure of Yesterday's Tomorrow* in Guffey 2006, 133-159.

<sup>(2)</sup> This is a reference to the mother of philosopher Gabriel Liiceanu. See Liiceanu 2008, 172.

place within patrimony studies, in the sense of the focus shift from the verb 'to have' towards 'to be'. 'Small patrimonies' include items that are not part of any museum and are not inventoried in any way. They do not have any market value, carrying only sentimental value for their owners. They present strong identity, family, memorial and trans-generational features. Symbolising very accurately intimacy and privacy, they do not belong to the famous *mémoire des lieux* category, but are among the so-called *lieux de vie*: the fireplace, the window from the living room, the favourite room wall etc. (Bonnet-Carbonell 2008, 10-12). 'Small patrimonies' survive over time due to those who consider that they share a particular object (*reconnaissance partagée*) (Bonnet-Carbonell 2008, 10-12).

In a bourgeois version, china has a long existence in time, accompanying several generations (<sup>1</sup>). It gained true notoriety between 1810 and 1840, originating from a 'country' called Biedermeier: a style that embodied a miniature aesthetic, good-natured and fundamentally private for the middle classes, offsetting the gigantism of the Napoleon classicism – according to Stéphane Laurent –, which had been particularly designed for the public markets (Laurent 1997, 148). However, the Biedermeier visual rhetoric did more than promote a retractable and epigone interior design. It responded to the noble finicality, based on *sophistication*, with a bourgeois snobbery that invested everything in *sobriety*. The windows with frills were amateur before being decorative. They imitated aristocratic collections, the grandeur of the Old Regime being now crouched inside a common bourgeois living room (Laurent 1997, 148). We do not share such interpretations that identify a collective depressive state in the passion for interior design, a state that would have arose after years during which the individual had been the political victim of history. We rather believe in the desire to calm things down on an individual level: while the major events hurried time and expanded space, the 'post-' periods allowed people create microcosms accessible to them; thus, they adhered to an *imago mundi* as small, introverted and meditative as possible, the

floral decorations and china creating a fragile surrounding, one that required the average man's protection (Pety 2010, 257). Biedermeier style creates objects that, once brought into one's home, require certain types of behaviours, generating unexpected sentimentality and attachment (Laurent 1997, 148). We give only one example: in 1891, being concerned with the difficulties of moving to another home, Alexander Odobescu confessed his worries regarding his daughter's frills (<sup>2</sup>). In a similar context, while writing to his wife in 1924, Pallady unwittingly implied that small interior decor items were not mere frippery before communism. They had become identity brands, a sort of small metonymy of the owner. Therefore they accompanied the viewer everywhere, making his new home more familiar. Not surprisingly, the artist listed a few objects to Jeanne, next to pronominal possessive adjectives (your table, your closet, my room etc.), and also called them by the style they represented (surprising for an intimate correspondence) (Empire, Louis XV): '...So I brought the furniture from your bedroom in Quai de Passy ...as well as your *secrétaire*, your Rognon table, the small tea table from the lounge, the Director and Empire chairs and other smaller items, the panel etc... I took the Louis the 15<sup>th</sup> commode, an armchair, the dresser that was in my room to my studio... and I sold the green sofa and chairs from the lounge, the armchair, the table and your mirror wardrobe for 2,200 francs to an antiquarian on rue Franklin, in order to pay taxes and the income tax, which amounted to 3000 francs for the years 21, 22, 23 (and, especially, not to look at them all the time and be tempted to spend money for their restoration). The furniture (buffet) near the entrance was left on the seventh floor, waiting for a buyer, unless you wish to keep it? – I put the lingerie in two chests, *all the frills, letters, and other objects* that belong to you, which I wanted to send to Bucharest, it would have cost six hundred francs, because it is all very heavy and the price is 4 francs per kilo ... Should I decide to send them anyway!? (etc.)' (Pallady scriind 2009, 100). The frills had their place within the large understanding of 'good taste', although Pallady was already considering the purchase of these miniatures on large scale

(<sup>1</sup>) Due to the devotion towards the items which had gained a temporal over-value, the same object crossed the histories of several families or generations. *Căieteile Herminei* [Hermine's Notebooks] are one example, edited by Rodica Țabac and Adriana Popescu (2010, p. 44).

(<sup>2</sup>) The reference to the 'thousands of frills from Ioana's room' is found the letter which the historian sent to Sașa Odobescu on the 26<sup>th</sup> of October 1891. See Odobescu 1992, 524.

consumption level. His diary from 1941 represents additional proof, carelessly written, full of corrections, written on a notebook for women, and, as editor Dana Crișan noted, printed in the Parisian magazine 'Printemps' in 1936! At the bottom of a page covered with brief remarks and an outline of a nude, one can read this note: 'Le Printemps possède aussi un Rayon d'Antiquités, où vous trouverez des meubles et des bibelots anciens de tous les styles' (*Pallady scriind* 2009, 153, 183). The post did not imply that the prices were affordable. It was their inaccessibility that awoke the desire to have – their purchase would have made the buyer 'something else'. However, these tendencies became seriously threatened by the 'bully' regimes, which despised 'retrograde trifles' and outmoded, sickly, decrepit 'junk'. In fact, one of the memories regarding the city of Cluj before 1940 suggests, besides the indubitable idea of refinement, a hard to hide rotten feature. More specifically, while portraying the old and squandering owner Karola Vikol, Ion Negoîțescu suggests the fact that her world was falling apart by itself, somehow deserving its fate: '... I was going to visit her again, before the Vienna arbitration, close to the time of her finale ruin, in her beautiful apartment, with superb Biedermeier furniture, huge Chinese vases, priceless figurines, chandeliers crammed with crystal, but without any carpets on the floor, as they had already been sold' (Negoîțescu 2009, 51). Frills do not merely revive an interior for Negoîțescu, but setup its twilight. The objects from his memories do not restore anything; they are only used to stage the failure of a society that seems to have no purpose. Thus, the sets from 'The Sentinel of The Dragons' are not relics, but anchor-objects. However, it is possible that Negoîțescu was deceived by outdated perceptions, shaped after 1945, when, in the absence of any alternative, people struggled to believe that there was no other way and that the older elites had nothing more to offer. Or maybe these additional spaces dressed with curtains are accompanied by the smell of mothballs only because of literary conformism: in order not to be suspected of nostalgia and because it was safer to mock everything that seemed old. However, a positive impression persists, a sensation of languish, drawing the visitor out of the grey daily routines, even during the 80s. The smell of frowsy things annoys at the first contact, and then the sense of smell leaves room for the visual sense to enjoy the small

decorations and stills, specifically designed for discrete withdrawals from the social time. Although it is difficult to demonstrate, the evolution of such properties ultimately overlaps the history of their occupants, together sliding across different political regimes, otherwise strong enough to leave traces within the domestic design: 'The decor that I am describing has remained the same, from my first memories until late in life', Ion Vianu states. 'In fact, my parents' death, the marriages – mine and my sister's –, the children had to occur for the rooms to change their purpose, some of the walls to fall and others to be risen, modifying the house's blueprints. [...] In the course of time the owners got rid of the *cubist furniture*, with smooth surfaces and asymmetries, and shifted towards a *more classic style*. The period was partially the cause for this fact, as the local production was rarefied by the revolution; *antique pieces, however, were cheap*. It was then when more consistent objects entered the house, Russian adorned silvery: ample fruit trays, tea sets, while the poor modern electric samovar (which was never used, because in our house we honoured coffee, not tea), always sitting on a wheeled table that was never moved, disappeared. Only the massive living room remained unchanged, with the bed table and heavy buffet that had three separate compartments, always locked by mother – then when I grew up, they were left unlocked – leaving sugar and sweets handy, as the myth of the 'stealing servants' was fading in socialism, other more efficient terrorists substituting them. Biedermeier furniture (bedside tables, *secrétaires*, chests) were now preferred and filled the house. Also other, more prestigious, paintings appeared; I mention a work by Petrașcu, a still image with a kettle, shading a bleak gleam from its brass' (Vianu 2010, 28). A simple description of the discount antiques mentioned by Ion Vianu is to be found in the second volume of memoirs by Michael Cantuniari: '...let me say something about bookstores in the centre: like I said before, during the second half of the 50's the gradually fading local bourgeois class was allowed to present and sell high quality art objects – small furniture pieces, paintings, carpets, statues and statuettes, even Damascene antique guns –, at very low prices' (Cantuniari 2011, 13). Regardless who their owners would have been, the objects did not deserve the fate of the people. Returning home after the fall of Ceaușescu, Ion Vianu remembered his thoughts when he was

about to leave communist Romania: 'It seemed monstrous to leave behind all the objects imbued with the past, everything that actually represented me. I remembered of my mother's death when I looked at her frills on the Biedermeier chest and I became so sad knowing that those objects did not have an owner anymore. I too was going to leave them without a master with my departure. Surely, they would survive [...]. But the force holding them together – our presence there – would not. Such a departure meant death' (Vianu 2009, 55). These memoirs volumes 'quote' various objects that easily comply with the pattern we described. No matter the story we push them into, antiques rather confirm than object. Not incidentally, Gabriel Liiceanu speaks of objects with a well-defined 'job description'. He further illustrates them by describing his grandfather's armchair. 'The truth is that, starting from a certain age, we begin to draw back, states the philosopher; gradually shortening, our life time requires to be enriched with the lives of those who have preceded us. [...] You search your grandparents and you regret that, ignoring this need which was going to arise, you didn't know how to question your parents about their own parents. By not doing so, you feel like you completely lost the possible extension of your life time into the past. [...] For instance, I never got the chance to meet my maternal grandfather: I was the youngest of his eleven grandchildren's. [...] The fact is that, looking back to the unknown time of my lives, I discovered this grandfather. I managed to save some objects that go back to his time from the house of my cousin Adrian from Caracal, abandoned last year after a century, left in decay and death – a strange couch, wearing upside a console with intarsia, which once stood in the lobby of the mansion from Cezieni, built by my grandfather at the turn of the century, then a guerdon and a Bierdemeier chair, which I now use for my work desk. A century later everything is in perfect condition. And the chair I now use when I sit at my desk and write gives me strength. Every day when I sit down to work and lay against the rounded backrest of the seat on which he sat, I feel inhabited by a powerful, draped and humorous being. I feel very good' (Liiceanu 2008, 149-151). When searching the lives, images or objects of our grandparents for some symptoms of our coming into the world, we discover a small dynasty of owners of one thing, inherited from generation to generation, or, as Liiceanu's case, the object is sought and repossessed, as if

the young man would adjudicate a character feature from his grandparent through that chair. We are therefore interested in historicised objects that play different roles, according to the times. For behind their apparent immobility, they hide genealogies, tragedies, tastes and trend changes. And unlike mere autobiographies, the story of the self uses the close ones as 'stepping stones', transforming their acquaintance into a subchapter of their life. This is how Gabriel Liiceanu proceeds as well, feeding on his regret for the people who have 'built' him, but who were forced to separate from him.

Otherwise, one of the starting points of the present research lies in the surprise of finding a quick reference to the 'bourgeois' frills in a book on Marxism-Leninism, anti-fascism and five-year plans. We refer to Gheorghe Gaston Marin's memoirs, a abstemious book, which could not have been suspected of too much sentimentalism; yet, Dej's rigid dignitary reveals information about his parents, who were Jews from Transylvania under Horthy: shortly before they were sent to Auschwitz they were trying to protect some objects that they felt that were summarising their life in those moments. We were struck by the fact that these people, although being aware of what was going to happen to them, spent their last normal life hours trying to shelter their symbols of domestic and emotional stability. Back in Cluj, the former fighter in the French Resistance was 'searched by an old friend of my father, chief engineer of the Hăţeg-Petroşani railways, Maros, who endangered his and his wife's freedom by hiding some objects my parents had given them the days before the tragedy knocked at their door. Maros family gave me the Rosenthal porcelain set, the crystal glasses, the table silverware, tablecloths with napkins, carpets and embroidery, the beautiful Meissen porcelain figurines and other valuables pieces and memories acquired by my parents, who loved beauty during their life of labour' (Gaston Marin 2000, 88).

We deal with nostalgia that we repudiate and nostalgia that we learn to live with. However, the manner in which we put them into words is sometimes fashionable, as we receive stereotype stories without knowing it, put into circulation for advertising reasons. Today the recent past adopts more and more disparate faces, ending among elusive recollections and joyful omissions. It is difficult to familiarise ourselves with our new memories under the avalanche of memoirs from *Humanitas* and

*Polirom* publishing houses. There are people who narrate laconically, as if they are trying to get rid of their own words, while others, on the contrary, display a lush vocabulary, giving the impression that they have lived in that past that they refer to more than they did in the reality of their own lives. The first category is composed of those who were formed after 1945, while the latter includes the representatives of the 'exploiting classes'. Moreover, in post-communism the foster 'unhealthy' relatives are re-affiliated in order to fill the lives of those who were persecuted because of them. In this context, the frills belonging to the grandparents are mentioned as if their purchase would have been the merit of the grandchildren. Experiencing a shortage of biography, the successors claim successful ancestors, from which they derive a prestige now impossible to obtain on their own. The memoirists with 'bourgeois' biographies present, thus, a painterly style, frilling their story, and speaking in an annoying manner for us about the 'life of Christmas gifts', to quote Maruca Cantacuzino (<sup>1</sup>). She is in self-delight imagining her ancestors eating only from 'Sèvres porcelain dishes when Saxony ones were not available' (Cantacuzino-Enescu 2005, 89); however, forcing us to note that these luxury items were frequently used while the cheap plates and cups 'sets' were treated very preciously. It seems clear that former elite representatives are people from times we cannot easily relate to. We have not crossed at all and did not share any road. Also we do not feel that we have much in common with a phrase like 'large porcelain cups with blue flowery immersed us in a pleasant mood and gave us unshakeable confidence in beings and life' (Cantacuzino-Enescu 2005, 31). From a retrospective point of view, trinkets claim pasts that we would otherwise consider imaginary (not fictional) for a simple reason: when the owners benefited from the presence of these objects they did not especially sought them and it did not defined their identity. However, not all of their mentions are cheesy and playful. For example, Adrian Marino definitely placed them in a childhood *illo tempore*, and of the contemporaries, at the same time. There is a reason why we recall them in a somewhat sarcastic manner, looking at them rather as

weary tools, customizing them only to be paired with the names of two minor poets, 'In exchange, how cute and colourful seemed to me the first writers from Iași whom I saw and «known», somehow, in my childhood and adolescence. I used to live next to George Topârceanu's house, as I mentioned before. Otilia Cazimir, wearing a red scarf on her head, used a tuft made of cock feathers to dust every morning various objects and trinkets. I think it was 1934-1935, because one day she came to the fence and told us: 'Children, be quiet. Mr Topârceanu is sick'. He died in 1936' (Marino 2010, 45).

Selecting beautiful memories is an attempt to bribe the past, to lure it on the narrator's side. In her *Confessions*, Maria Frunzetti often mentions Biedermeier furniture pieces, using them as 'heraldic' objects; we would do anything for them, in order to have memories by including them in our individual biographies, exaggerating sometimes (Frunzetti 2001, 23, 77, 105, 126, 149). A more interesting example of *shared memory* is the fact that Mary Frunzetti and Annie Benteoiu remember the porcelain and Art Nouveau of the Enescu family, mentioned in Maria Cantacuzino's memoirs, who had been their owner. Thus, Maruca exemplifies the situation when the narrator is being narrated, in his turn, by those who find themselves in his past. In Mircea Berindei's memoirs, the mentioned objects rather play the role of a 'scar' than that of a 'coat of arms', suggesting that the people who gave sense to those things disappeared. Without a compatible owner, whom they would portray, the objects lose their meaning, becoming waste. The Sèvres or Meissen porcelain 'dies' unless it has an owner able to understand, to commemorate and reconfirm its actuality. The small 'widgets' from the *Venetian Firewall* are signifiers partially envisioning the lost idea of elite: their presence in Berindei's memories would not have been that sure, if they had not been displaced from their original purpose and sold at the flea markets. For this reason they are frequently reiterated in the memoirs, in order to express the feeling of cultural distance that separates us from the old days. Although they survived the twentieth century, some objects are not, however, accessible for the present. The past keeps them to itself. At best, they can provide details about what their owners were or were unable to be

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(<sup>1</sup>) Sanda Stolojan actually speaks of the 'excesses of the old exiles, too strongly influenced by being part of the old bourgeoisie'. See Stolojan 2007, 174. The note from the 18<sup>th</sup> of January 2001.

anymore <sup>(1)</sup>. Therefore, myths are created rather by time than people. Before 1989, when seeing the flea market scene in *Bietul Ioanide* [*Poor Ioanide*] – a screen adaption of George Călinescu's novel – the unsuspecting audience despised bourgeoisie and its rotten world, banished by the new one, that of the 'working people'. Watching the same film after the fall of communism, we think of something else – the elites destroyed by totalitarianism. Each of the two eras is the counter-myth of the other; both completing their profile subsequently, by antithesis. Actually, there are some worlds that have failed to be contemporary with their own myth. They did not establish it during their real existence, possessing it posthumously, after both disappeared. However, between you and me, would 'little Paris' be so much appreciated had it not been the victim of communist bulldozers?

'Which exactly is the moment when what you experienced is regarded as past?' asked herself Herta Müller (Müller 2005, 137). What exactly does memory deal with? It treats the event as an accident, taming it by including it in a species of redundant, familiar and controllable facts? Is it an eternal return of the present? And does it necessarily translate nostalgia into kitsch? For example, Jenny Acterian's diary goes until 1947, without assuring the reader that she was aware of the inevitable transition to communism. The period between 1944 and 1947 appears as a clear phase of transition to totalitarianism much later, being the product of a retrospective order of events, when a chronological order became possible. Moreover, our memory regularly cancels the conclusions of similar historical contexts: in 1948 it seemed that nothing could be worse and already we sighed with regret for interwar Romania; in 1968 we believed that the situation was much better than during the Soviet occupation; in the 80's we were again despaired and regretted the summer of '68. Not the opinion shift is essential, but the comparison term we choose in order to make the judgement whether we are doing better or worse. First we find a point in time which we believe it represents the end of an era, and then we deny that end and find another final point of our own. Maybe this is where the origins of the myth lie, as the historical myth represents a dynamic denouement. And the complexity level of this problem reveals itself more wider if we consider that it is not the actual facts that matter,

but the age we are when we recall them, 'to my surprise, after experiencing communism (the persecution of the class I belonged to, being forced to leave our homes for common domiciles, facing proletariat, being put in jail), I don't keep negative memories regarding the terrible decade '50', wrote Sanda Stolojan. All of my experiences from that period also contain positive aspects: friends, love, joy, a joy that colours the darkness of those years. I remember of that time with a feeling that I still wonder about. I get emotional as if the rather terrible things that happened to me (for instance: moving to suburbs) would not have dented some of the light in my soul. Maybe my youth at the time when I was dealing with all of these experiences made me accept them in a certain state of mind, a mixture of rebellion and courage, both positive, its traces still surviving in me with a touch of melancholy, like a goodbye – the goodbye which separates us from that lost world that we survived, young and full of irrationally, confuse, incomprehensible hope in an unseen force that was going to save us' (Stolojan 2007, 28). This is not about the regret for the lost youth, but for the real separation from the bourgeois world, which, indeed, took place during the juvenile stage of their life; a separation which they did not truly acknowledge at that time – the 'obsessive decade'. There is also a certain degree of sympathy for the innocence of those people, poisoned in time by certainty or scepticism. The above quoted lines are dated June the 26<sup>th</sup> 1997, thus belong to a more mature post-communism period, that of the Democratic Convention, reflect a kind of compassion for the young 'fifty-ers', who did not know what challenges awaited. They represent a detached and indulgent self-portrait of the memoirist Sanda Stolojan, who is now returning to a vacant self, knowing in retrospect what kind of events were going to mutilate her future. While further reading the exiled author Ion Vianu, we note that the refuse to remember is the equivalent of the refusal to see his taking off from Otopeni – leaving the country – as a key moment in this regard. This is not an easy exercise, the memory of one's place of birth lying behind the answers to the question 'who are you?' However, the year 1989 changed the binary image of the world, the motivations, identity discourses and fears that people had gotten attached to. The disuse of the old landmarks determined certain disorientation, a sort of inability to situate into the some hesitant post-communism temporality. Furthermore, the

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<sup>(1)</sup> These are 'mute' objects, living a life on their own. See Turkle 2007, 308.

death of Ceaușescu makes the exiled to face a different Romania from the one they had left behind. Their memoirs strengthen the impression that their return to a renewed country immediately emaciated them. Paradoxically, the collapse of communism causes a feeling of being left behind, of accelerated aging. The disappearance of that mentioned regime, which was contemporary with his own youth and adult life, the exiled wanders in a *second-hand* historical time, in a timeless epilogue of his life, as Sanda Stolojan suggested. The memoirs from exile are useful because they help us distinguish several ways to participate to a historical period, or, as François Hartog says, some specific temporal regimes: a) an abandoned time, that of the Romania they had left, b) an individual time, worn through the world, c) a time that recaptures them from the past, that of the Romania they found after 1989 or a time they enter again, regardless whether they find it where it was left.

Memories populate certain past time islands, coagulating neighbouring memoirs. Can we deny them because history always seems incomplete to us? Never obtaining final answers, we either get a glimpse of ephemeral backgrounds, which do not last for long in our memory, or durable pasts, which come to compose memory itself. Although the quoted paragraphs are often introspective, we do not intend to adopt a psychological perspective: we rather follow the narrator's *self-identification* with the narrated memories, regardless if these are personal or belong to someone else. Creating new memories – and not simply inventorying them – occurs when our biographies invite life stories that we have not really intersected with to come in. We assume them *à rebours*, because we can find ourselves there, by recollecting my memories with yours into a common 'past', shared by more of us. Although memories do not have finality, we can classify them <sup>(1)</sup> as follows: those which we fear, those we feel sorry for because they are dying, as they do not have any further carriers, and those for the sake of which we look forward for aging. Often, they do not disappear once with the person who was their main actor <sup>(2)</sup>. Thus, we refer here to the

memories that persist due to the fact that we regularly share them with others <sup>(3)</sup>. For example, Constantin Bălăceanu-Stolnici's memories are accurately confirmed by Annie Bentoiu. She considers them eloquent for the communist atmosphere his writings recall; however, our interest focuses upon 'the memory inside a memory', the shared family histories, common to both: paintings and old books, china and furniture, all of them stolen or burnt, not even the wedding rings belonging to Stolnici's parents could avoid 'expropriation' (Bentoiu 2009, 161-162). However, we also encounter gaps, especially when our co-storytellers die, taking with them text fragments that were also ours. Breaking this lifelong empathy gives us the feeling that we have departed from the 'land', sailing the ocean on a paper boat. Sanda Stolojan visited her friend, Sanda T., in the summer of 2001, 'surrounded by friends, but in fact alone in the midst of her memories (brother, son, husband, brother, sister-in-law, all of them gone)' (Stolojan 2007, 186). Thus, the encounter becomes a very rare opportunity to turn the conversation into a two-voiced self-evocation, each recognizing herself in the other's odyssey: 'We talk about Poiana, her family's property, their country house, devastated during the fifty years period of communism. While listening, I thought about those art collectors gathering patrimony items forever lost... like her mother had been, the great protector of Romanian crafts; she created weaving workshops (embroidery, rugs), which she held in her beloved county of Gorj. Everything has been robbed. However, Sanda T. takes these things with serenity. She reminded me that my maternal ancestors, the G. family, were related to her own. She would like to leave the empty recovered house from Poiana to a foundation that would arrange a 'memorial

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She then considered that his life belonged to her, that she could have crossed it as she pleased, without considering its various stages, thinking about him in different ages, ignoring chronology.

- <sup>(3)</sup> We have in mind the house of the French foster vice-consul from Iași, Joseph Sibi, preserved in the local memory through repeated narrative recoveries. The reports of those who include into their own biographies fragments from this family's history and the home they had inhabited are a form of patrimony, in English it is called *living memory*. Thus, most intentions of auto-inclusion *a posteriori* into someone's story are recorded in the case of Charlotte, daughter of Joseph Sibi, French teacher for many generations. See Dumas 2011.

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<sup>(1)</sup> It is worth mentioning that specialists distinguish between memory and recollection, the first seems more objective to them while the latter rather affective. See Dassié 2010, 23.

<sup>(2)</sup> During the show 'Back To Reason', broadcasted on TVR Cultural channel in the evening of the 7<sup>th</sup> of May 2009, guest Roxana Dreptu referred to her deceased husband, painter Ioan Inocențiu Dreptu.

house', where all of the artistic and historical remains of that past could be gathered' (Stolojan 2007, 186). The two bashed women were trying to further evoke those who were gone, or to find new affinities or common memories (Davis 1979, 31-50). In fact, many of us can not listen to their grandparents anymore, but manage somehow to keep in touch with them through further sharing their recollection. Nothing special about that, we might be tempted to say, as many of our memories are actually adopted backgrounds. In this sense, we also have the support of a few old artefacts, giving us the chance to approach a past or another, asking it to become ours as well, at least partially. We do not attempt psycho-analyse at all and we are not searching for any hidden meanings, difficult to put into words <sup>(1)</sup>. We wish to document different attitudes towards objects, people, moments and feelings that gradually become common property by entering a text. This is the shortest definition of the idea of 'small heritage'. We found a self-referential understanding of the concept in the case of Ion Vianu and another one, in the third person, preferred by Neagu Djuvara. They both considered backgrounds they had not experienced, asking questions that others did not. Ion Vianu started from the idea of reconstruction of the self, as those he wrote about completed his life: 'my story would not have been possible, admits Vianu, if I would have not allowed myself the audacity to pursue such reconstructions. These are possible if you got to know very well the actors of a drama you have not witnessed. [...] 'I' am actually myself, the one who writes, with my precise identity, recorded in documents and in the memories of those who met me and will remember me later, until the generations will lose sight of me' (Vianu 2010, 28-29, 146). More relaxed, Neagu Djuvara sees family heritage survival as a skill to exit the scene in beautiful manner, the art to end without completely erasing your traces in the world. There is a reason why he focuses on Alexander Saint Georges, 'a foster captain of cavalry, passionate collector, who had left the army to devote himself exclusively to his passion of collecting everything he could from our country's past. [...] He was obsessed with the concern that, after the death of each man who

had represented a however small part of our history, many if not all of his objects and documents would be lost forever. So he tried his best to save everything he could from destruction or waste, after the disappearance of a personality, sometimes without a certain criteria' <sup>(2)</sup> (Djuvara 2010, 265-266). The two narrators return a long way back in time, into an old present, consumed along with others; and they want to make it compatible with the new timeliness, completely estranged from the old facts of their lives.

Even the most elementary certainties are extinguished without maintenance, protection or support in difficult times. Obviously, there is no danger that one plus one could ever be something else than two. However, there are other truths, which explain the world and make us care about it. These cannot live without our assistance and without the conviction that the greatest achievements of the human beings are, unfortunately, the most fragile ones, too. This is also where the idea of 'small heritage' is included. It does not only contain Biedermeier furniture and Meissen figurines, but also life stories that protect the memory these 'dear trifles' (Lucia Ofrim), from a narrative perspective. We could not understand their importance if we did not know that among the first victims of the dictatorship of the proletariat were leather-bound books (burned in a mansion yard), Sèvres tea services (smashed against the walls or stolen), or piano keyboards (broken with the rifle butt or stepped upon by boots). We believe that the world where they fitted perfectly normal deserves a brief *memento*, at least. Otherwise, all the objects we do not know any longer what they represent will create blind history, unable to function for us. In Paris, on the 9<sup>th</sup> of February 1993, Sanda Stolojan recognized this 'indifference' towards what she called in December 2001 'the memory of a time which has been beheaded, assassinated in the midst of the deadly violence of the century that we crossed': 'I entered', she wrote in February 1993, 'just like every year at this time, the shop 'Le Père Fragile', where they have sell-outs for china and crystal. On a Bohemian console there were crystal glasses: blue, green, yellow. Exactly the same as my parents had in the living room. Was it because of the crystal's texture? *The memory instantly turned into a cold*

<sup>(1)</sup> The idea of extracting this subject from the area of psychology and bringing it in that of historical anthropology is not new, other academical circles have also been concerned with creating an archaeology of the artefacts that contain our own past. See Harrison, Schofield 2010, 173).

<sup>(2)</sup> Djuvara also transcribed an epigram that circulated in 1900, regarding the amateur collection trend practiced by Saint Georges.



*presence without shadows, a dry drawing without the emotion this kind of retrieval among familiar objects is supposed to bring.* The images emerging from the memory were not *transfigured*. Thus, it is possible that the crystal that is probably polished for this purpose to not be able to reflect anything else but itself, like an empty mirror, when the internal source is off' (Stolojan 1999, 136) <sup>(1)</sup>. The objects bring back fleeting memories, they resemble faces you have seen before; there are past times that were so beautiful that now we miss them so much that we wish we never experienced them at all <sup>(2)</sup>. Not to mention the houses which were once synonymous with family names; in the interwar period the name of a street was as important as its inhabitant's names. Therefore, once those buildings were demolished, the former owner failed to relocate in a previous ego; the epilogue of his story being left to chance <sup>(3)</sup>.

<sup>(1)</sup> The reference regarding 'the memory of an unfinished time' is found in Stolojan 2007, 200.

<sup>(2)</sup> The memories of those who left abroad demonstrate why the narrative approach of obsolete objects or decors can become a point of view regarding the manner in which we see how the so-called *culture of mourning* awakens certain patrimonial interests. As exile is defined through a sort of mystic human-space relation, due to the idea of *loss* in the first place and, second, to that of *absence*: loss has impact over the individual, absence distorts space; man feels diminished, space seems disintegrated. In the first case, the amputation a person's experiences when he leaves his country brings along a certain identity insufficiency. The exiled renounces his own territory; a man without a homeland is stripped of his old fellowship, the coherence of his biography until that point also depending on his geographical location. In the second case, the exiled considers that his own absence induces a sense crisis to the place he had occupied at home; everything is caused by the conviction that space becomes intelligible only through the presence of the individual who takes it into consideration; thus, being absent meant to symbolically de-structure it, make it anonymous.

<sup>(3)</sup> This is an acute state of mind for the Romanians who had returned from exile. Their literature makes us believe that everyone's time is comfortable in a domestic perimeter which we individualise now or we customise it retroactively. Thus, the biographical stages of the exiled seem to bear geographical coordinates. Are we truly born for a length of time that can only gain consistency through the mediation of space? In order to answer this question, we distinguish three possible situations: first, when we place ourselves spontaneously in the same 'non-

Do old things attract words of a certain nature by themselves or do memories require, as a mandatory ingredient, some older objects as background? In the case of Romanians, we do not believe that we would always refer to old sets, almost like in a ritual, if these would have disappeared naturally, and not in a brutal manner. Therefore, we search for defunct pasts, deeply buried inside objects. And they hide numerous stories, still not included in memories. Thus, we pick as many references to artefacts as possible from memoirs and diaries, because their narration can wake the sleep of time, revealing yet unknown actors of the recent history. Although we must mention: only a concise reference in a diary (which briefly records the most recent past) will make the object only the ingredient of a private view, of a still life, while, being evoked in *memoirs* (which take distance and manage with periods from long ago), the object becomes less 'built', rather a character that bursts from the past; in a diary, the object may remain indifferent at the disposal of the person who notices it, while in a memoir, it must quickly cover the distance between 'then' and 'now': it catches up and bursts into our memories.

Even if it did not physically resist, china survived from a cultural point of view. Due to its certain presence, it represents strong signifiers for a revolute period. And it goes without saying that now they are pushing their owners into the past, making them obsolete. These are people of which we speak of using the past tense, because their time stopped at a certain point. Therefore, we attempt to study things wrapped in words, objects awaiting their own story to be restored. They are still produced and sold in post-communist Romania today. However, their production date is not important, their social age is. Frills are born old in our perception. However, we should note that a 'frill' represents a semiotic object with various signifiers, it can

returnable' time type, the time from home, a time for free and seemingly implicit, very little acknowledged as such; second, when we are already far from Romania and time bears the meaning of a certain space ('back then when I was in the country...'); third, when we lose ourselves in a borrowed time, that of exile, a time that is not related to a particular geography: lacking the protection of a familiar surroundings, we long for non-locative state, but we are satisfied only with a comparison instead: a certain landscape from the Alps resembles one from home etc.

mean: 'sometime before', 'grandparents' house', 'elite'; or it may refer to self-falsification, anachronism, kitsch, Bovary-ism, communism, poverty. These various meanings reveal the succession of attitudes towards these artefacts, illustrating a social history of tastes and self-images (Vincent 2004, XIII), in parallel with the evolution of decorative styles. Our investigation belongs to a field of research called *cultural biographies of things* (Kopytoff 1986, 64-91). However, it must start with a thorough understanding of the survey's sources: memoirs, diaries, interviews, letters which share references to a past which they enclose, but which they will not reveal completely. These are included in autobiographical literature, called *self-narrative* in the specialised language. Therefore, we work with texts which do not necessarily follow a chronological order and all the stages of personal biographies. We are interested in the rather randomly manner in which an object, a picture or a domestic setting is mentioned, turning it into a meaning of the idea of 'once upon a time'. Why does it seem to us that things are more expressive than facts? We will attempt to answer this question in the present paper.

Do we really miss what we once were, or does the desire to reinvent ourselves prevail? Do we leave the present by remembering? Do we populate it with an outdated time? Or do we recompose biography calling to a favourite past? We waive him anyway, as we approach another. The facts we use to tell the story of our live at the age of 85 differ from those we had referred to two decades earlier. The latest memory is not necessarily cumulative; the details with which it sometimes can lure one away may hide many omissions. The present study does not pretend to deplete a subject, but to plead for the neglected, 'residual' historical sources, those ignored by the eye of the researcher, because they do not contain explicit news, revelations, anecdotes etc. For example, in the case of *Creștetul ghețarului* [The Top of the Glacier] we were not interested in the information about Adrian Păunescu, but in the ways in which the memory visits heterogeneous temporal modes; or, on the contrary, in her book 'Chatting', Aurora Liiceanu mentioning that some china gave a couple the feeling of safety and relative certainty is a case outside the horizon of our research because the objects are significant of the past and do not need to be brought back on the agenda (Liiceanu 2010, 39-40). China is here the redundant and convenient metaphor of routine,

the sign of an apparently unchanged present. They do not stimulate self-evocation; on the contrary, they urge owners to close themselves into a timeless 'here and now'. However, we are interested in articles which, although familiar, interrupt the feeling of temporal continuity. Whether they remain close to the owner, or they are left behind, they somehow leave his actuality, ruining its accordance with itself.

We have, however, counter-examples, i.e. autobiographical writings that obviously project the author's present into the past. Oana Pellea's diary is included in this category: we love objects through words, dreaming that they will enrich the memories and thoughts of other people as well. 'March, 8, 2003 [...] I was walking down the street and suddenly I felt the need to go inside an antique shop. I started walking faster and faster, and became anxious. I arrived, I opened the door and I felt relieved. I had escaped, now I was safe. I did not know what I had escaped from, but I knew I did. I love bookstores, furniture antique shops, they make me feel good. Each item has something to say to you, begging you to take it home, just like in a pet shop. There are such things as orphan furniture seeking for adoptive parents. It is sad and good at the same time to be in an antique shop. It's good because you can hear many stories. If you know how to listen, you can learn how this puny spoon was once a silvery piece and the star of a baptism ceremony; or the fabulous story of the pocket watch from the corner of a drawer ... these two chairs are about two hundred years old, talkative and willing to name everyone who rested on them. [...] I went home happy. I had escaped. But what or who was I running from when I entered the antique shop? ; I realized: *from today*.

The next day I went back and took home two talkative chairs. There is much more noise in my house since then. They talk and talk...' (Pellea 2009, 88-89). Things somehow stabilise our perceptions of space, and once it was tamed, they introduce us to more friendly and relaxed, un-anguished times. This is how we are offered the chance to revisit forgotten genealogies, although, in the hurried 21<sup>st</sup> century *the past* doesn't last very long, it soon expires and is immediately replaced with another one that has just arrived. At the same time, the number of 'retired' objects rapidly and predictably increases. The future generations will find them *trendy* due to a major merit: junk reassures us that time always comes from somewhere, that every moment has its own little history. Due to

the existence of artefacts we are able to take distance and frame our biographies, deciding by ourselves the story we descend from.

Objects have a long way through time, accompanying grandparents, parents and grandchildren. By investing time in them, we retrieve ourselves at times, even when our china no longer belongs to us. Due to these beloved artefacts we take distance from our previous selves, setting stages in our biography. *Therefore, we are interested in the particular time segment we associate them with, and the time frame they best represent.* Although we have known them since always, we only feel that they start to belong to us at a time of crisis or identity related questions, when the stability of a private environment is invoked to protect us from the threats of the public space. Objects seem to reject us without a story for their background. By avoiding becoming one's possession they cannot be historicized. However, they do gain a sort of respectability, extracted from their obvious oldness, not from their uncertain age. After tracking some discourse similarities and recurrences our approach aims to demonstrate that the association of some quite personal perceptions (in diaries or memoirs) may lead to the description of a 'community' of feelings and sensibilities, thus a well-defined area of analysis. Going beyond the biographical and emotional features of each individual diarist or memoirist, the textual sample we select will signal some convergent authorial subjective features, which might indicate a spontaneous 'objectivity', simultaneously sustained and shared by several individuals. In other words, any old object carries a new past, which we can revive together by verbalising it <sup>(1)</sup>. Avoiding launching such a hypothesis without further following what may actually come out of it, our research finds its starting point in a few simple questions: why do we include obsolete objects in our personal retrospectives, objects we once ignored, which did not appeal to us in any special way?, why do we suddenly rediscover them and how do they 'complete' us? And if we focus on them, what exactly is left outside memories? How much historical memory can a family memory contain? Our temporary answer is that they play the role of the 'Madeleine', the saving detail; their 'conservation' on a narrative level makes us believe that our past can be recovered and

kept close. Why do we prefer old items, or items outdated by our memories? Because they are different from the proletarian, serialized, common and anonymous ones; those that are condemned to a life length equal to their usage period. Therefore, the studied text genre is mainly of an introspective nature. Due to this, our research differs from the 'aseptic' approaches, exclusively focused on the intellectual and professional evolution, on the social and political frame, or on a potential conflict with the communist regime. However, our paper does not hold a psychological tendency: we rather follow the narrator's *self-identification* with the revived memories, whether personal possessions or others' belongings. Thus, we create new memories rather instead of simply inventorying them when we call into our biographies life stories which we once intersected with. We assume them *à rebours* because we recognise ourselves there by recollecting my own memories and your own into a 'some other time', mutual for more of us. Some of the objects populating Mircea Horia Simionescu's thoughts also indicate the nature of the text we are dealing with: '... each has its own history and my feelings for each one are different, I am thinking of a catalogue of qualities and of the possibility of a hierarchy using other criteria than utility. Objects continuously generate feelings – he noted on August, 19, 1964 –, one takes me back three decades ago, enabling me to see my grandmother's hand armed with the dust cloth, another one takes me near a library bookshelf, near which I felt I was going to faint from happiness. The boundaries are narrowly drawn, like the lines on the pavement surface making up the squares for a game of hopscotch. You now know very well how many squares you have to jump over in order to pass from joy to the most painful melancholy, from disgust to exuberance. The concreteness of external objects helps one organise the affective space through successful combinations, otherwise risking mediocrity' (Simionescu 1998, 87). Always lenient and always the same, objects witness the way we change in the course of time. They are silent biographers, replaying life fragments – initially, too quickly consumed – in order for us to better understand them. On the 4<sup>th</sup> of June 1965, the same diarist discovered the difference between his own self from that moment and that exhibited in his diary from 1947: '...I was flying too high back then, writing so merrily about death, without considering the concreteness and

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<sup>(1)</sup> Laurent Olivier talks about manufacturing collective past. See Olivier 2001, 180.

eternity of things, ignoring the surrounding small objects...' (Simionescu 1998, 115-116). Thus, the writings lacking a subjective author are of no use for us; we quote the fragments where the author becomes reflexive, telling us something about his civil, private and domestic identity. Our approach is based on economical research, analysing autobiographical literature from a narrative rehabilitation perspective, excluding any Freudian interpretation. In addition, there must be a separation between childhood related objects that belong to the family or to others on the one hand, and, the personal artefacts the memoirist still identifies with later in life when trying to define himself, on the other hand. They invoke the latter when we would like the past to swallow a present we no longer need.

We remember in order to thank or to protect. In the first case, we exercise self-recovery narrative more for the others than for ourselves. A letter from Monica Pillat to Pia Pillat, dating from September, 5, 1973, takes into consideration the objects that keep us together, close to each other, making us complicit to the memories of others: 'Every object encloses its own life in itself – ten years length, others are only a few months old, yet each object revives moments, days, faces, words, figures – so that rooms are full of presences' (*Minunea timpului* 2010, 85). Therefore, narration defies distances (Pia was abroad), portraying house interiors (maybe never seen for real) and then bringing together objects and people, reuniting them in a single emotional frame. In this case, autobiography represents a way to return debt, to 'reunite' those who gave us a part of them, gave up a good of their own in our favour. By remembering what others have 'left' us we partially retreat from our own past (Carlos Fuentes) and we invoke them in the volatile space of individual memory, in order to rejoin them, once again. In the second case, self remembering transposes a renewed exasperation: we tell what we would like to forget, because, once shared, memories belong to others as well, and they seem less our own. We feel relieved by giving them further; we escape from them, in a sense. Moreover, the key factor is not the effectiveness of the recovery, but the public's reaction the narrator is able to obtain. In other words, the most important thing is that people let themselves captured by the story and feel part of it. Reconstruction accuracy is not the main matter, but the number of those who acquire the author's memories. Together

with our nostalgia, these can secure our self, because the individual memory is never reduced to an interior history, it needs 'mirrors', similar traumas and 'Siamese' souvenirs. In other words, you can save those objects narrated by their owner and mentioned again in the memories of those who were listening to the initial story. In his memoirs, written between 1977 and 2000, Mircea Berindei recounted Martha Bibescu's memories. We look around us leaning on words, through their use we become spectators of never seen before sceneries: 'the guests were passing from the Brancovan room to an elegant *empire* salon, as from one country to another, as from an age to another, with the astonishing speed of thought. [...] Mr. Jacques Truelle, Minister of France in Bucharest, strokes the arm of a chair, decorated with the head of a sphinx, worked in bronze.

'This furniture', he says to his Italian colleague, 'bears, if I'm not mistaken, the incomparable seal of Jacob Desmaltier, *ébéniste de l'Empereur...*'

... 'and it belonged to Napoleon the first, and later to the Bauffremont family', added the host. [...]

'I received the furniture in this room from my mother in law, Napoleon's niece, who had it from the Bauffremont family, with whom she was related. The name Bauffremont is, of course, familiar to your Excellency, also from Marcel Proust's book, *Pastiches et Mélanges*, as the name of the' first race of our kings who could rightly claim the throne of France', as the author acknowledges (Berindei 2004, 93-94). Berindei noted that Martha Bibescu told the legend of the furniture to all the guests who were there for the first time. Considering its value, the story was worth recounted and the new visitor also entered the biography of an object or another, along with the past generations of viewers.

The frills! We do not believe that people intended to collect them during communism, however, given the fact that they were such a common gift back then – the universal gifts, proper for any occasion or any receiver – so that many Romanians became collectors unwillingly<sup>(1)</sup>. In fact, we are less attached to the objects

<sup>(1)</sup> The sociology and anthropology of the gift set this situation into the category of *things exchanged in equality-matching relationships*, very suitable for 'the Socialist ethics and equity':

than to the places they occupied for such a long time. This is the reason why we distinguish between occasional object references and interior descriptions interesting in themselves. We may encounter in autobiographical literature either a memoirist who refuses to acknowledge the passage of time and goes back to the beginnings of his lost home, or one who surrounds himself with objects in order to gather some memories in anticipation for later, a kind of 'ready-made' melancholy. Both treat their home as a 'pedestal' for themselves. Thus, in her role of 'Scheherazade', Martha Bibescu urged her guests to admire the intentioned disorder in some rooms from Mogoșoaia, apparently neglected, in order to resemble the ancient Oriental thesaurus, or the so-called *Chambres des Merveilles* in the West. In 1940, a visiting diplomat, Mircea Berindei, remembered that episode, analysing the manner in which the specificity of the objects she was attached to influenced her social attitude. 'She was perfect for her role as chamberlain-guide and she was expressing herself with the elegance of a royal highness...' said Berindei, after he had extensively described the 'inventory' the princess used for the scene: '...On the tables there were laid large stitches embroidered with gold and silver threads, shining copper candlesticks, coloured in green by the passage of time; there laid, as thrown there by accident, old bibles, with covers made of expensive metal, pearl or wood carvings, hookahs, scimitars, censers, beads of Amber, filigree jewellery boxes and many other valuable trinkets. On the floor there were numerous prayer mats, bearing the marks of faithful Mohammedans' knees, and in the middle of the room, on an easel, there reigned an oil portrait of Prince Brâncoveanu. At the left, on a wall, a huge painting represented King Louis XIV of France, contemporary with the Romanian ruler, as a baby, lying on wrinkled velvet. The room had something of the metal and polychrome splendour of a Greek church, but at the same time, it also resembled that of a bazaar from Istanbul, stuffed with various, heteroclite, unexpected and delightful objects' (Berindei 2004, 86). *However, we must acknowledge the danger of becoming prisoners of such texts, issuing convenient paraphrases, lacking any analytical approach, at the same*

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neither the giver, nor the receiver lost or gained anything in a disproportioned manner, the presents being chosen in order to place them both on an equal symbolic level. See Comter 2005, 24.

*time.* This sort of warning is also to be found in Matei Calinescu's diary. Referring actually to Martha Bibescu, he wrote on the January, 9, 1981: 'Preparing my course of 20<sup>th</sup> century literature, which I start from Proust, I don't read criticism regarding Proust's literature, but testimonies and biographical materials. This is how I came over *Le voyageur voile* by Marthe Bibesco, full of aristocratic kitsch, sometimes punctuated by a spiritual note, which, however, often does not belong to her. For example, the laconic observation of Antoine Bibesco, a friend of Proust's: «ce qu'il y a d'admirable dans le bonheur des autres, c'est qu'on y croit». All the quotes from Proust are superb, even if their starting point is often kitsch (genealogical-nominal slipslops)' (Călinescu 2005, 226).

Restored in the memory, the bourgeois living room forms an interior landscape with a sweet impressionistic structure; the description abounds in *reminder*-objects, those we recall when we want to go back in time, following our own traces (Moran 2006, 27-42). Sanda Nițescu reconstructs through words 'the black lacquered 'Cubist' living-room, which my newlyweds and pro-modern parents bought, along with the rest of the furniture, before the war, namely in 1935. This furniture, which had got with a brown shade here and there in the course of time, contained a square table which could be extended – for twelve people –, a dozen of chairs upholstered with Biege cloth chiné, a cabinet filled with all kinds of china and figurines of questionable value, but not without a certain amount of charm, and a long buffet – from the same set lacquered black – upon which there was a wooden Telefunken radio receiver. This huge buffet, seated along the wall, sheltered cutlery, the most precious crockery, Mother's beautiful white damask table cloths' (Nițescu 2008, 46). The above description can become boring for a reader who does not know how those things looked like, but the accents the author uses in order to humanize the 'perspective' can arouse our curiosity. Things are pretexts to notice people, family members or acquaintances who we later believe symbolize lost civilizations. Thus, objects that today seem common represent a kind of 'skeleton' or 'escutcheon' of those who did not leave any other portrait or metonymy of their biography. 'The room seemed untouched since the 19<sup>th</sup> century – said Mircea Berindei, referring to Eugenia Nicolau's house in Târgu-Mureș –, when it seems it had been inhabited by very generous, because upon the well polished

honey-coloured wood furniture there were placed trays and kettles, sugar basins and bowls, in the most perfect harmony, all made of silver, and the glass case contained crystals, china, flatware, the latter were placed in their original boxes clad with purple silk, all of them valuable' (Berindei 2004, 17). He also made a more expressive comment regarding how to court the objects we cohabitate with, 'Ms. Nicolau had painted something meanwhile, a picture was born out of nothing and I was avidly searching for it. I was suddenly discovering on the easel a canvas that represented, for instance, a pot of bluebottles. I was recognising the vessel in amazement, the one that was usually set on the commode, as well as the oval table's rounded corner, even a part of the tablecloth, where a book was laid as by chance, yes, *The Illustrated World Almanac* for the current year, the same Ms. Nicolau had given to me, as usual, immediately after it was published' (Berindei 2004, 18). 'The owner used to transpose on the canvas these small pieces of visual truth, transferring them into a bi-dimensional and a-historical register, as if the objects near her were coming out of the paintings and not vice-versa. Pallady noted in his diary a somewhat similar episode – the painter received a bowl, the giver believing that it will be once found in one of the master's works (*Pallady scriind* 2009, 182). But his hopes were in vain, because Pallady did not automatically portray prosaic spaces of existence: '...the object is worthless in itself... the artist must symbolize it...', he theorized on the 18<sup>th</sup> of February 1941 (*Pallady scriind* 2009, 168). On March the 25<sup>th</sup> of the same year he completed his idea with the following aphorism: 'To go beyond the subject ... which should be only a starting point for expressing what we personally see in it' (*Pallady scriind* 2009, 177). Pallady admitted painting's inability to avoid narrative colonization, the object's entrance into the frame of the picture depending on the story that recommended it. Things are useless if they do not contribute to the consistency of a moment: that of enjoying the already 'posthumous' image of a painted object, rediscovered as an old acquaintance on the canvas. Thus, we are able to reinvent and become their 'parents' so that their world starts all over again from us, the ones who give them another life.

The cultural and epic that bring a meaning to an interior are no less important, connecting it to the macro trends, transforming it into their late epigone. Mircea Berindei provides another

example, Valentina Carp, teacher: '... down on the sofa covered with a Persian rug where she slept at night, there were incredibly numerous pillows covered in cloth decorated with oriental motifs, needled by her on the back cloth, or painted on velvet. Moreover, Romantic oriental elements were present in the reception room as well. Among other things, there was a very low hexagonal wooden table, which she had pyrographied with the same oriental motifs. (pyrography was fashionable at the time.) On the table stood in an artistic manner, like in a 'still life' painting: a hookah, an amber necklace, a small album of postcards from Constantinople...' (Berindei 2004, 19). What were the oriental interiors suggesting? Were they inevitable in the homes of the elites because the royal residences had accepted them implicitly? <sup>(1)</sup>. In his dialogue with Filip Lucian Iorga about the mansion in Blânzi, Alexander Paleologu did not leave aside one of the mandatory components of an aristocratic house from that period: '... to the left there was a door towards a Turkish styled room. It was an old custom to gather things from your Oriental travels into one room. They were not necessarily Turkish, but Oriental: sofas, cushions, couches... – *Maybe a hookah*. – Unmistakably. And you could comfortably spend your siesta there, resting and reading in the afternoons' (*Breviar pentru* 2007, 58-59). This is the East revealed by Western means, a generic East, Arab rather than Ottoman. It was the world in which, starting from the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, the Westerner had only seen turbans, harems and *hookahs*: a hetero-tope within which time was still during its siesta, before entering the speed of the modern years. This is not an actual East, but a parallel dimension, that of from one thousand and one nights; from there you can look inside the backstage of history, uninvolved, without fast-forwarding its clocks. A cultured East in this manner dissolves its geographical coordinates and virtually migrates wherever it is desired and dreamed of. It becomes a new 'room filled with marvels', a trunk stuffed with pauses and wonder. This is the pattern we use when, after 1878 and 1913, we adopt 'adopt' as patrimony Dobrogea and the Quadrilateral, treating them as an internal East. Interiors with oriental or Phanariot inflections did not give a melancholy touch to the Ottoman past. But it suggested that the falchions and sofas could be taken as local

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<sup>(1)</sup> We refer here to the residence of Alexandru Ioan Cuza din Bucharest. See Spirescu 2010, 75.

products, without being considered among our identity marks. Interiors 'à la torque' formed a Romanian Ruritania, which we gradually colonized, both on a space and memorial level: the palace of Carmen Sylva from Constanța with that of Marie in Balchik, with the myth of Ada Kaleh, with the Bedouin clothing from masked balls etc <sup>(1)</sup>.

The human-object relation is one of mutual support and meaning: things die only once with those able to say something about them, the 'deceased' artefacts are not those burnt or stolen, but those that nobody talks about them anymore. Here lies the difference between the 'elitist' frill and that of 'masses', from the communist years. The first was remembered depending on its origins (Paris, Vienna), while the 'proletarian' ones do not persist inside our memory through the object's actual qualities, but through the memory of the moment when it was given to us, or of the person who gave it to us. It seems like frills existed 'by themselves' before 1945, as a part of a lifestyle, customizing the room that contained them; afterwards, they became too explicitly ornaments or gifts, series objects making thousands of homes anonymous. Moreover, the continuously shrinkage of the living area 'multiplied' this kind of items. We see the ugly communist frills as a contemporary phenomenon, but not necessarily actual, as their disregard already proves a temporal and cultural distancing of those times when we all valued them highly. A similar mnemonic process is applied in the case of the 'bourgeois' frills, but this time in an appreciative sense: it is recovered on a narrative level after 1989, and only its caducity making it the mark of a lost, and also regretted, time. More clearly, let's leave Freud alone and accept the fact that 'the Meissen' and the 'ballerina' can still be counted among the recent historical sources. It all depends on the skill to obtain information from them. However, we do not have that much time available, as the 'aristocratic' china in street fairs represent a kind of warning. The 'antiques' exposed on Lăpușneanu Street in Iași are not being purchased because they would be contrastive with the cliché designs of our buildings. They seem strange to us and we are not keen on taking

into our homes. Nobody needs them anymore, because those elegant manners that made them necessary are now dead. And, regardless of how much we try, we cannot restore the feeling of familiarity with the old concept of 'good taste'. They would be more suitable inside an anthology of old manners. From this point of view, communist education was successful; it managed to inoculate an alienation from the Biedermeier universe. As without storytellers, objects remain abandoned memories. Life withdrew out of them, and our generation never got the chance to know them at all. No matter how much we appreciate them, the old frills preserve a dose of irrefutable strangeness in our eyes: it's unlikely that they would appreciate the company of former UTC members! And we would not be able to make a story around them; this would their owner's role. These lines will result in a small ethnography of prosaic or ambient objects, reconditioned in the communist period, and long after that. Initially, these represented 'achievements', and nowadays they resist only because people do not have the money to replace them. Being out of use would change them into waste, marks of a time we are no longer connected to. It is crisis that explains the obedience towards old objects, a 45 years long regime that discouraged the idea of private property. In the first stage, the objects' age explains the people's present time. In the second stage, the latter's memory defends the items' past and existence. The frills we refer to here do not matter as household decoration accessories, the differences between the bourgeois trinkets and their communist relative consisting of the tastes and manners mode the required. Obviously, these discrepancies are also to be found in the way they were mentioned later, in the post-totalitarian period. We believe that another important factor lies in the fact that the bourgeois period is 'completed' and thus subject for re-symbolisation, while the proletarian time is still 'open' and cannot be included within a single general frame. If we refer to objects in terms of their relation with time, we must note that they are usually apathetic. They start to become alive when we determine where their present ends in order to make room for the past. In other words, they remain 'passive' from the memory point of view as long as they hold a practical function, and become 'active' after ending the everyday wear and tear and we invest them with other functions, usually of mnemonic

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<sup>(1)</sup> Related to the eternal recurrence of objects, we transcribe here an anecdote: on the 4<sup>th</sup> of May 1931, Charles the 2<sup>nd</sup> and Nicolae Iorga were visiting Ada Kaleh island; the sovereign used to stop at 'Moka' coffee-shop, where the hosts served him from the same cup his father, king Ferdinand, had used. See (Țuțui 2010, 34).

nature <sup>(1)</sup>. Although we are accustomed to preserving convenient memories, objects do not hurry to complete our retrospection. They are not event witnesses, but rather accomplices of a particular self-discourse. They are mentioned out of the fear that words are not sufficient; objects are invoked in order to increase credibility. We do not recall frills regardless our age, only after we have a large enough past in order to desire its stability. Thus, telling stories about objects is not only related to the owner's present, but also to the end of the concept of 'normality': something is not the way it used to be! They help to keep the past in the present's backwater, to keep it familiar. This is how we get the impression that yesterday is decades old.

What reason is there for our glance or memory to stumble upon an object? Some of them are still with us and restore through memory the people who sometime ago were around them too; others are lost forever, their meet their owners only within their regrets; the third category include the objects which were voluntarily abandoned by the exiled owners: these are objects we lack the most, because they accompany us everywhere with their absence. At least for Ion Vianu, returning in his home country also meant the encounter with estranged objects, the feeling that abandoned things never cease waiting for us, discreetly testing the memoirist. Therefore, he began a reconstruction using regained objects, or, more accurately said, remembered. If we seriously consider some retrospectives, we conclude that the memory of some of us hardly survives, with the approval of objects. 'It's like objects would decide when, how and where you remember things and people from the past', Herta Müller noted. Made of invincible, lifeless and durable material, thus of a wholly different nature than ours, these objects upon their own revival within the human mind. Objects dominate the present moment, and once they sprung before us, they relate to past stories. [...] Objects continuously build their own complicity, while the persons and events around obey them' Müller 2005, 135-136). They wear out and even disappear; they can only bring feelings back to us, rejuvenating them now and then. Gabriel Liiceanu talks about the emotional edifice of his life, illustrating through this expression the *anti-diegetic* type of text, upon which we further focus our own research

approach (Liiceanu 2008a, 6, 101). Thus, we identify as many such scriptural 'introversions' as we can find, attempting to sketch a report regarding modes of 'gardening' the ego, with the great aid of time. Starting from the 'tool-object' analysed by Liiceanu (2008a, 12-15), we ask ourselves: how do we treat the objects we do not perceive as such, the ones which do not have a specific role? Are we able to shape the history of the solutions found in the course of time regarding this issue? Let us pretend that at least these 'companionship' objects have lost their purpose and are waiting for us to assign them a new one. And so, they do receive one when we admit that a humble object may become a permanent 'subsidiary' of the self. The same Liiceanu reveals it, in a letter addressed to his son: 'I would like to leave you something [...] a few of my things that did not count more than a breeze throughout my existence. [...] They resemble the small odds and ends girls usually keep inside a nice encrusted box, fetishes of their lives which they won't abandon until the end of their lives. It is because there lay the marks of their most valuable life experiences, *if you know their story*. Imagine that I have a pile of peddlers in front of me. I scatter them, and take one in my hand from time to time, I turn it around and show it to you, and then I put it back. Anyway, the box will be yours and you will find each one in there' (Liiceanu 2008b, 229). In other words, only our nostalgia manages to push things into a new existence (Isanos 2010, 83). For memory is not a simple sum of backgrounds received altogether, they are multiplied or reduced depending on the number of present contexts we join them with, in order to keep them alive. Therefore, old things make us more responsible, especially as they relate to the stories of others to a larger extent than to our own.

Socialism is gone, but its truths are still coming back. Can we really remember it completely excluding ourselves from this recovery effort? For the moments of social rupture force the individual to make an effort of re-explaining his life. For example, the establishment of the totalitarian regime raised the question of one's *origin*, its fall in 1989 valuing, perhaps excessively, the *biography* of the same people. The post-1947 regime had a special passion for genealogy, claiming elaborate autobiographies, justifying complicity or guilt. We do the same nowadays to some extent only that for different purposes, we are doing our best to recover the period before 1944,

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<sup>(1)</sup> An example of previous disposed objects that later became museum items is found in Bonnot 2002, 157.



trying to find a prominent ancestor at any cost: if we had had landowner parents, surely our grandmother would have painted and an uncle of ours would have played the violin! No wonder Ion Vianu mentioned a counterfeiter of 'Grigorescus', who easily found a Bovary-like clientele ever since communism (Vianu 2009, 115). We quickly pass from our 'hidden past' to our 'worth-telling' past. A similar mnemonic type of exercise is instrumented with conflicting results: in communism origin accused the autobiographer, while now, after communism, it awards the memoirist.

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# The Bible – Source of Postmodern Literature (Scriptural Quotation in Contemporary Literature)

Maria-Nicoleta CIOCIAN

University Assistant PhD, 'Babeş-Bolyai' University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania

Faculty of Psychology and Education Science

E-mail: nicoletamaria2001@yahoo.com

**Abstract.** The present study wishes to offer Livius Ciocârlie's '*Cu fața la perete*' <sup>(1)</sup> a reading based on biblical intertextuality, the scriptural text thus becoming a fertile source of inspiration for contemporary literature. The depictions of the biblical quote as well as the functions that it serves in the literary text lead to the conclusion stating that the Romanian writer proves himself to be the explorer who has clear knowledge of the entire investigated biblical field. The biblical text, which became intertext in Livius Ciocârlie's work, cannot be left with a fragmentary interpretation, exempt from the whole to which it belongs. The reader, engaging in a dialogue with the author, promises to make a pact: that of becoming a reader of the Holy Scripture in order to be a dialogue partner for Livius Ciocârlie.

**Key words:** intertextuality, biblical quote, dialogue, Bible-literature relationship

In the present paper, we shall not deal with an approach centered around the literary features of the Holy Scripture, but deal with a literary text, more specifically that of a diarist, approaching biblical fragments from a less usual perspective: a literary one. We would like to offer a new reading track – from the perspective of the biblical intertextuality – to a text by Livius Ciocârlie: *Cu fața la perete*. We shall analyze and elaborate the biblical quotations from the first part of the text. Due to the length limitations we can not approach the ones found in the second part, seen through the eyes of Bernardo Soares.

The Holy Bible becomes, in the postmodern age, source of literature. It influenced and has been constantly influencing the development of literature. Very little has been written in our culture about the Bible-literature relationship, the Romanian researchers being especially preoccupied with the linguistically nature of the problem (valuable studies have been written on the contribution of the Bible's translations towards the evolution of the Romanian language – Florica Dimitrescu, Eugen Munteanu, Viorica Pamfil, Dan Zamfirescu, Vasile Arvinte, Alexandru Andriescu and so on).

We find ourselves compelled to give credit to an approach which depicts the dialogue

with religion transposed in a diary, as well as the results to which such an endeavor may lead. We thus grasp the way in which the Bible is being turned to advantage in contemporary Romanian literature. We hope that the results of our analysis shall reveal the contribution that theological ideas have upon nowadays' cultural debates.

The quoting of Biblical verses has, in Ciocârlie's work, the greatest weighting in *Cu fața la perete*.

A shallow relationship of intertextuality between the quote and its source may be easily established by the reader. However, the exact reconstruction of the hypotext implies a more detailed approach on the Scripture. We will expect, from the very beginning, that the quoted text is addressed to an informed reader, who can easily establish the intertextual relationship between the two types of texts.

The biblical quote thus becomes, at a textual layer, a dialogue with religion; this leads to the acceptance of religion, to a desire to understand the sacred text and to another form of knowing one's self. In the selection of the biblical quotes, I didn't analyze the ones that bring nothing new (from the perspective of the intertext) as opposed to the ones that we shall make reference to. Moreover, I didn't note devious aspects of the biblical intertexts (inaccurate or rephrased quotes, paraphrases and so on), allusions made to the sacred text are followed, every time, by a precise reference, by

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<sup>(1)</sup> *Cu fața la perete* (original Romanian title), literary meaning: 'facing the wall'.

an exact reproduction of the quote, thus proving once again the real preoccupation that the author has for fundamental religious texts. Such a great number of biblical quotes in the diary are proof of the viability of these kinds of pursuits. We will analyse configuration methods of the quoted text in the text that it is being quoted into, without a very careful analysis of each quotation individually. All the biblical quotes inserted in Ciocârlie's text open the way to reflection, meditation, and interpretations and endeavor to understand the Christic message. A detailed analysis can outline orienting milestones in our approach of the diarist's work from the scriptural perspective, in an attempt to enlighten the biblical mystery.

The dialogue with the Holy Scripture has its debut in *Cu fața la perete* with the analysis of Christ's response about his speaking in parables: 'Strange thing was Jesus's reply when asked by the apostles why he talks to people in parables: because, unlike them, the apostles, people have been given [the ability] to know the mysteries of the heavenly kingdom. It would mean that people don't need to understand the meaning of the parables. Should they stick to their letter – or literature?' <sup>(1)</sup> (Ciocârlie 2010, 114). Here, Livius Ciocârlie gives a defective interpretation to the text of the Scripture, because Jesus speaks in parables in a manner that his auditorium would understand. The Romanian author makes the biblical text seem not clear enough, lacking a meaning close to general comprehension; he corrupts the text by making an interpretative correction, which he wants to be elucidating, but he only manages to obscure it. Thus, a literary reading of the entire verse in being born, an altered interpretation resulted from a voluntary exempt from the context and an unspecialized understanding of the scriptural verses.

The theme of faith, inability and willingness to believe seem to be present all throughout the lecture of the Holy Scripture.

After a short exchange of replies with B.S., he comes back to the reading of the Bible: '*... for it must be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!*' The most striking testamentary mystery is hiding in the relationship between what was written that it will happen and the one through whom what

was written materializes. This one is sent with a mission, and because he fulfills it, he will be punished by The One that sent him. Finding his lost sheep, the shepherd *rejoiced more of that sheep, than of the ninety nine which went not astray*. So there exists a dialectics of faith. It must be confirmed and strengthened by doubt' (Ciocârlie 2010, 115).

The biblical verse, as related by the holy evangelist Luke, in chapter 15, in the New Testament, in a parable about the sheep that was astray, conveys God's love towards the sinful man:

'What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he loses one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he finds it? And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing' (Official King James Bible, Authorized Version, The Book of Luke, 15:4-5).

The parable of the missing sheep is recounted in the context of the old accusation made by the pharisees of Judea, who seemed dissatisfied that Jesus listens to the sinners and tax collectors and agrees to share the same table with them. The parable is meant to show how liable the difference between the righteous and the sinners is and how much permissiveness God may manifest towards the wrong ones incapable of repentance. The three parables inserted by Luke the evangelist in chapter 15 are 'an illustration of a soul's converting process and unravels the unquestionable link between freedom and grace' (Manoilescu 2008, 104). Livius Ciocârlie offers an upside-down reading of the Scripture's text, whose wish is to dispose of the despair of those considering themselves lost.

Livius Ciocârlie goes on: 'I wouldn't take mystery for inconsistency. In Testaments, some sentences contradict one another. To forgive your brother seventy times seven is being asked of you by God, Who forgives nothing.' (Ciocârlie 2010, 115-116). The episode of forgiving seventy times seven is told both in *The Old Testament* and in *The New Testament*. However, Livius Ciocârlie makes a reference here to *The Old Testament*. The given interpretation is upside-down, because the biblical text of *The Old Testament* offers the image of a punitive, yet forgiving, God or simply of purely forgiving God (in *The New Testament*). Ciocârlie's text places the quotation in confusion: he mistakes the God-man relationship for the man-man relationship.

<sup>(1)</sup> The present paper, as well as the novel quoted have been written in Romanian. This fragment along with other direct quotations of Ciocârlie's work have been brought to English by the translator of this paper, since no other version of the novel except Romanian exists at the moment.

Stelian Tofană, in circumscribing a few traits of *The Gospel of John*, talks about the frequent usage of syntagms with different, overlapping meanings, of terms that 'along with their direct meaning, obviously have another one, more profound' (Tofană 2001, 217), this implying a literary *technique*, specific to the author. 'In all these forms of expression, the Savior takes in consideration both the literary meaning and the symbolic one, but his auditorium always grasps the first sense. As for these words with overlapping meaning, it must be specified that Jesus Christ never utilizes them with enigmatic purpose, but with the intention of guiding the readers towards the spiritual and deep understanding of His doings, which also act as signs, that is to say, symbolic connotations' (Tofană 2001, 219). Livius Ciocârlie underlies that he is making reference only to the literary meaning; he is forcing the interpretation towards an essentially literary one, without taking into account the theological angle of John's narration, without choosing certain biblical quotations because of their symbolic significance. Here, doubt proves that Livius Ciocârlie is ready to accept faith, so that, in another fragment, he considers the Savior's words and parables 'difficult to understand': 'Shattering words: *You don't know what you are asking. Are you able, to drink the cup I am drinking...?* All of a sudden, when Jesus talks to the archbishops, in the temples, his words and parables are difficult to understand' (Ciocârlie 2010, 117). This is the reason why, sometimes, the Savior is found in circumstances where He has to explain what He says, which is rarely found in the synoptics. But the author is content with observation, ignoring the spiritual perspective present in the Gospels.

The snipping, random or not, of some biblical quotations in Ciocârlie's text, does not make up, not even by an off-chance, a snipping from a systematical, theological treaty. The author is not a theologian in the modern sense of the term. All these quotes taken from the Holy Scripture must be understood, we consider, as a desire to know the Lord and talk about the Lord; a desire for a deeper understanding of the evangelical meditation; *theology* in the originary sense of the term (talking with and about God; understanding of the divinity).

When bringing into discussion The Last Supper, Livius Ciocârlie seems devoid of the power of faith; wanting to surprise the reader and trying an interpretation which lacks any theological exegesis, he arrives to a point of

confusion: 'If we are to take for granted what we read in Luke, the apostles are worthless people. They find out one is about to betray Jesus, barely ask who and immediately want to know which one of them is the greatest. In John, The Last Supper does not exist, in Matthew the wrongdoers on the cross are silent, in Mark the heart rending *Woman, this is thy son!* appears and so on' (Ciocârlie 2010, 122).

According to the Holy Scripture, in the case of the evangelist John, the setting of The Last Supper is different from the other three synoptics. The episode exists, however the establishment of the sacrament is not related. In the case of Matthew, we are not being told about the repentance of the wrongdoer about to be crucified, that appears in Luke, and about the conversation between him and the Savior. *Woman, this is thy son!* does not appear in Mark, Livius Ciocârlie transfers segments from one evangelist to another.

Is it a confusion or is it a knowingly transfer of the verses of the Holy Scripture? Is this transfer on purpose or pure accidental?

The completions or the nuances brought in the telling of the biblical fragments sometimes harden the lection and show a particular interest for a theologian-researcher. He is not satisfied to take biblical passages, but separates the verses, compares and confronts them, but omits some details or makes transfers from an evangelist to another. Here we are dealing with a *deconstructive biblical intertext* towards the coordinates set by a considerable biblical exegesis, an attempt of representation or common understanding of some scriptural passages. Livius Ciocârlie is moving now his deconstructive verve towards the Holy Scripture; he makes usage of a dislocation treatment of the biblical passages. The confession of the author is relevant in this aspect, few pages later: 'a believer I am not, but I do live under the heaviness of the primary sin' (Ciocârlie 2010, 135). The transforming intercession of Livius Ciocârlie punts, we believe, also on *the shaking* of which the author is marked at every rereading of the Holy Scripture. 'Every time I reread, I am petrified. Judas betrays because that is the way it was written. Filled with remorse, in order to set things right, he confesses that he has blamed an innocent man (Peter, the chosen one, cries his cowardice stealthily) and returns the silver coins. Being mocked, he commits suicide. He we must hate, not the rest. If at least it would have said that he repented for all because that it

is how it was written. Then you could have told yourself: it is a mystery, therefore nothing left to understand' (Ciocârlie 2010, 120-121).

The fulfillment of the prophecies is seen with unfaithful eyes, the attempt of the evangelists to present the events as being part of the godlike plan of the world's salvation is, for Livius Ciocârlie, a failed attempt, a suspicion, a misunderstanding of the presentation of Christic events of the Savior's activities as being the fulfillment of the revelation.

It is as if Livius Ciocârlie wants to recreate, through these inside out readings, a 'new circuit of sense' (Genette 1982, 453). He has notable ability of 'reading' *differently* the Holy Scripture.

Could it also regard, through the transcription of the biblical passages, an attempt of seeking his own never found identity? 'Another anguish is given by the incapacity of finding one's identity. I do not know if this is a solution; an answer, however, it is: self conscience can tell the self that identity with himself to no end is to be found' (Ciocârlie 2010, 101).

After a few pages, another biblical reference is inserted in the text:

'Jesus, to John *Very truly I tell you, you are looking for me, not because you saw the signs I performed but because you ate the loaves and had your fill.* He tells this in order to shift from earthly food to heavenly nourishment. The argument is, however, weak. It was the wonders and not hunger, of any kind, that determined people to follow Jesus – a realistic explanation so therefore frustrating, lacking spiritual sense. In the Book of John, Judas is a devil. He loses his substance. He can no longer be, not even, a symbol of betrayal' (Ciocârlie 2010, 124).

Here, Livius Ciocârlie is putting together two different biblical episodes: the miracle of bread propagation and Judas's betrayal. The piece of bread is the one that links the two parts: in the first part, Jesus is the bread; in the second part, Judas is being remarked before the disciples through the sharing of bread (Judas received sacrament without being worthy).

The miracle of bread propagation, 'interesting example of multiple meaning' (Tofană 2002, 368), is told in the Holy Gospel of John, in chapter six <sup>(1)</sup> and represents 'the

godlike power of Jesus working for a suffering crowd whose sorrow sensitizes him' (Tofană 2002, 368). Livius Ciocârlie here also offers an inside out interpretation of the evangelic text, denying the spiritual values of the Christic message.

Considering Judas *a devil*, Livius Ciocârlie brings in discussion chapter 13, verse 27 of the Holy Gospel of John: 'Then after he had taken the morsel, Satan entered into him. Jesus said to him, 'What you are going to do, do quickly.' (The Bible or The Holy Scripture, John 13, 27, 1573).

It can be observed that here, Livius Ciocârlie brings into discussion the episode of the betrayal, as related by the evangelist John, because the latter insists on certain words that were omitted by his predecessors, introducing the lexeme *Satan* and depicting, thus, the Christic mystery in all its depth. 'The Book of John is the most dynamic of all the Gospels, a unique work situating its author among the world's most inspired' <sup>(2)</sup>.

After an exchange of replies with Bernardo Soares, the text of the diary comes back to annotating on the Scripture: 'Seen from the outside of Christianity, in His argument with the pharisees, Jesus is not convincing. All He does is state His identity, without any reason for why He should be believed' (Ciocârlie, 2010, 125). Here, the text is inadequate, the truth of the biblical fragment is overthrown – Jesus does not want to convince the pharisees, with whom He is frequently ironic, but wants to convince His followers of the Christic truth.

We then go back to the Judaic lack of faith and condemnation related by Luke:

'*Anyone who loves their life will lose it, while anyone who hates their life in this world will keep it for eternal life.* It is as though Calvin were talking, not Jesus. Why should man not love his life and want eternal one? Logically, it means it would have been better for us not to have been born. (While computerizing: wrong. Logically, it is worse: hate opens the pathway to the after-world).

Luke: *the devil had already prompted Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, to betray Jesus.* How about 'it was written'? Is the devil a collaborator of God? Sure seems like it since Jesus says *so that the Scripture may come true.* And after giving Judas the bread *Satan then took*

<sup>(1)</sup> The transcribed fragment in the ciocârliean (association with the author's name) text is related in chapter 6, 26: Jesus answered them, saying: <<...>> The Holy Bible, new international version.

<sup>(2)</sup> An introduction to The Gospel of John in the Romanian version of the Bible that was used for the purpose of helping write this paper.

him over. First there was the thought and after that Satan possessed him? Inconsistencies' (Ciocârlie 2010, 126-127).

Chapter 12, verse 25, of the Book of John says: 'Anyone who loves their life will lose it, while anyone who hates their life in this world will keep it for eternal life' (The Bible, New International Version), and the annotations of the Scripture regard the word *life* as having two layers of meaning. We could also consider the issue thusly: 'For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it' (Matthew 16:25, New International Version of The Bible). The same annotations do not consider the verb *to hate* (Hebrew term coming from old Greek and, through it, in modern languages) as being used in the proper sense, 'for Jesus never encourages hate, but the ability to immediately and utterly let go of loved ones, in order to be closer to God.' (Luke 14:26, New International Version of The Bible Matthew), aware of the risk of using this verb, rephrased this thesis: 'Anyone who loves their father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves their son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me' (Matthew 10:27, New International Version of The Bible).

Livius Ciocârlie reads the Savior's words, here, to the letter, giving both a literal and a literary interpretation of these fragments. He is not taking into account the scientific investigations made by specialist in the biblical field; investigations which may no longer be eluded in such a context <sup>(1)</sup>. The abandonment of such theological investigations does not mean, in this context of Ciocârlie's work, scientific isolation, but rather an attempt to understand another perspective of the biblical text, a reading, sometimes literary, of some scriptural passages. The biblical fragments are brought over and inserted in another textual field, different from that of theological investigation. The result is remarkable: *an attempt to impose the Christic truth to other coordinates, those of literature and diary, an*

*attempt to unravel, through them, one's own self.*

Coming up next, another passage about the biblical message makes the focus of our attention: 'No matter how much I try, I cannot agree with the wonders. They seem too simple a solution to me. For example: Paul in his dispute with the charlatan from Paphos. I was expecting strong arguments from someone about to become a great theologian. But he blinds his adversary literally, not with the light of his ideas!' (Ciocârlie 2010, 131).

A couple of pages later, before a Leszek Kolakowski quote, Livius Ciocârlie transcribes a quotation from the Apostle Paul: '*Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person someone might possibly dare to die.* The miracle, that redeems many things, is that there are people who die for other people, helping them, without asking whether they are good or bad' (Ciocârlie 2010, 145).

The fifth chapter of Romans, 'part of the missionary work of the great Apostle' <sup>(2)</sup>, entitled *The Rewards of Turning Towards Faith. Adam and Christ*, describes 'God's favor' (Jones, 2000, 28) and transcribes what the holy Apostle Paul used to preach by speech. The Savior 'did not die for a righteous man, not even for a righteous or friendly world, but he died for a world full of godlessness and enmity towards Him [...]. What boundless love! What indefinable grace!' (Moldoveanu 2001, 170).

Livius Ciocârlie shatters the biblical text and interprets it in a literal way. Verses 6-11 depict 'the universality of sin' and 'the universality of grace' (Moldoveanu, 2001, 170) as a general truth for all of humanity: 'You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person someone might possibly dare to die. But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him! For if, while we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life! Not only is this so, but we also boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now

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<sup>(1)</sup> 'If we do not obey rules of interpretation, very many teaching may be extracted from the parables. Our Lord himself gave the interpretation of many parables, but where there is none given, it is necessary to check if our interpretation agrees with other verses dealing with the same topic in *The New Testament*. – Kenneth JONES, *Evangelia Bibliei – 15 lecții din epistola lui Pavel către Romani*, Agape Publishing House, 2000, p. 44.

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<sup>(2)</sup> From the introduction to Romans in the Romanian version of the Bible that was used to help write the present paper.



received reconciliation' (Romance 5, 6-11 in New International Version of the Bible).

The author's attention is diverted to *The Holy Apostle Paul's Epistles*, which marks the end of the scriptural incursion in the volume *Cu fața la perete*. The periphrasis of quotation opens up with a sort of introduction: 'Paul is among the originary apostles. He was not molded by Jesus. There persists in him a little piece of devil, you might say. He argues with Varvara, his proselytism comrade –and they fall out' (Ciocârlie, 2010, 144).

It can be deduced that Livius Ciocârlie knows the history the gospel is passing on in the apostolic age: the Holy Apostle Paul is a missionary, 'one of the greatest ever in the service of the Christian Church' (Verzan, 1996, 7), because the other apostles began their activity before the historical birth of the Church. Paul, also called 'apostle of the nations', after his conversion from the road of Damascus, was miraculously called by the Savior himself.

Ciocârlie's annotations to Paul's epistles are general consideration, appreciative, but also veracious from a theological point of view – 'some of the advices given in the Corinthians are so in correspondence with the spirit of the epoch, that it seems obvious only a bigot, not also the believer, could take them literally nowadays' (Ciocârlie, 2010, 152) – says Livius Ciocârlie when making reference to the first epistle to Corinthians. The interpreters of the Holy Bible consider that Apostle Paul's letters are not 'quietly elaborated on predetermined topics, for the purpose of which data must be collected, studied, sorted, classified and then be transposed on paper, according to a predetermined plan. They are occasional writings, that need to deal with pressing matters, with issues waiting quick response and so written under the impulse of the moment' (Constantinescu, 2002, 191). It seems that Livius Ciocârlie hinted well into these epistle's substance and motive (or he has read serious theological works on the mission of Apostle Paul – a question we will have to answer at the end of these considerations upon the biblical intertextuality of his work), because these annotations represent an adequate reference to the scriptural reality, without derisory elements and without substantial meaning inversions, as was the case with the other annotations on the verses of evangelists. The Romanian author either perfectly infers or knows Paul's texts written 'under the pressure of certain circumstances or events that demanded of him

an urgent intervention in one or another Christian community that he established' <sup>(1)</sup>, texts that also present 'some obscure phrasings, unfinished sentences, suspended thoughts, parentheses, digressions and shallowly linked elements'. Because of this 'Paul's epistles must be taken into consideration for being exactly what they are: pieces of the great apostle's missionary work, the transposition in written word of that which he used to speak' <sup>(2)</sup>.

The first biblical intertext from Paul's epistles is based on Romans 5:7: 'The Apostle Paul: *For one will scarcely die for a righteous person — though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die*. The miracle, that redeems many things, is that there are people who die for other people, helping them, without asking whether they are good or bad' (Ciocârlie 2010, 145).

Kenneth Jones places Paul's letter in *Romans* under the sign of God's grace and making peace with Him. 'In Romans, chapter 5, the Lord's grace is described [...] Where man greatly manifested his enmity towards God and where his revolt for his Creator reaches its maximum point, the Lord manifested His love, and prepared, through the death of His Son a means for man to make peace with God' (Jones 2000, 28).

'Genuine treaty of theology' (Constantinescu 2002, 192), the epistle in *Romans* is the most valuable of Paul's writings. It was written by him 'in his double competence: that of servant and apostle of the Lord; as a servant, he expresses his attitude of complete dependency on God; as an apostle, he presents the authority he has, as opposed to those that he addresses to' (Socoteanu 1996, 7-8).

The second intertextual intervention from *Romans* is from chapter 8: 38-39: '*...neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, 39 nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God...* Paul does not preach; he needs no arguments. He needs blasts, words and rhythm' (Ciocârlie 2010, 147).

Ciocârlie's comment is perfectly adequate to the spontaneous character of Paul's writings because 'exactly this spontaneity and lack of polish is what gives this writing their true value' <sup>(3)</sup>.

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<sup>(1)</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>(2)</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>(3)</sup> Ibidem.

Chapter 9 of *Romans* (verse 21) – ‘chapter which marks the shift from presenting the Lord’s plan to presenting the means by which this plan may be fulfilled [...] and from the depiction of man coming true before God to the depiction of God coming true before man.’ (Socoteanu 1996, 159)- teases the dialogue to such an extent that, out of context, the quotation may be given a literary interpretation devoid of damage. Those well informed on theology place the focus on ‘*the very same piece of clay*’ from which ‘two different types of vases result, but are not different types of clay;’ (Socoteanu, 1996, 282) ‘the vases of honesty or opprobrium do not result because the clay is different, so not due to the fact that some are part of a people destined for salvation and others are not’ <sup>(1)</sup> (Socoteanu, 1996, 283).

‘To whomever is confused of the Lord’s discretionary action, Paul says: *...Has the potter no right over the clay, to make out of the same lump one vessel for honourable use and another for dishonourable use?* Let us picture a painter saying ‘*I want to create a bad painting; it would be my pleasure to do so*’. When creating a broken vase, is the potter still a potter? It is not good, nor prudent, nor something that should be done to argue God’ (Ciocârlie 2010, 147).

*1 Corinthians* then brought into discussion: ‘Some of the advice given in the *Corinthians* is so in correspondence with the spirit of the epoch, that it seems obvious only a bigot, not also the believer, can take them literally nowadays. That *the appointed time has grown very short* is what Paul used to think; in reference to the Second Coming of Jesus’ (Ciocârlie 2010, 152).

The Apostle Paul says these words in chapter 7:29: ‘This is what I mean, brothers: the appointed time has grown very short. From now on, let those who have wives live as though they

<sup>(1)</sup> ‘In Judaism, there existed the idea that they had different rights to salvation, as opposed to other peoples. If the vases of honesty were made from different clay, which would mean the Potter is not sovereign. If a certain piece of clay would get to Him, he would not be free to mold it as He pleases, but he forces to make vases of honesty. Thusly, the clay would dictate the Potter what to do. However, if it is not up to the clay but to the Potter, He underlines his reign. *A piece of clay* is a mixture of earth and water. If there is enough water, we shall have a soft clay, easy to mold. If there is little water, the clay will be more like stone. In this way, lack of moisturizing the earth of our being, through the Word of God, may lead to petrifying of our intentions towards God.

had none’ <sup>(2)</sup> and underlines the grave importance of spiritual things <sup>(3)</sup>.

He continues with the same Epistle, chapter 9:1 – ‘*Am I not free? Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen Jesus our Lord?*’, Paul writes to the *Corinthians*. In what manner has he seen Jesus? Maybe only in his faith. If he had really seen him, when he was Saul, there would have been no reason for him to be proud. That would mean that seeing Him, he did not believe. (Ciocârlie 2010, 153). The questions in this verse have double purpose: refreshing of the awareness of God’s greater calling and the mission of opening the eyes to the reality of ghostly life <sup>(4)</sup>.

*1 Corinthians*, chapter 13:1 is brought into the text without any comment: ‘*Poem to Saint Paul: If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal*’ (Ciocârlie 2010, 156). *Agape* is the theme of the entire chapter, an hymn dedicated to intransient love, inserted by Paul as elaborated piece of work <sup>(5)</sup>.

*2 Corinthians* is the intertextual material up next for analysis: ‘*the affliction we*

<sup>(2)</sup> The Holy Bible, *1 Corinthians* 7:29, English Standard Version Anglicized.

<sup>(3)</sup> ‘Regardless of how fiery earthly life may be, it is less valuable, because it is transient, than the new life offered through faith in Our Lord Jesus Christ, which is eternal and happy. The one redeemed to our Lord Jesus, among many other gifts received from his Redeemer, also receives the gift of wisdom and light, so they may distinguish among values and not place a value of less importance above one of greater importance, and not bind his heart to something that is not primordial, but offer themselves wholly to the greater value’ – Nicolae Moldoveanu, *Hristos Crucea – meditați iduhovnicești la Intâia Epistolă către Corinteni a Sfântului Apostol Pavel*, ‘Comorile Harului’ Publishing House, Deva, 2001, p. 218.

<sup>(4)</sup> ‘The Holy Apostle Paul confessed that he was free, that he was an apostle, that he had seen the Lord and turned souls back to God. All these were not praise brought upon himself, but powerful ghostly facts, through which he was carrying on God’s Will on earth. He was self-aware and sought to live at the peak of the Greater being and calling! We cannot live the real Christian life on earth, we cannot be useful to the souls that interact with us, if we are not fully aware of the calling and mission in the world that God gave us’ – Nicolae Moldoveanu, quoted work, p. 246.

<sup>(5)</sup> From the introduction to *Corinthians* in the Romanian version of the Bible that was used to help write the present paper.

*experienced in Asia*. These words of Saint Paul's offer credibility; you think that's what happened. But this credibility retrospectively reverberates on Christ (Ciocârlie 2010, 158).

Chapter 1:8 <sup>(1)</sup> reminds of an *affliction* in Asia, however, the commentators of the Scripture do not place the focus on the continent named here, but interpret the entire verse as cherishing the trials and suffering of mankind for obtaining virtue.<sup>2</sup> However, the 'credibility retrospectively reverberating on Christ' (Ciocârlie 2010, 158) is a backwards interpretation (from materiality towards Christ), devoid of the light of faith; Christ is credible through Himself, he needs no stable material points.

One page later: '*...not to put it too severely*. Such words under Saint Paul's *quill* make of him a contemporary of ours. Precisely in the day that I'm improvising a page about the need for instruments, and experimenting with it. Saint Paul makes reference to 'the letter of The New Testament'. I don't know how to interpret this in the absence of footnotes. Were the gospels collated and quickly published? Good, but his own epistle is part of The New Testament' (Ciocârlie 2010, 159-160).

Livius Ciocârlie is referring here to the same Epistle, chapter 2:5: 'Now if anyone has caused pain, he has caused it not to me, but in some measure—not to put it too severely—to all of you' (2 Corinthians 2:5, The Holy Bible, English Standard Version Anglicized).

The reference cannot be deduced from the context, because the textual snipping is too little. I have deduced the exact reference by reading on the scriptural text. This may lead to an area of interest regarding our analysis: Livius Ciocârlie seems to read the Holy Scripture linearly, page by page and the bookmarks are there where he

stops to consider the text, where the latter raises questions, new interpretations, curiosities or mere similitudes with his own cultural memory. Apostle Paul's 'contemporaneity' is also underlined by Valeriu Anania in his annotations: 'a dynamic temper, Paul is a river of energy and perpetual motion' <sup>(3)</sup>.

There is a certain thing that needs to be admitted: the consistent character of the author's biblical reading, as well as the frequency of annotations. An essential element of the biblical annotations is represented by the author's maintained interest for unraveling the scriptural mystery through an investigation method that is specific of the literary texts. A reading solution for Ciocârlie's biblical intertext would be the opening in parallel of the two texts: *Cu fața la perete* and the scriptural text, the continuous comparison between the quoted text and the text that is being quoted into and the establishment of the relationship between them. The resulting *bi-text* can only justify its existence by bringing the quoted text to its initial form. *In want of footnotes* (Ciocârlie 2010, 160) the profane author does not know how to interpret. A consequence of this confession: the reading of the biblical text happens, times and often, in the presence of *footnotes*, theological interpretations or annotation to the sacred text. A confession of pertaining to *footnotes* seems extremely important, all the more because they mediate the intertextual relationship proper.

Livius Ciocârlie reads The Bible, asks questions and searches for answers by reading other verses (because he does not understand). His searching triggers the bringing of the sacred text closer, ignoring the temporal distance, and, perhaps, installing a subtle strategy of bringing into the literary text a new type of intertext, not very used nowadays. An entreaty comes after the quote: 'I am asking of whoever reads my work, if they read my work, to learn nothing from me' (Ciocârlie 2010, 160). The *biblical quote* does not seem to offer answers, but rather stimulate the perpetual search for them.

Unanswered questions, misunderstandings, attempts to analyse from several perspectives, rediscoveries, and comebacks upon the sacred text. Not taking, sometimes, the revealed character of the sacred texts very seriously may cause these suspicions. The *solutions* for deciphering the Scripture's

<sup>(1)</sup> 'For we do not want you to be ignorant, brothers,[b] of the affliction we experienced in Asia. For we were so utterly burdened beyond our strength that we despaired of life itself.' – The Holy Bible, English Standard Version Anglicized.

<sup>(2)</sup> 'The Holy Apostle Paul was surrounded by numerous hardships and bore many burdens. Such behavior coming from the world was suffered by many who preached the Gospel. However, he experienced certain hardships that very few did. He recalls here such a trial, that he himself, who was used with death, did not forget. It wasn't only one of the greatest sufferings, but it also lasted for a long time. It is difficult to understand that exactly those who love God more and are entirely in His service receive a greater cup of sorrow' – Nicolae Moldoveanu, quoted work, p. 11.

<sup>(3)</sup> From the introduction to Romans in the Romanian version of the Bible that was used to help write the present paper.

text are not looked for in their very constituency, but in the immediate reading of an *alien* context, different from the originary one.

If we attempt a classification of the verses quoted into *Cu fața la perete*, we shall discover that their choosing is dependent on the author's preoccupations from a certain point, on the questions that arise from certain circumstances. The applied reading of these verses is, just as Ciocârlie's attitude towards other quotes: literal or literary, like a novel, forwards or backwards, betraying a downright or shallow research of the sacred text. The ultimate purpose of the biblical intertext, it seems, knows one's self by means of interrogating the sacred text. The self, the knowing of one's self is brought to fruition, Livius Ciocârlie seems to infer, only after a very toilsome bookish experience. And the intertextual diversity found in his diaries seems to confirm this.

We would be right to inquire what the function of these biblical quotes brought into discussion is. Why The Holy Scripture – such a rich intertextual matter – in *Cu fața la perete*? Can the adjoining of quotes substitute the need for stable points or examples in such an intertextual a text? Are the scriptural quotations only apparently disorganized? Or do they have an internal conduct that is less visible to the first interactions with the text? Behind the biblical intertext, can there be seen a carefully assembled construction in the textual space or are we dealing with biblical fragmentation and no overview? Is the intertext a literary trick that the author uses to hide his sincerity? Or, on the contrary, a way to exaggerate his sincerity? Or a simple *manner of existence*? ('Their only subject, other than the writing itself, could be a manner of existence') (Ciocârlie 2010, 160).

On a prime layer, the appetite for biblical quotes could be the cause of the incapability to believe (or lack of *healthy patience*) and hope that, in this way, the biblical text will substitute for the lack of interior order? The biblical quotes have, in certain instances, a cleansing function and translate the desire to go back to places that could have the power to *install order*.

One of the first considerations regarding the purpose of inserting biblical quotes in a literary text is, we believe, that of trying to unravel the revelatory mystery, making it, in the same time, accessible to the large public. The presence of such quotes in the text can also circumscribe to the attempt of transgressing the limit of divinity or of choosing a solution towards surpass a crisis (the crisis of a language

suffocated by convention, or the crisis of an entire culture). The carrying into the text of a dialogue with The Holy Scripture may also translate an attempt to augment the value of the dialogue with other writers. Livius Ciocârlie is not the tourist that only stops to consider a few scriptural chapters or verses, trying to understand them. He offers a careful look and proves to be an explorer possessing clear knowledge of the entire investigated biblical field.

Questions referring to the fidelity or infidelity of the biblical quotation regarding the original text are not justified, since the comparison of the two texts proves that the Ciocârlie's text does not contain and does not assume false or degraded biblical quotes.

The option for a biblical intertext can also be justified by the desire of finding a *fresh* and yet not worn-out intertextual in an intertextual literature defined by excellency. The adornment of the Ciocârlie's text with biblical quotes can be a symptom of the desire to innovate the intertextual sources in a literature marked by 'the feeling that art has explored all possibilities' (Groupe n 1978, 32), feeling contoured by a 'cumulative and plethora culture' (Groupe n 1978, 33).

If no other book of universal literature has been reproduced for so many times, translated or transcribed just like the books of the Holy Scripture (reproduced and transcribed in dozens and hundreds of copies after the original books of the Apostles), in the Ciocârlie's volume – *Cu fața la perete* – we are dealing with a *copy* or transcription of very many old verses-or newtestamentaries, the Holy Scripture becoming a inexhaustible intertextual material. Reporting to the biblical writings is made through the volume, the literary text becoming, in this way, the adequate space in which the sacred text is being *read*. Interpretations are lingeringly negotiated and never fixed forever in the limits of an avowedly or inside out reading. It does not matter that much, if such an interpretation is authorized or not (researchers of the Holy Scripture would, most probably, contest vehemently such an interpretational attempt). What gives here value to the intertextuality Ciocârlie's textuality is precisely the intertextual source of the testamentary books.

If the art of quotation has been seen as a sign of cultural and aesthetical instability, the art of biblical quotations can become the clue of a contemporary aesthetical stability, of an existence of some reference systems which wait

to be explored. The biblical intertext ranks the text which uses it at a superior level towards the ordinary one, offering the possibility of enlarging rough spectrum for intertextuality and the opening of current literature towards biblical theology. Fascination of the biblical quote allows a new world to penetrate the world of diary, hence contributing at the salvation of the diaristic text. Biblical writings are writings that also have something else to say besides *telling themselves* <sup>(1)</sup>.

Another motivation for the frequency of biblical intertexts could be that of increasing the value of the other quotations, by placing the latter among the ones from the Holy Scripture, or an attempt towards saving Ciocârlie's confession.

Through biblical insertions, the author seems to suggest to his own self a minimum point of reference for his persona as well as the readers who will want to go deeper in the (endless) ocean of biblical studies. The frequency of biblical intertexts in Ciocârlie's text goes beyond the simple coordinate of the theme's *introduction*, and even reaches exegetical details that orient the reader ingeniously and open the pathway to reflection for him. If the postmodern writer is nothing but an *eternal scribe* and all he does is reorganize available material, and 'originality is just a matter of mixing' (Mușat, 1998, 45), Livius Ciocârlie in *Cu fața la perete*, is **not solely a scribe of biblical fragments**, the book continuously transcribing <sup>(2)</sup> other verses.

We have proved that the biblical text, which became an intertext in Livius Ciocârlie's text, cannot be interpreted by fragment and exempt of the whole to which it belongs. The reader engages in a dialogue with the author and promises a pact: that of becoming reader of the Holy Scripture in order to become Livius Ciocârlie's dialogue partner.

<sup>(1)</sup> In *Cartea cu fleacuri*, Livius Ciocârlie mentions: 'No matter how many things a literature book has to say it has to be pervaded by the capacity of telling itself. At the border there are writings which have nothing else to say. What does Caragiale want to say in his sketches, in *O noapte furtunoasă*?, in *D'ale carnavalului*? Nothing more than Bach in *Clavecinul bine temperat*. – Livius Ciocârlie, *Cartea cu fleacuri*, ed. cit., p. 210.

<sup>(2)</sup> 'Books always speak of other books and every story tells a story that has already been told' – Eco 1996, 100.

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# Food Fantasy. The Rise of a Genre

Dana PERCEC

Associate Professor, PhD, University of Timișoara, Romania

E-mail: dana.percec@litere.uvt.ro

**Abstract.** The paper presents the development of a new research discipline, food studies, which has gained prominence in the last decades, and its influence on the configuration of new literary genres. While food is now a central subject in areas as various as history, economics, sociology, medicine, nutrition, and cultural studies, it is also popular with the general public, books, TV shows and channels centered on cooking, eating, and drinking being extremely fashionable today. This popularity has affected an increasingly diversified literature as well, which proposes recipe collections inspired by the writing style, characters, historical background of various literary masterpieces and non-canonical writings.

**Key words:** cookbooks, eating, fantasy, food studies, literary genres, pop culture, recipes

## Introduction

‘[...] Big meaty nouns, crisp fresh verbs, a nice seasoning of adjectives and adverbs. Words. The stuff that dreams are made of... very tasty dreams, fat free and calorie free, but with no nutritive value.’ George R.R. Martin, author of the popular *Game of Thrones* series, writes this in the Foreword of a cookery book inspired by fictional texts. (2012, 2) The present essay tries to account for a new fashion that has developed of late, more strikingly in the English-speaking world, of books which are neither stories nor recipe collections, but a usually astute (and charming) combination of the two. There are ‘official’ as well as ‘unofficial’ cookbooks and companions to classical authors, to contemporary popular fiction and TV series, to children’s and teenagers’ literature. There are also pieces of experimental and creative writing, which bring together the literary mode and the kitchen atmosphere. Some declare an educational purpose, while others have an entertainment or, on the contrary, a parodic function. They are all the result of the rise of a new discipline, food studies.

For more than a decade, the study of food has been a topic of interest in academic and scientific discourse, becoming, from marginal, a central subject on the intellectual agenda. This increasing popularity is reflected in the great variety of media that bring food to the forefront, from print to television and cinema, with bestselling books of recipes, cooking shows and cookery TV channels, or fictional materials –

novels, short stories and films – revolving around the notions of food and eating.

Similarly, the ever more dynamic field of cultural studies has promoted, as an independent discipline, food studies, somewhere at the crossroads between history, economy, anthropology, and medicine. In fact, as pointed out by Watson and Caldwell (2005, 10), food has attracted the attention of scholars and of the general public alike as a universal medium that illuminates a wide range of cultural practices. This explains the growing body of literature intentionally or accidentally entering the realm of ‘food studies,’ a literature employing the discourse and methods of anything from philosophy to geography and from politics to folklore. Moreover, the diversity of the field is explained by the intimate connection between food and identity, as Wenying Xu points out (2008). For the Asian-American scholar, food is a significant medium, which ‘organizes, signifies, and legitimates our sense of self in distinction from others,’ (2008, 72) while, more concretely, themes like food, hunger, consumption, appetite, *etc.* carry a strong symbolic meaning, circumscribing identity issues such as race, gender, class, sexuality, or diaspora.

What needs to be stressed from the very beginning is an observation that has been made by the editors of a recent anthology on this topic: the fact that food studies are not the study of food, but ‘the study of the relation between food and the human experience’ (Miller and Deutsch 2009, 9). This implies a broad methodological perspective, which covers the study of culture and cultural artifacts, literature

being one of them and thus explaining the success of a new, borderline literary genre the present article tries to present.

### **Food studies – a success story**

Until recently, there has been little interest in this ‘material’ subject (Belasco, 2008) – if we follow the traditional body vs. mind divide – because of the resilient prejudices of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, which kept food in the separate, inferior sphere of domesticity (and femininity). Along the same lines, from a private subject, food has become institutionalized when, in the 1960s and 1970s, more women enrolled in academic research. Apart from being regarded as a ‘feminine’ subject, food has also been (and still is, sometimes) considered a mere trifle.

Traditional scholarship may still associate the subject of food with triviality, but, in the past ten to twenty years, various areas of research have turned to food studies as an instrument necessary in understanding the social, political, and cultural dimension of societies in all periods and geographical locations. Food is central in today’s explanatory discourses about warfare, religion, political theory, industrialization, or commerce, to name but a few. (Tannahill, 1988) Food is at the same time one of the most concrete manifestations of human life and also a mentality, as it is defined in terms of preferences and aversions, of pleasures and addictions. According to Watson and Caldwell, (2005, 5) food practices are involved in a rich network of relationships and expectations that are contested and negotiated, appearing in some of the most enduring anthropological debates: ‘When all else fails, people will always talk about food.’ The success of food studies is explained probably by their accessibility, as a means of understanding cultures. Food, Counihan and Van Esterik argue, (1997, 10) is nowadays as much a scholarly as a real-life concern, while the soaring interest in this subject is supported by its interdisciplinary character. The attraction of food for disciplines such as cultural studies and literary criticism is justified by its symbolic potential, its ability to convey meaning: it has a rich alphabet with its diversity of colours, textures, and flavours, and it communicates in the numerous ways in which it can be processed and combined.

The development of research interest in food goes back to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, in fact, with anthropology as a pioneer. For example, Marcel Mauss’ theory of reciprocity (1967) presented food-sharing in the 1920s as one of

the earliest forms of exchange. In 1966, Claude Lévi-Strauss wrote about the transformative power of cooking, coining up the famous ‘culinary triangle,’ (Counihan and Van Esterik, 1997, 36-43) which described the human evolution from nature to culture and traditional gender divisions by means of three methods of preparing meat: roasting, smoking (both natural methods, associated with men, involving no receptacle), and boiling (cultural, represented by women, involving a receptacle). Since the 1970s, nutritionism has been promoted as one of the major medical branches. The result was an ever growing number of guidebooks, whose international influence is given by the ongoing debates about body image, the keywords being weight control, consumption, and healthcare. But, because looking fat or thin, eating, and fasting creates links to cultural images of masculinity and femininity, food is also a major theme in gender studies. Eating is an enactment of gender, as men and women define themselves differently by their habits related to food and drink. More specifically, food consumption and food deprivation are especially meaningful for women, being employed as statements or weapons, in social and sexual negotiations, as Rudolph M. Bell first pointed out in his seminal work on anorexia nervosa and fasting, (1985) followed by a plethora of studies in female eating disorders.

With the commodification of food, eating and food varieties, as well as access to food have become symbols of empowerment and powerlessness, which trigger the development of a critical discourse covering two major areas – the social and the geographical. Consequently, a great number of authors show an interest in food politics, a topic which can be defined with the mixed vocabulary of economy and geography (food industry, population growth, urban expansion), politics (governmental agendas), medicine (dietary principles), *etc.* Critiques of globalization and the divides between various geographical areas are offered in books entitled polemically *Food Politics* (see, for example, Nestle, 2007, or Paarlberg, 2010, but the list can continue). Some scholars refer even to a ‘philosophy of food,’ (Kaplan 2012) although this abstract phrase seems contradictory, given the fact that the senses and activities related to eating have been traditionally considered too ‘low’ and basic for a philosophical analysis.

More recently, food has become a topic of fascination to the general public, evidenced by the popularity of chefs – some of them as



famous and influential as film and music stars – by the spectacularly high sales of cookbooks and other food-related printed materials, and by the invention of new television formats to accommodate food shows, documentaries, and live competitions.

Food studies are nowadays a part of the academic discourse. Food is well placed at the centre of material culture, as the most immediate manifestation of consumption, which enables its perception as a new and promising framework for understanding social mechanisms. (Smith, 2002, 6) Much historical work in the area of food studies focuses on periods starting from the 17<sup>th</sup> century, through the 18<sup>th</sup>, into the 19<sup>th</sup> and the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, because the early modern societies were the first to see clear changes in consumption, in terms of consumer demand and supply, but, more important, in terms of a conceptual and behavioural twist as the articulation of a variety of economic and cultural factors simply made people want to consume more. Among the objects that make up this new material culture, foods and drinks, and the acts of eating and drinking have meaning in several contexts simultaneously, (Richardson 2011, 4) becoming an important key to reading various types of texts, from medicine to literature.

When it comes to tackling food-related topics in literature, I argue that the theory which is indirectly at work is Roland Barthes' essay on the functions of food. (in Counihan and Van Esterik 1997:28-29) In *Towards a Psychology of Food Consumption*, first published in 1961, Barthes considers food to be more than a mere collection of products, with statistical or nutritional information; it is a system of communication and a set of images or usages, a combination of needs and techniques. Food has a spirit, with flavour and substance, it is a composite unit, like language. And just like language, it has various functions. The somatic or psychic function revolves around the concept of health, signifying, materially, a set of immaterial realities, underlying the body-mind divide. The anthropological function refers to feelings or moods attached to foodstuffs, as it is possible to associate eating with images connoting a variety of meanings. Finally, there is the commemorative function, which is employed by the plethora of fiction writers, historians, researchers, and chefs who publish extensive materials in the field of food studies. According to Barthes, food permits a person to partake each day of the natural past. Food techniques (ingredients, recipes, utensils) often

have a historical quality, being repositories of ancient experiences, of a wisdom which is passed on from one generation to another. The historical theme of cooking food evokes an idealized world, a society which is invested with aristocratic traits and elicits feelings of nostalgia and escapist desires.

### **Eating in literature**

This idealization and power are at work when food appears in literary texts. Eating, drinking, feasting and fasting are stable motifs even in the earliest literature, from Homer's *Odyssey*, to the early modern stories of Rabelais, to Victorian children's literature, where food, as a cultural signifier, plays a central role. In such texts, food has a substantial influence on the plot and the narrative, as well as on character development and interactions.

Early epic poems are perfect illustrations of the functions explained by Barthes. Banqueting is a central notion in these narratives, feast and war being two major coordinates of archaic societies. Simplified down to the most basic level, the social life of such early communities has only two moments of explosion, in between which lies a void. But banqueting and battling, though opposite events, are the strongest, most significant moments of reference of personal and collective history. The chronic fear of early societies – the anxiety of solitude – can only be soothed with the complex rituals of the two events, annihilating the individual and promoting collective values. Banqueting, like warfare, is the privilege of noble men; no women or children and no inferior castes are allowed in. Feasting, a moment and practice of absolute grandeur, builds solidarity and calls for massive adherence, bringing about social order and imposing a vital rhythm on the life of the collectivity. The alternation of low-emotional moments with periods of intense emotion is the key to a good social life.

In Anglo-Saxon heroic narratives, like *Beowulf*, life in the hall is the nucleus around which all other positive and negative events are grouped. It is the symbol of kingly power, as well as the only space that can offer protection from monsters, from the unknown, from the cold outside, from hostile nature. In the banqueting hall, where bread and the sweet beverage of mead are shared, the most honourable values are to be promoted. As a space of initiation, the hall is also the place where, while eating and drinking in excess, the youth is initiated to

manly life, which implies stamina, honour, and solidarity. Banqueting contests are mock battles that develop the competitive spirit and the desire to win.

At the opposite end, controlling the appetite and refraining from eating in solitude is also common practice during the Middle Ages, fasting being contextualized by religion. Signaling the hatred of the flesh, extreme self-discipline, the power of the mind, fasting is meant to tell saints apart from lay people since the earliest centuries of Christianity (Brown 2008). The first saints, those hermits living in the desert, an area that denied life and the human by its very nature, give a powerful example of what is actually implied by seclusion – a battle not so much against sexuality as against the belly. The saint's victory against hunger, in a period of extreme poverty and prolonged severe famines, becomes the most impressive symbol for the collective imagination (2008, 232).

The image of humanity in a landscape completely deprived of food is like a glimpse of paradise for most ordinary people. To prove to himself that instincts can be controlled, the hermit has to resist the fearful state of *adiaphoria*, the moment when the mind collapses and the body starts wondering in the desert in search of any herb or root that could comfort the pains of the belly. No equilibrium is possible unless this state is overcome. Fasting is, therefore, the ultimate proof of the mind's triumph over the body. Through systematic fasting, the stomach shrinks and the blood circulates more slowly, therefore, the body's excessive dependence on food and sex disappears forever. Refraining from eating means, for the hermits, cooling off the bile, cleaning the body, regulating moods, a necessity for purge which will make a spectacular comeback with the bulimics' laxative cures in the late, consumerist 20<sup>th</sup> century. It has been even argued that some medieval saints – especially the female ones, like, for example, Catherine of Siena or Clare of Assisi – were anorexic. (Krugovoy Silver, 2002) Despite the anachronism of terms and labels, what saints, hermits and contemporary anorectics surely have in common is the attempt to control food intake for the sake of self-discipline and, as Susan Bordo puts it, (1990, 83) for the development of a 'self,' be it a public one, like in the classical Greek culture and probably nowadays, or an inner one, for devoted Christians.

In modern times, when literary texts abound in food imagery, Victorianism seems to have been the most concerned with feasting and fasting, now turned into an ordinary eating practice. While in Charlotte Brontë's novels, the lack of appetite is a sign of romantic love or female suffering, in Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking Glass*, appetite is a dangerous thing. Hunger is aggressive says Anne Krugovoy Silver. (2002) Alice is a very greedy child, eating and drinking everything she finds even if she knows that unmarked jars and bottles might contain poison and other dangerous or unpleasant substances. Her constant hunger endangers at times the life of animals in Wonderland. Birds and mice almost get drowned in the lake created by the huge tears Alice sheds when she grows very tall after swallowing the cake with 'Eat me' beautifully written in currants. The White Rabbit's servants get injured when they try to get big Alice out of their master's house, after she has drunk the contents of a bottle. Eating and drinking without control leads to disfigurement: Alice is now so tiny that a dog could swallow her like a fly, now so big that birds can make nests on her. Other eating characters in Carroll's stories are grotesque as well: the Duchess and her Cook in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* or the King who has to eat more sandwiches when he is about to faint in *Through the Looking Glass*, for instance.

In the end, Alice's maturation is announced by her angry rejection of food. At the banquet organized in honour of 'queen' Alice, the food develops a human personality, speaking and walking and even attempting at devouring the humans who were just about to engulf it. Unable to put up with this chaos, Alice jumps on her feet, seizes the table-cloth with both hands and shouts: 'I can't stand this any longer!' (Carroll 1995, 159) For Carroll, who kept detailed journals of his own meals, small appetite is a sign of maturation and wisdom. Rejecting food for the first time in her life, Alice is no longer a foolish child, but a responsible woman, capable of taking good care of herself. Rejecting food, she joins Elsie, Lacie and Tillie, the three treacle-eating girls who are representative for the culture of anorexia, which, argues Anna Krugovoy Silver, (2002) is already powerful in the Victorian period, with women drinking vinegar or vomiting in order to preserve their slim waist.

### Food and new literary genres

‘Because all people eat and many people cook, the meanings attached to food speak to many more people than do the meanings attached to more esoteric objects and practices,’ write editors Carole Counihan and Penny Van Esterik (1997, 8) in their introduction to the collection of essential reading materials in food studies. No wonder, then, that literary criticism and history at their most serious have turned to foodstuffs. A veritable boom in this academic and popular subgenre in its own right can be seen in the past ten to fifteen years in the English-speaking world especially, though not exclusively. Currently, food in fictional texts or literary studies is an independent theme, most commonly evoked in the discursive and graphic format of cookbooks. Kara Keeling and Scott Pollard (2009, 21) explain the success of this emerging genre in terms of its ability to add sensory details to the original literary text, ‘offer[ing] a gustatory supplement to the narrative’ (2009, 21). The mass market effect of the genre is that it capitalizes on the readers’ interest in certain stories, characters, and historical periods, or on the impact of certain canonical writers on the public consciousness.

The variety of texts related to food is so great nowadays that it would be quite a challenge to attempt a classification. Still, for the purposes of the present study, such an attempt is necessary. Thus, an important category is that of the cultural histories, which are scholarly endeavours to describe domesticity, fashions and mentalities during periods associated with iconic literary figures: Shakespeare’s early modern England or Jane Austen’s Regency. Secondly, there is the pastiche, which combines the recipe format with a certain writer’s literary voice. Thirdly, there is the popular category of literary cookbooks, which offer, in a glossy format, recipes inspired from the plot, characters and setting of fashionable novels and TV series. By far the most extensive category, this one has already spawned a number of subgenres, the fantasy cookbook being among the most conspicuous.

Scholarly examples include cultural histories of eating, fashions and culinary choices based on the literary proof offered by authors like Jane Austen, Marcel Proust, etc. The former, whose novels display domestic plots, where the rituals of giving or sharing meals are crucial, despite the scarcity of detailed descriptions of foodstuffs and dishes, of material things in general, acknowledges the function of

food as an important signifier of moral worth, social status, and accomplishment in housekeeping. Maggie Lane’s *Jane Austen and Food* (1995) gives such a cultural and historical insight, while more recent volumes take advantage of Austen’s transformation into a pop icon, advancing Austenian recipes (such as the Wine-Roasted Gammon and Pigeon Pie or Martha’s Almond Cheesecake, Black 2002) or even suggesting having tea with your favourite Regency romance author. (Wilson, 2004) The latter, who regales his readers with smells, tastes, and flavours throughout his *Remembrance of Things Past*, is an ideal pretext for a literary history of *fin de siècle* food. (King, 2006) Significantly, Proust offers a recipe from his childhood, *Boeuf à la Mode*, which he then uses as a metaphor for the whole process of writing a novel: individualities are constructed, in fiction, out of numerous impressions, as the famous *Boeuf* was made of carefully selected bits of meats, enriched with jelly.

Food histories of Shakespearean inspiration, like Shakespearean criticism and Shakespeare-based historical/cultural research in general, have an already long tradition, one of the first resources for 17<sup>th</sup> century recipes dating back to 1976, in Madge Lorwin’s *Dining with Shakespeare*. The collection contains cooking instructions in the original, Shakespearean English, with translations into modern English and measurement explanations, as well as the first account of the culinary culture of Elizabethan England. 13 full menus include dishes associated with some of the Bard’s most famous characters. In the 2000s, the variety of Shakespeare-inspired cookbooks is as vast as any other branch of Shakespearean or Renaissance studies. While Francine Segan proposes ‘Renaissance recipes for the contemporary cook,’ (2003) Mark Morton and Andrew Cippolino (2008) write about table habits, dining and festivities in the Elizabethan times and plays, the chapters of the book being divided by food type: mutton, lamb, fish and seafood, vegetables, *etc.*, and surveying early modern cooking methods. An interesting theory is advanced by Joan Fitzpatrick, (2007) who considers the eating habits illustrated by the Shakespearean text more relevant to the contemporary mind than those of historical periods closer to our own, but which are mentally and symbolically more remote, because of the Cartesian body/mind divide. Before the 18<sup>th</sup> century, dietaries looked strikingly similar to 21<sup>st</sup> century nutrition guides, offering tips on

what men and women should eat and avoid, mixing foodways with personality types. This direction was, of course, carried along Galen's humoral theory, inherited from the Middle Ages, but, significantly, it displayed what we take now for contemporary beliefs in consumption patterns influenced by lifestyle, or the conviction that diet and exercise are important rules which should be strictly observed.

The literary pastiche in the form of a cookbook is another option for postmodernist authors practicing a sort of literary ventriloquism. Mark Crick's experiment, entitled *Kafka's Soup* (2005), goes beyond the ingredients and methods, focusing on food as text, as a language, as a system of signs, with syntax and a style of its own. As a photographer dissatisfied with traditional cookbooks, which, he says, have nice pictures and dull texts, Crick turns recipes into stories and also includes his own visual projections of an ideal dish presentation, illustrating the book with his own photographs. Crick proposes 17 recipes written in the style of 17 authors, from Homer and Chaucer, to Italo Calvino and Thomas Mann. All recipes can be tried out in the readers' own kitchens, even if the instructions for *Clafoutis Grandmère à la Virginia Woolf* begin like this: 'She placed the cherries in a buttered dish and looked out of the window. The children were racing across the lawn, Nicholas already between the clumps of red-hot pokers, turning to wait for the others.' (2005, 60) and for *Vietnamese Chicken à la Graham Greene*, like this: 'A recipe has no beginning or end: arbitrarily one chooses at what point the cooking instructions become necessary, after the butcher has done his work and before care of the dish passes to the seasoning whims of the guests. I choose the moment when, looking into the refrigerator, I noticed the naked white flesh of the chicken. As I stared at the breasts I felt a pain across my head' (2005, 70).

Literary pastiche with a tinge of parody, written in an operatic tempo, Francesco Attardi Anselmo and Elisa De Luigi's *A Feast for Lady Macbeth* (1997, 2007) puts gastronomy on the musical scales, reconciling Lasagna Verdi with Stratford-upon-Avon Pork Pie, as the authors themselves warn their readers in the Foreword (2007, 4). The book is, firstly, an intertextual exercise, bringing together two texts—Shakespeare's Scottish play and the 19<sup>th</sup> century Italian libretto for Verdi's opera *Macbeth*. Secondly, it is a creative transfer from the

medium of the written, printed text to the oral medium of the theatre, and then to the medium of musical performance. Thirdly, it is an example of postmodern imagination, as Attardi Anselmo and De Luigi mimic the fashion in today's popular literature of producing countless prequels and sequels to the famous plots of classical literature. This mock-prequel focuses on young Lady Macbeth before marrying the Scottish thane, as a girl accomplished in all domesticity, raised by her mother to be a housewife and an excellent cook, a connoisseur of the most jealously guarded culinary secrets of both the 17<sup>th</sup> and the 19<sup>th</sup> century (in a voluntary, carefully planned act of anachronism).

The cookbook is organized on the structural model of a play/libretto, with a list of characters, prologue/overture, four acts, intervals, and an epilogue. Each act includes recipes instead of scenes, which begin on the discursive model of culinary language (with a list of ingredients), continue in the narrative mode, retelling the plot, then mixing styles and rhetoric (the thriller, literary criticism, musical theory, a lesson, *etc.*), finishing, symmetrically, with the imperative mood characteristic of recipes and guidebooks. All this is seasoned with short biographical notes about Shakespeare and Verdi, literary commentaries about the Bard's influence on the Italian composer, and quotes. The epilogue, entitled *The Castle Cellar*, provides advice on the selection of wines to use when serving the great variety of dishes which have been introduced and devoured, at least at the level of the printed page. Instead of Conclusions, the book offers a discographic history of Verdi's opera.

An example: in Act One, Attardi Anselmo and De Luigi come up with a subchapter/scene entitled *The Witch's Beard* (2007, 13-16). It includes the story of the warriors' encounter with the weird sisters, a historical and cultural description of bearded women, a commentary on the elegance and lyricism of the music Verdi chooses in his opera to suggest the importance of this moment in the economy of the entire story, and a recipe for four persons, containing anchovies and a salty chicory sauce. Or: *The Verdi Interval* (2007, 43-44), under the pretext of a recipe for Vol-Au-Vent alla Busseto, describes the complicated process of selection and creative intervention which is appropriation, in this case, with a transfer from literature to music. The chapter explains Verdi's fascination with Shakespeare, using the support of biographical evidence. Finally, the recipe for

five persons, adapted from the cuisine of Verdi's native region (Busseto), evokes a courageous combination between chicken organs, dried mushrooms, onions, and local red wine. *The Elizabethan Interval* offers glimpses into the cultural history of Shakespeare's contemporaries with contrasts between London and country life, and with juicy details of theatre rivalry in the late 16<sup>th</sup> century, as evidenced in the writings of Robert Green or Shakespeare himself, in pamphlets, letters, and diaries. The recipe for 10 persons is a genuine feast: spongecake, orange brandy, raspberry jelly, cardamom powder, and whipped cream.

Somewhere in between a serious research project of cultural history and a popular cookery collection, the attempts in the style offered by *Tea with Jane Austen*, (2004) for example, serve both an informative and an entertainment purpose. Written by a curator of Jane Austen's memorial house (Kim Wilson is also the author of a book about *Jane Austen in the Garden*, where she catalogues various types of English gardens, from parks and groves, to cottage gardens and Regency or Victorian follies), *Tea with Jane Austen* looks at the social practice of serving and taking tea during the Regency and Victorian period, emphasizing the important role tea played in the English everyday life. Each chapter looks at tea in a different context: it presents moments of the day associated with tea (not only the so-called 5 o'clock tea, but breakfast and snacks and other meals); it explains the function of tea in people's lives, illustrating it with the help of excerpts from Jane Austen's novels, her letters, and other writings of the Regency author's contemporaries. Tea evokes a place and a mood, Wilson rightfully notices, (2004, 12) and the success of the book resides in this very achievement. Although the description of tea parties plays a peripheral role in Austen's books, the frequent evocation of food, eating, drinking, and feasting transforms the phenomenon into a substantial theme. It implies hospitality, sharing, quality and refinement, fashion, manners, and social convention. In addition, the charm of the book resides in the presentation not only of tea as a moment and a practice, but of ingredients and equipment associated with tea (the 'dining parlour', a key room in any Regency or Victorian household; the tea stand and table—expensive pieces of furniture which add to the value and impact of the tea-serving gesture, etc.) Last but not least, the book offers several recipes dating from Jane Austen's age, taken and

adapted from 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century cookbooks and private documents, recipes of food served with tea, from delicious scones to toast with good, rich, home-made butter.

Shakespeare-based cookbooks are, again, a category that promises to dominate the market being, at the same time, perfect illustrations of the way in which food studies have been embraced by history and literary criticism, at the crossroads between experimentation, appropriation, and marketing. This is the case of the collaborative project of Elizabethan performance historian Alycia Smith-Howard and celebrated master chef Alan Deegan, *The Food of Love: A Shakespeare Cookbook*. (2012) Smith-Howard's share is the result of extensive research into Elizabethan cookery books and a re-reading of Shakespeare's plays, sonnets and poems in search for food imagery, without the support – which can often be deceptive and second-hand – of regular concordances. This creative investigation of the Shakespearean text revealed thousands of references and led to the finding that the play with the most abundant culinary vocabulary is not *Twelfth Night*, which lent its first line to the book's title, but *The Winter's Tale*, which contains probably the most complete grocery shopping list of early modernity available in a piece of literature: 'CLOWN: I cannot do't without counters. Let me see; what am I to buy for our sheepshearing feast? Three pound of sugar, five pound of currants, rice [...] I must have saffron to colour the warden pies; mace, dates – none, that's out of my note; nutmegs, seven; a race or two of ginger, but that I may beg; four pound of prunes, and as many raisins o' the sun' (WT, IV, 3, 36-48).

### **Food fantasy and fancy recipes**

The frequent juxtaposition of the cookery book genre and the fantasy story is only apparently *forcé*. In fact, both food studies and fantastic literature are borderline territories, in constant progress and change, enriched by other genres and discourses, developing and widening their scope every day. As far as literature is concerned, in fact, there was a time when all literature was fantasy, writes Peter S. Beagle in the introduction to an anthology of fantastic literature. (2010, 9) The fine line between fantasy and 'actual' literature has begun to become thicker and thicker only in the last few decades, with the development of a number of subgenres and even sub-subgenres. It is hard to pin down fantasy as a genre just as it is hard to

place the genre (or related genres and subgenres) in an aesthetic hierarchy, according to mainstream highbrow standards. In their attempt to isolate the genre, many theorists have resorted to the term employed by Brian Attebery in his pioneering work on fantasy, a term borrowed from the vocabulary of mathematics, ‘fuzzy set,’ (Clute, Grant 1997, viii; Mendlesohn 2008, 183, 273; James and Mendlesohn, 2012, 2) meaning that fantasy can be defined not by fixing boundaries – which are fluid – but by analyzing the most relevant examples.

Hence we observe the genre instability which is recognized by all theorists. But while some salute this crossing of boundaries, considering it ‘an exhilarating development, bringing with it a sense of breached ramparts and undiscovered terrain’ (Wolfe, 2011, 19) and recommending fantasy as a fresh, postmodern instance of interstitial art, which subverts genre expectations and defies literary conventions, others see this as the flaw of a fictional ‘area’ which slips into the commercial and thus forfeits the right to be regarded as a true genre (Beagle 2010, 10).

Returning to the cookbook fantasy, the cross-gender literature which is so abundant in bookshops and libraries today, it must be observed that, quantitatively, one of the most alluring categories is that of popular impersonations of fantastic narratives as cookery collections. A successful type is the cooking guide addressed to children or to a teenager audience, which dwell on the educational, formative character of cookbooks. One of the first attempts in this category is an A to Z guide by the author of the Mary Poppins series, P.L. Travers (1975, 2006). *Mary Poppins in the Kitchen. A Cookery Book with a Story* first starts from the assumption that the mere, plain discourse of recipes is too technical and not narrative enough to recommend especially to the younger segment of the public (hence, the ‘kitchen with a story’). Then, explaining in simple terms how to prepare such foodstuffs as the Topsy-Turvy Cake, the Very Plain Cake, or the Queen of Puddings, the book offers its readers a tour through the lives of the Banks family and children (plus the famous nanny) via a week’s menu and a week’s stay in the kitchen, rather than in the nursery or the park. The book’s declared purpose is that of making cooking fun to children who can, thus, grow more cooperative and more responsible in the family and around the household.

In the 2010s, Marry Poppins is no longer the *dernier cri*. But Harry Potter is. So an ‘unofficial guide’ to the fantasy world of the Muggles and Hogwarts foods and dishes is the best way to continue the Harry Potter craze in other ways than cinema, comics and clothes industry. The *Harry Potter Cookbook* proposes one hundred and fifty imaginative recipes that take the readers through everyday family meals, celebratory school meals, and party snacks, with a pinch of magic. Author Dinah Bucholz (2010) combines cookery, herbology, and divination in order to attract the younger public, while admitting that her project is mainly supposed to carry an educational message. Today’s children, accustomed more (if not only) with pizzas, burgers and fizzy drinks, may feel attracted to a world of food which looks fantastic, but is, in fact, quite traditional and... healthy. The book teaches Harry Potter fans how to cook (and eat) plain British dishes, unknown to children in most of the countries where the book has been translated, such as Black Pudding, Kidney Pie or Trifles. Food is an essential ingredient in J.K. Rowlings’ novels, her frequent references to eating and drinking, to breakfasts and snacks, being an attempt to make the readers literally ‘taste’ the fantasy and ‘smell’ the wizards’ world. Starting from the rather common metaphor of the ‘alchemy’ of the oven and the ‘magic’ which transforms raw ingredients into savoury treats, Dinah Bucholz invites readers to explore the possibility to transform the mundane into a masterpiece (literary and/or culinary).

Sharing the fantastic scenario with the Harry Potter cookbook but lacking the educational dimension (since it is not designed for children and teenager audiences), ‘the (cook)book of ice and fire’ based on George R.R. Martin’s *Game of Thrones* pushes culinary fantasy even further. Chelsea Monroe-Cassel and Sariann Lehrer offer an ‘official’ cooking companion to a medieval world of rituals and traditions. After substantial historical investigation, in which the authors consulted books of cookery dating from Roman times, the Middle Ages, and the Elizabethan period, they offer a combination between familiar and exotic, in an attempt to turn fiction into an edible reality. They manage to bring back to life, under the pretext of offering a background to George R.R. Martin’s fantasy, tastes, images, and sounds the contemporary reader is no longer accustomed with. Ingredients, spices and tools become part of a metadiscourse engendered by the kitchen atmosphere. Meat recipes evoke the

extinct bovine species of the aurochs, the readers' palate is challenged by the long-gone flavour of 'pudre douce' (a common medieval spice mix for beverages, somewhat similar to cinnamon), while modern cooking recipients are put to shame by the ageless earthenware, which enrich the taste and allure of the dishes with the combined flavour of folklore and magic.

But the ultimate example is the immersion of the cookery writing style in the TV format. Re-writing a book in the form of a recipe is, in the end, still a possible version of textual intervention. When a TV series that has gained millions of followers produces a variant for the kitchen, this is (still) a less ordinary experience. Such is the case of a Dr. Who cookbook, entitled *Dining with the Doctor* (Oseland 2012), which renounces any claim of sophistication, declaring itself, from the very 'Introduction,' a typical mass market product, like the series it is inspired from, when the motto-sentence is the matter-of-fact (though slightly alliterative) statement that 'Cookbooks are cool.' The book offers one recipe for each whovian episode, with formal and informal meals, recipes for parties and solitary snacks alike. With 18 beverages, 20 recipes for vegetarians and even a few for low carb dieters, the cookbook seems to cater for all tastes, literally. The names of the dishes remain in the commercial register: Cinnamon Pull Apart Crack in the Wall, Pond's Wedding Punch, or Marble Cucumber Circuits with Vesuvian Fire Dipping Sauce.

### Conclusions

Peculiar instances of cultural appropriation, the literary cookbooks also bring evidence to a new mode of consumption. The text of fiction is dissected, with tools that once belonged to deconstructivism, and then enriched with styles, objects and formats outside the predictable confines of literature. Since food studies are, in themselves, a mélange of disciplines, discourses, academic tendencies and fashions, this new model of cookbooks is always, and necessarily, the result of a morganatic union, like so many other products of contemporary culture: elitist and popular, vintage and futuristic, nostalgic and parodic, commemorative and iconoclastic, good and bad to eat and to think, to paraphrase a food anthropologist (Harris 1998).

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# Andrei Codrescu and the/His New Scheherazade

Rodica GRIGORE

Associate Professor, PhD, 'Lucian Blaga' University of Sibiu, Romania

E-mail: rodica.grigore@gmail.com

**Abstract.** Andrei Codrescu, Romanian-born American writer, is well-known for his books of fiction or non-fiction based either on his personal experience as an exile or on a profound understanding of literature. His novels express a permanent fascination for reading and re-reading the great works of literature before him, in his particular case, the act of reading always meaning an original interpretation of 'the great books'. Nevertheless, Codrescu did not limit himself at this stage, implying a complicated strategy of masking (or unmasking), and the author includes, therefore, in his texts, some personal memories or personal symbols in order to be (or to become) himself a part of the narration and one of its key-notes. Dreams, consciousness, imagined realities, make up the existence of the narrative voice of Codrescu's latest book, *Whatever Gets You through the Night*, since the author himself is conceived as an imagined personality that has taken on an actual reality.

**Key words:** reality, imagination, fiction, mask, interpretation

For the narrative voice in Andrei Codrescu's *Whatever Gets You through the Night: A Story of Sheherezade and the Arabian Entertainments*, (Princeton University Press: 2011), imagination proves more than an escape from the tedium of quotidian reality; rather dreams are creations of an alternate reality, an ideal to be controlled and manipulated, but left to occupy the abstract realm of imagination because it is from this ideality that the writer derives more satisfaction. Unlike the Romantics, implicitly criticized for their rejection of actual life for a fantastic (or not) super-reality, he does not deny his actuality nor does he dismiss it as dissatisfying. In other words, he 'inter-exists', stressing that his imagined reality (the ideal) is truer than his actual one. He does not challenge the reality of his actuality, but merely challenges the dismissive assumption that dreams are not 'real'.

More in an attitude of reverie than one of rejection or escape, he confesses to himself that he is unable to discount the reality and vitality of what he imagines. His dreams are no less substantial than his reality, though different. Objects and people have a life of their own in the imagination. In fact, as Richard Zenith put it discussing Pessoa's work, 'the only way to survive in this world is by keeping alive our dream, without ever fulfilling it, since the fulfillment never measure up to what we

imagine' <sup>(1)</sup>. The most important stage within this process is, of course, to dream insistently and to perform all the daily duties but living, simultaneously, in the imagination, that is, traveling far and wide in the geography of minds. And even if the philosophical content of his book is not perfectly defined, Codrescu may as well call it an 'aestheticism of abdication,' for only freedom offers the possibility of isolation which is necessary for complete solitude. The author's expression of disengagement and solitude then is not a form of eccentricity, but consists of dreaming. Of course, dreaming of literature here might be called 'imagination' when reflective, 'visualization' when deliberate or just 'fantasy' when contrived for our aesthetic sensibility. So the author gathers landscapes and people in a perpetual state of 'dreaming', thus substituting the dreariness of real counterparts. As far as Codrescu is concerned, as well as the narrative voice of his book, dreams are the perfect landscape of solitude, for dreaming is the only paradigm of understanding.

*The Thousand and One Nights* (also known as *The Arabian Nights*) is, as Borges often said, the book as universe: an endless realm of magical wonders and urban low life,

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<sup>(1)</sup> Richard Zenith, *Introduction*, in *The Book of Disquiet* by Fernando Pessoa, New York, Penguin Books, 2001, p. XXIII.

palaces and harems, genies, princesses, and monsters. The work is full of heroic, self-reliant women, outlandish adventures, and science-fictional marvels (a flying horse, a city of brass). The reader who only recalls Ali Baba or Aladdin will be surprised by the puzzle-like nestling of the stories, which are interlinked in ingenious ways. One tale leads to another; characters often tell their stories in order to ward off death (as Scheherazade does); coincidences multiply fiendishly. Ordinary life seems governed by marvelous laws, and sometimes supernaturally dreadful ones. This is the world's best-known collection of stories, and the most popular. It might be 'the most-read book in English after the Bible and Shakespeare, but it has a different kind of familiarity than those canonical works' <sup>(1)</sup>. What we remember from the *Nights* is not high eloquence, intellect or faith, but a handful of characters and scenes: the shrewd Ali Baba spying on the gang of thieves, resourceful Aladdin with his lamp, and Scheherazade herself spinning tale after tale in order to survive. Borges, who read the work many times from childhood on, and found in it a model for the storyteller's art, memorably observed that 'One knows that entering the book one can forget one's poor human fate' <sup>(2)</sup>.

But these tales also display a profound fear of the sexual powers of women. This fear provides the starting point for Andrei Codrescu's brisk retelling of the *Nights*' frame story. Of course, it is a completely ironic one, the title itself suggesting this. His book is entitled *Whatever Gets You through the Night: A Story of Sheherezade and the Arabian Entertainments*. Codrescu has been preceded in this direction not just by Borges, but also by Italo Calvino, John Barth, and Salman Rushdie among others; nevertheless he is not discouraged being, at his best moments, a splendid entertainer and a thought-provoking analyst, ready to tease out each witty twist and turn of Scheherazade's nightly work.

Besides the Arabic frame, the most important themes of Codrescu's book are introspection, solitude, estrangement, all characterized at times by a droll sense of tedium and lethargy, exquisitely expressed. The author creates, a sort of geography of self-awareness, in

order to construct a form of aesthetic contemplation of life; and this new aesthetic survives the collapse of all philosophies and metaphysics, a new form of modernist Epicureanism and at the same time a sort of postmodern cynicism.

In this book, ordinary life is recounted only by dreaming, by the exercise of imagination, by inhabiting the confirmable world of subjectivity. The narrative voice implies having lived a life that proves to be an original expression of human loss, sometimes even reflecting upon his condition. Of course, the reader might recognize some echoes of Codrescu's favorite writers: Epicureans, Stoics and Cynics. Andrei Codrescu is not at all a Romantic thinker, for he decidedly disparages the Romantic impulse (the excessive emotions, the naïve clinging to the impossible, the confusion between need and desire). He often expresses the conviction that consciousness tolerates no illusion and therefore metaphysics might be considered exhausted, in the sense that some of the most important postmodern authors also state. Besides, it is not a life of sensuousness that he is proposing, but rather a life of observation and of awareness of the powers (or, better said, potentialities!) of literature.

Codrescu spends much time on a rendition of the *Nights*' frame story, which concerns preparations for the initial meeting of Scheherazade and her king Sharyar. He greatly extends the opening quest, when Sharyar and his brother Shahzaman, both of them kings spectacularly cuckolded by their wives, travel the world in an effort to find a still more powerful man who has been defeated by a woman. They meet a huge demon who tries and fails to keep his wife captive in a glass box. *The Arabian Nights* is haunted by female sexuality and sneakiness. Women's ability to run rings around male efforts to corral them comes up again and again: royal wives rarely pass up the chance for some brisk erotic exercise with their handsome Moorish slaves. Asceticism doesn't help. Codrescu is acute on Sharyar's rejection of philosophy, proffered by a hermit as the cure for his ills. 'I am not seeking an answer!' he said proudly, 'but a being more powerful than I betrayed as I was' <sup>(3)</sup>. Then he adds, to the

<sup>(1)</sup> David Mikics, *Seduction Unending*, 'The New Republic', July 25, 2011.

<sup>(2)</sup> Jorge Luis Borges, *Selected Non-Fictions*, edited by Eliot Wernberger, translated by Ester Allen, Suzanne Jill Levine and Eliot Weinberger, Penguin Books, 1999, p 234.

<sup>(3)</sup> Andrei Codrescu, *Whatever Gets You through the Night: A Story of Sheherezade and the Arabian Entertainments*, Princeton University Press, 2011, p. 21.

miserable anchorite: 'Wisdom is depressing, a form of inaction. You're an old man, brother' <sup>(1)</sup>.

When Scheherazade steps in, she acts to save the virgins of the kingdom, who are rapidly being depleted by the king's murderous ways. (It is hard to avoid thinking of the biblical *Book of Esther*, which of course has been known to the authors of the *Nights*, though Codrescu's Scheherazade outshines even Esther in her savvy manipulation of the king!) Her father the Vizier tries to dissuade her, but she heroically insists on going in to Sharyar, confident that she has a way to survive. And she does: her immense talent for tale-telling, which far overpowers the despot's deadly whim. 'When she appears, like the Genie in the bottle of literature that she is, we must obey the order of her stories,' Codrescu writes. Instead of controlling this woman, Sharyar wants to be held captive, kept in suspense night after night. (Scheherazade's stories usually break off in the middle with the coming of dawn, to be resumed the next night.)

The book expresses the possibility of literature offering a mode of simultaneous existence within one's imagination and in reality. Therefore, *Whatever Gets You through the Night* may be regarded as well as some kind of 'fact-less autobiography' <sup>(2)</sup> (as the Portuguese writer Fernando Pessoa described his own *Book of Disquiet*), a kind of diary or journal that records not so much events or people, but certain ideas and musings, being centered upon Codrescu's own literary obsessions. More than this, the author complicates here the idea of fictionality, by stressing that his narrator's personality in this book is not his own and yet is not completely different. Codrescu writes sometimes of plurality and otherness, stressing that he himself is both and neither, seemingly repeating Pessoa's assertion: 'Each of us is various, is many, a prolixity of ourselves!' <sup>(3)</sup>. The juxtaposition of Codrescu's actuality with his narrative voice's imagined reality or the conjunction of details of the author's actual biographical life with similar details of the fictional narrator's imagined life reveals a most exquisite example of irony in Codrescu's work. But all the similarities between the two lives are

precisely what maintained the distance between them, specifically by means of irony, one of the most important stylistic devices used here by Andrei Codrescu.

Codrescu is a great fan of Richard Burton and writes similarly expansive footnotes, even if without Burton's salacious peculiarities; and his delight in his source text is contaminating. One wishes that he had tackled some of the other parts of the *Nights*, such as the mysteriously perfect tale of Jullanar of the Sea (which inspired Hans Christian Andersen), or the dizzying, hilarious Hunchback cycle. By the end of Codrescu's book, the author fully convinced his readers of his perfect capacity of creating numberless *jeux d'esprit* clever and exquisitely constructed, but always diverting.

'With a few exceptions such as Naguib Mahfouz, who paid homage to the tales of Scheherazade in his novel *Arabian Nights and Days*, the *Arabian Nights* has had a mixed reception from many Arab readers'<sup>4</sup>, as David Mikics perfectly underlined reviewing Codrescu's book. Its style is often deemed low and crude, its content immoral. Its true home has been the West, ever since 1701-1717, when Antoine Galland translated it into French. Galland inaugurated the discipline of Orientalism in 1697 with his massive *Bibliothèque Orientale*. In this encyclopedia of Islamic culture, he emphasized the richness of Arabic writing and the high achievements of Arab society. He was the first in a long line of admirers of the Middle East: another of them, Edward Lane, produced an English version of the *Arabian Nights* in 1838-1841, and supplemented it with a rich treasury of footnotes on Arab life and culture. When Galland translated the *Nights*, the Ottomans had recently put Vienna under siege. The Muslim world was not an underdeveloped region, but a still mighty empire.

The next translator of the *Nights*, after Galland and Edward Lane, was the most famous of all. When Richard Burton embarked on the stupendous task of turning the book into English, he was known as an unparalleled master of Eastern languages and a courageous African explorer – and most of all as the reckless adventurer who had penetrated Mecca disguised as a Muslim pilgrim. Impulsive and self-thwarting, he had the physical endurance of a Greek hero, and was an equally heroic scholar.

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<sup>(1)</sup> Ibid, p. 22.

<sup>(2)</sup> Fernando Pessoa, *The Book of Disquiet*, edited and translated by Richard Zenith, New York, Penguin Books, 2001, p. 3.

<sup>(3)</sup> Ibid., p. 176.

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<sup>(4)</sup> David Mikics, *Seduction Unending*, 'The New Republic', July 25, 2011.

None of his fellow Victorians could match his learning for its scope and originality. Burton published his *Arabian Nights* translation in sixteen volumes between 1885 and 1888, and it was a wild success.

If literary critics often discussed irony and its negative implications in Codrescu's previous works, the negation that the writer deploys within this book is often a sign of affirmation. Andrei Codrescu, after all, initiates the discussion of irony with a positive definition when he says irony is the first indication that the consciousness has become conscious. Whereas Socrates, to quote Kierkegaard, brought the subjective self into existence in response to external conditions such as state pressure for communal thought, Codrescu, following the great example of Fernando Pessoa, soars above his immediate surroundings, even his corporeal grounding, into the realm of the tangible, the imagination. Dreams, consciousness, imagined realities, make up the existence of the narrative voice of this book. Indeed, at times the author himself appears as being only a dream, an imagined personality become reality and an instantiation of a poet's conscious consciousness. But Codrescu, however, seems to invert the process of ironic Socratic dialectic; he does not need Socrates to strip his life bare of immediacy and even corporeality in order to get him to breathe ethereal air. Instead, the author of *Whatever Gets You through the Night* is quite literally half in the immediate, the real, and half in the 'mediate', the imagined, since he is only half himself. He leaps from imagined sunset to imagined love, asserting a reality he knows he does not have. In this way, he (again, like Pessoa) consciously un-knows himself, revealing in the 'poetry of the twilight of disillusion.'

In this context, the role of the reader becomes crucial above all for the playing out of the irony that suspends Codrescu's use of literary masks. Irony creates the distance necessary for these authors to create themselves and express everything poetically; but irony also requires a reader in order to initiate the chase for meaning and understanding. According to Kierkegaard, the pseudonyms were more embodiments of ideas or ideals, rather than 'real' or 'actual' people <sup>(1)</sup>, the extent to which

Codrescu will take his masks, functioning as some kind of pseudonyms. Kierkegaard designates the pseudonyms as 'poetically actual subjective thinkers'; their purpose is, therefore, to 'poetically' represent different points of view or life-views or ideal possibilities which readers may analyze and then adapt depending on whether or not may help in the process of becoming or shaping selfhood. Kierkegaard's pseudonyms and the ideals they represent are not merely a game of choices for the reader, but an ethically guided pathway towards truth. For this reason, Kierkegaard needed the distance of irony to keep his own views and personality as far from his pseudonyms as possible in order to allow the reader to see their stage of understanding the existence and not his own. And whereas Kierkegaard defined and mastered the use of irony, Codrescu lives it. The writer's challenge is to the entire literary, psychological and sociological world. Just as Kierkegaard shows that certain concepts are inassimilable into any system, Andrei Codrescu posits that the self is similarly indefinable. In fact, Codrescu himself does not let his secrets be revealed, as he is both none and all of his masks or narrative instances. In his particular way, the writer offered the reader a fictional rendering of the aesthetic life that shows its logical end; after all, for Codrescu, Kierkegaard's existence spheres provide a vehicle to express multiple and even contradictory truths about the self and about the difficult and tiresome struggle that leads to complete and authentic existence. Whereas Kierkegaard left his philosophical posterity with numerous clues and delineations of what has come to be known as his philosophy of self, Codrescu, showing a pleasure of masking (himself), not only embedded his 'philosophy' in his literature, but he lived it as well, the material of his mask being fabricated of the nothingness of his own irony.

In the *Arabian Nights*, the quest finds you unexpectedly: you are, and always will be, unready for it. Borges was fond of 'The Two Dreamers,' the tale of a poor man in Baghdad who dreams of a fortune in Cairo. He journeys there, and he is imprisoned and beaten. When he recounts his dream, his jailor laughs and says: 'I had a similar dream: there's a house in Baghdad, with a garden, and a fountain, and a buried treasure is there.' From the jailor's description, the poor man recognizes the house as his own,

<sup>(1)</sup> Richard M. Summers, 'Controlled Irony' and the Emergence of the Self in Kierkegaard's *Dissertation*, in vol. *International Kierkegaard Commentary: The Concept of Irony*, ed. Robert

L. Perkins, Macon, Mercer University Press, 2001, pp. 289-316.

and hastens back to it: he finds the treasure in his own backyard, just as the jailor envisioned. 'And this was a wonderful coincidence,' the story concludes (in Lane's version). Pity the jailor: the eternal straight man, imprisoned by his disdain for illusion. In this tale, reality and dream become two halves of a strange whole, and one life answers the riddle of another. Whether you have spent your time dreaming or soaking up reality, you remain subject to this uncanniest of laws. David Mikics discusses another aspect regarding Codrescu's book and the long history of the *Arabian Nights*: namely that 'the Breslau manuscript of the *Arabian Nights* concludes with Night 602, when Scheherazade begins telling her own story' <sup>(1)</sup>. Borges, meditating on this remarkable conceit, makes it still more remarkable: he says that Scheherazade, when she reaches the 602nd night must tell the whole chain of stories over again, touching her own existence at the center of the vast skein. Like her listeners, she is sentenced to fiction, and the wonders never cease. This is exactly the situation Codrescu embody within his own book. In writing in his particular manner, he did, therefore, more than having recorded his own 'experiences of dissociation.' He diagnosed a condition that has become widespread in the field of contemporary literature: a new kind of self-consciousness combined with a lack of any fixed view of the external world.

Expressing an exquisite sensibility, Andrei Codrescu retreated into himself and behind the masks or narrative instances he himself created only to find doubt about himself and the world and also to express his belief in the potentialities of literature.

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<sup>(1)</sup> David Mikics, *Seduction Unending*, 'The New Republic', July 25, 2011.

## **B. REVIEWS AND SCIENTIFIC ACTIVITY**

# Corporate Governance (\*)

Oana ALBESCU

PhD Candidate, International Relations and European Studies

'Babeş-Bolyai' University of Cluj, Romania

E-mail: oanaalbescu@yahoo.com

Christine A. Mallin's book brings into the reader's attention the interesting and contemporary topic of the corporate governance, 'an integral part of everyday business life, in order to provide an understanding of the development of corporate governance over the last two decades', as the author argues.

The work is divided into four parts and fourteen chapters, evaluating in minute details both theoretical aspects of corporate governance and empirical case studies.

The first part of the book introduces the reader to the theoretical aspects of the corporate governance, gathering valuable assumptions about theories associated with the development of corporate governance, such as agency theory, separation of ownership and control, transaction cost economics, stakeholder and stewardship theories. The author approaches the issue of the growth in corporate governance codes, with reference to the Cadbury Report, 'which has influenced the development of many corporate governance codes globally'. To illustrate the corporate governance codes that have been most influential globally, there are discussed and rigorously analyzed the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, International Corporate Government Network, Global Corporate Governance Forum.

The second part of the book reveals the character and the importance of the stakeholders and the shareholders, taking into account the fact that 'the corporate objective is generally to maintain or enhance shareholder value, while the impact of the company's activities on its other stakeholders must be taken into account when deciding the strategy to be developed for achieving these goals'. Ch. Mallin highlights the importance of the domain of socially responsible investment, asserting the fact that 'in recent years, there has been an increasing awareness of socially responsible investment issues, (...), and this have, in many cases, become an integral part

of corporate governance policies, both of individual companies and of institutional investors'. Engagement, preference and screening describe the main strategies for socially responsible investment, provided by the Ethical Investment Research Service.

The third part challenges reader to approach the board structure of a company, encompassing 'the function of a board and its sub-committees, the roles, duties, and responsibilities of directors, and the attribution and contribution of a non-executive'. The author brings into discussion some critical distinctions between unitary board, 'responsible for all aspects of the company's activities' and dual board, 'consisting of a supervisory board and an executive board of management'.

The last part of the book provides an analytical and in-depth study of the international corporate governance, gathering empirical observations and studies related to corporate governance in Continental Europe, Central and Eastern Europe, Asia-Pacific, South Africa, India, Brazil. These studies evaluate the prerequisites of the corporate governance in certain countries, with the theoretical instruments described in the previous chapters. In Germany for example, 'the business type tend to be either public or private companies limited by share. The German corporate governance system is based around a dual board system, which comprises a management board and a supervisory board.'

Mixture of theoretical and practical dimensions of corporate governance, this book should be read in the context of 'global financial crisis, corporate scandals and collapses and public concern over the apparent lack of effective boards and perceived excessive executive remuneration packages'. With reference to all these, Mallin's work is successfully illustrating 'the importance of corporate governance to the company itself, to directors, shareholders and other stakeholders, and to the wider business community'.

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(\*) A review of *Corporate Governance* (by Christine A. Mallin), Third Edition, published at Oxford University Press, 2010, 357 p. [ISBN 978-0-19-956645-7].



# The Recent History Otherwise: Cultural Perspective

Olga GRĂDINARU

PhD Student, 'Babeş-Bolyai' University of Cluj, Romania

E-mail: olgagradinaru@gmail.com

The starting point of the volume *The Recent History Otherwise: Cultural Perspectives* (Iaşi, Editura Universităţii 'Al. I. Cuza', 2013) is different from those we are used with, being indeed 'otherwise' than other books focused on the history of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. As the editors Andi Mihalache and Adrian Cioflanca commented, this is an approach 'from below' approach, 'focused more on private Ryan's family than on the famous Yalta percentage' (Cioflanca, Mihalache 2013, 11). Closing the chapter of the previous century with a much welcome dose of humanity and empathy is probably the most elegant and expected demarche of cultural history on the Romanian soil.

The 'otherwise' character of the volume may be seen from its very cover, where O. Bancila's painting from 1907 sets the mood of the reader and the horizon of expectations. The painting *Reading the newspaper* has the role of setting the chronological boundaries from the era of rare literacy among the Romanian peasants to the nowadays (post-totalitarian) era of internet, smartphones and touchscreens. The choice of the cover is an inspired one, being explained by the editors by the desire to avoid the popular signs and symbols of the previous century (belonging to totalitarian regimes). The painting is, in editors' eyes, the 'perfect allegory of the recent history' (Cioflanca, Mihalache 2013, 11).

The *Argument* of the volume is nothing else but the personal and different approach of the recent history subjects, as well as the explanation of the word 'otherwise' from the very title. The consequences of the 20th century events and their various representations in the collective mentality determine the always 'otherwise' reception and understanding so that, even standing in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the dialogue with the realities of the previous one casts a shadow over the present. As 'an exercise of optimism', the book encompasses various themes and motives, refusing the 'cold academic' perspective and embracing a slightly personal approach, especially prominent in the choice of the published material. *The Recent*

*History Otherwise* makes an attempt of 'rehabilitating' the 20th century marked almost entirely by wars and totalitarianism, still captivating our attention and still influencing our existence.

The definition of the term 'recent history' offers the volume another argument for its coming into existence – 'a past in the course of finalization that always gives us the illusion of being able to catch it' (Cioflanca, Mihalache 2013, 10). In an attempt to set the chronological limits of the 'recent past', the differences of regarding the 'event' come to the foreground, shaping our contemporary mentality and capacity of representing and analyzing historical events. This attempt of setting the scopes of the 'recent past' is to be seen in the structure of the volume, beginning with the chapter 'How the present was born' (Cum se naştea prezentul') and ending with 'Where does the past end?' ('Unde se termină trecutul?'), as well as 'The retreat from reality' ('Retragere din real'). Apart from the mentioned chapters, there are other nine, denoting the freshness of the proposed perspective and the 'cold academic' disengagement: 'Since other times' ('De altă dată'); 'Katyusha on air' ('Katiuşa la microfon'); 'Politics and Performance' ('Politică şi spectacol'); 'The Committee and the Intellect' ('Comitetul şi intelectul'); 'The film of truth' ('Película de adevăr'); 'The daily life, subversion, simulacrum' ('Cotidian, subversiune, simulacru'); 'Playing and not really' ('În joacă şi nu prea'); 'The guitars don't play marches' ('Chitarele nu cântă marşuri'); 'Stories to tell' ('Poveşti de spus').

All the mentioned sections have from three to seven intriguing articles, encompassing a wide range of themes and areas, exploring various facets of the previous century from different angles. On the other hand, the playful and unpretentious titles of the sections are in accordance with the title and cover of the volume, offering a challenging and tasteful portrait of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. As in the case of the cover, the content of the volume manages to avoid dramatic and superfluous themes without giving the impression of a hygienic surgery and

approaching various themes 'empathically'. The number of the articles dedicated to the totalitarian regimes of the past century is not complaisant, although one may notice the fact that there is not an article concerning fascism, only one researching the anti-Semitic stereotypes in the files of the Romanian police. This imbalance may be seen as the result of the Romanian Communist history and its status as an Eastern country under the influence of the former USSR.

The first section on the dawn of the 'present era' deals with mediatic disputes at the beginning of the century at the inauguration of a statue of a great Romanian politician – I. C. Bratianu (Liviu Bratescu), with 'the same different' in case of anti-Semitic stereotypes in the files of the Romanian police (Silvioara Constantin), and with collective death representations of the Romanian army during WWI (Bianca Marmureanu). Other three article of the same section reveal three other relevant aspects of the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century: Dumitru Turcan explores the first narration about the Soviet gulag, Alexandru Munteanu presents the opposition between urban and rural in Ion Agarbiceanu's writings from a surprising perspective, while Mihai Chiper investigates the images of decline in the inter-war city of Iasi, focusing on lamentation as form of remembrance.

Chronologically speaking, the second section of the volume is still focused on the first years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, looking into other cultural facets and what cultural book of the previous century would ignore the artistic horizons. Thus, Silvia Marin-Barutcieff researches the Belle Epoque of *Jugend* journal, while Mihaela-Lucia Ion introduces us to artists, critics and art collectors of those times. Apart from newspaper conflicts, the past century is known for its inventions so that Gabriela Glavan examines the phenomenon of Radio/Cinema Paradiso. Romania seen through the eyes of the other during the first years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century is the proposed approach of Nicoleta Roman, dealing not only with a traveler perspective, but, more specifically, with a female perspective.

'Katyusha on air' consists of three challenging articles focused, beyond doubt, on the WWII: the war and the Romanian radio during the war period is Ionut Nistor's research based on the Romanian archives; Dana Percec's centering is on trenches in war literature, while Gabriela Welch's discourse is based on the Soviet motives of sacrifice, victory and cult.

The cult of Bratianu family in Romania (Ovidiu Buruiana), the peculiar nationalism of the Legionary Movement (Mihai Chioveanu), representations of abundance in the Communist propaganda of collectivization (Sorin Mocanu) are other facets of the third section with the suggestive title 'Politics and Performance'. The section also includes two other brilliant researches focused on Communist celebrations and anniversaries: Alexandru Alioanei presenting a prototype of Communist celebrations through exploring the event called 'The week of Romanian-Soviet friendship' and Antonella Asandei exploring the symbolic aspect of the Romanian Communist anniversaries between 1965 and 1989. Alternating two different perspectives – from the tribune and from the street – and two strategies – mobilization and repression – in Romania until Stalin's death, the two authors of the article (Adrian Cioflanca and Adriana Radu) highlight the Romanians' reaction to the news of Stalin's death as extensions of Stalinism mobilization practices and of repression, as well as purification techniques implemented on Romanian soil.

Another inspired section entitled 'The Committee and the Intellect' points out various artistic facets mainly during the second half of the past century, being centered on the Romanian artists during the 'Democrat-Popular' regime (Paul Nistor), on the Romanian music during the first years of Communism (Gabriel Catalan), on the issues of theatre and propaganda between 1965-1989 (Cristina Preutu), on forms of censorship in the post-war Romanian theatre (Oltita Cintec). History and revolution in Camil Petrescu's work is the focal point of Georgiana Lesu's research, while Gabriel Moisa problematizes the notions of 'local history' and 'national history' in the context of the 1985 'frame themes (*tematica-cadru*) for history country museums'.

The sixth section is dedicated to cinema, considering mainly the multiple facets of the Romanian cinema, such as: the Bucharest movie collection between the myth of freedom and the reality of the ideological intrusion presented by Ciprian Plaiasu; the sources, methods and problematizations of the Romanian Communist film by Aurelia Vasile; and the category of the 'brigand (*haiduc*) movie' as the exponent of the myth of the social justice by Mihaela Grancea. The single article of the section that doesn't concern the Romanian context is Daniel Hanu's

'Beyond story: on heteronormativity in Brothers Grimm's fairytales and in Disney adaptations'.

The seventh section is nothing but an intellectual feast, tempting the reader with various themes on the daily life of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, be it the case of the conceptions of the physical culture in Romania of the first half of the past century (Bogdan Popa), of the mass tourism in the Communist Romania of the '50s (Adelina Oana Stefan), of the gender issues in the Communist era (Raluca Bibiri) or of the school and family issues in the Communist Romania (Catalina Mihalache). Other two articles look into the Communist female ideal (Ioana Cozma) and the pop culture in Romania of the '70s (Gabriel Badea), while another deals with the Polish novel of the punk adolescent of the '80s (Clara Popa). As in the case of the previous chapter, the majority of the articles explore the Romanian cultural background, leaving less space to other European cultural realities.

'Playing and not really' consists of articles pointing out playful subjects, as it is the case of the article focused on the Romanian caricature analysis of the '50s written by Mara Marginean and Andrada Fatu-Tutoveanu or of that centered on the universe of the comics, Gelu Teampau highlighting ludic, subversive and ideological components of this domain. The other two articles deal with sportive and subversive aspects in the image strategies of the Romanian Communist Party between 1921 and 1946 (Diego Ciobotaru) and with the op-art imaginary, ambience and clothing (Ioana-Iulia Olaru), revealing a glimpse on the historicity of forms of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Elvis Presley's reception in Romania (Tudor Rosu), the rock music in the West and in the Communist Romania (Serinela Pintilie), as well as a perspective on rock, history and memory are themes of the articles of the ninth section, leaving the reader with the taste for more explorations of the music realm of the previous century.

Unlike the previous chapter, 'Stories to tell' lingers on various aspects of memory, social imaginary and storytelling, inviting the reader to new refined areas of interest. Florentina Tone's article has an appealing subject on the memories of the school years of a special class from the royal palace (where the future Romanian king Mihai had studied) (where Mihai, the king to-be of the Romanians would study), while Adriana Bondor deals with oral history and cultural memory in the case of

Zlataust Street in Iasi. The archives of the 1951-1989 from Cluj investigate the weight of the oral history in case of Paula Ivan's article, whereas Virgil Mihaiu points out the traits of the jazz trend in the Communist Romania in 1970-1989. The female imaginary and the discourses on corporality in the post-socialist Romania are the main analyzed sides by Petruta Teampau, whilst Ludmila D. Cojocari and Virgiliu Birladeanu offer a perspective on WWII social memory in the Republic of Moldova, emphasizing three surprising components – war, alcohol and identity – in the post-Soviet context.

The question of the chapter entitled 'Where does the past end?' is answered by five articles that accentuate several ardent topics of the last decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Sinziana Preda expresses the changes in the post-socialistic graphic memory of Nicolae Ceausescu and Cristian Nae analyzes the politics of memory in the East European art after 1989, while two other essays evince the traces of the 'other' in anthropological researches of the past century (Cristina Bogdan) and the textualization of the interior scenery in the autobiographical Romanian literature between inter-war nostalgia and Communist contamination, studying the diaristic phenomenon from multiple hypotheses (Andi Mihalache). The last article of this section points out, in the light of an ex-Maoist's confessions, two coordinates (activism and penitence) of both physical and symbolic search of Jan Wong in her writings.

'The retreat from reality' may be considered the last playful touch of the volume, refusing the rigid chronological perspective of the most historical books. Be it the case of present or past, the retreat from reality is a constant means of escape, meditation (if not complacency), being for decades the only mean of living otherwise than the ideology, propaganda and censorship had dictated. From the multicultural perspective, this section may be regarded as the most balanced one, containing ways of escaping reality in the French context ('Dream and memory – Proust's metaphors of imagination' by Elena Prus), in the Russian-American context ('How to catch a nymphet. Feminine characters in the imaginary of Nabokov's novels' by Alexandru Budac), in the Japanese context ('An Orient for the Occident. Narration and theatricality in Yasunari Kawabata's prose' by Rodica Grigore), as well as in the European and South American context ('Re-enchantment of the world. Magic realism

between post colonialism and postmodernism' by Evagrina Dirtu).

After a quick and far from all compliant surveillance of the volume, one must admit that it takes two courageous historians to present to the Romanian public a search for historical, cultural and, among others, emotional and empathic closure concerning the still actual realities of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Although inclined of exploring the Eastern cultural and unavoidable political facets of the last century, *The Recent History Otherwise* represents a refined and tasteful account of a century that seems to refuse leaving our social, cultural and political

actuality. The proposed empathic attitude from the editors' *Argument* is to be noticed throughout the volume, emphasizing remarkable and surprising attitudes, facets and perspectives in various domains – arts, sports, media, collective memory, mentality and imaginary, daily life and politics – all wrapped up in a warm and unpretentious atmosphere closer to the non-academic reader. With no exhaustive claims, *The Recent History Otherwise* offers a multicultural picture of the more or less painful events and their image with subtly lighted and shadowed aspects on the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

# From Labor Society toward Consumer Society (For a Cultural History of Labor) (\*)

Dragoș SDROBIȘ

PhD Candidate, 'George Barițiu' Institute of History, Cluj-Napoca, Romania  
E-mail: dragossdrobis@yahoo.com

For cultural history the main condition in historical realities investigation is to wipe out the *common places* of the social thinking. Instead, cultural history aims to find out alternative sources of investigation capable of contributing to historical restitution. Meanwhile, cultural history tries not to favor any historical source, even though it is confronted with archives and official documents or domestic artifacts and social practices. For the cultural historian it becomes important not to *say something*, but to *reveal*. The pursuit of objectiveness is no longer desirable. In fact, Jacques Le Goff's phrase *faire l'histoire* meant more or less a turning point in the historical research. Cultural studies have begun to prevail in the last decades, simply because history as a history of humankind and humanity began to gain ground against history as pure retrospective. The new perspective is to see the past through the eyes of the past. So, in order to synchronize the past with its own present it became necessarily for any historian to escape his/her present. It is what David Lowenthal called *the past is a foreign country*. The new perspective developed as compulsory because of the continuous malformation of the past: 'What is now known as *past* is not what anyone lived as *present*' <sup>(1)</sup>.

In following Lowenthal's advice the first step should be the reconstruction of the people's past representations. Proceeding in this manner – exploring the way in which people used to think and to figure out the world – the cultural history is more or less a *social history of representations* (Pascal Ory). To redo is to bring into present something absent; in other words, cultural history refreshes the past memory and the present memory both. The purpose is to prove that the absence is not inexistence, but latency; it's only a perspective shift. 'Tout est

dans le regard. Vous vous regardez dans un miroir; fermez les yeux: votre image *disparaît*. La société est à l'instar de l'enfant dans la cour de récréation: elle fait comme si. Il semble bien qu'elle ne puisse fonctionner sans ladite représentation [...]' <sup>(2)</sup>. These *images* are the ones to create society and to build the social individuality, by adhering or rejecting the norms. The social individuality is thus the result of multiple social plans: gender, sexuality, age, generation, religious orientation or educational credentials. 'L'histoire culturelle, méfiante *a priori* envers les interprétations unifiées, qui mettent en scène un homme simplifié et rationnel, est l'infatigable avocat d'un être humain traversé – et, parfois, animé – par de contradictions (?) internes qui peuvent, par exemple, le faire jouir à avoir peur, rêver sans illusion ou «désirer» simultanément et profondément une chose et son contraire' <sup>(3)</sup>.

The labor itself is a social norm. To present the evolution of work from a necessity to a defining ideological construct of the western society is what Dominique Méda intends to do. In fact, approaching this subject is the same as tracing the core element that led to the Western's success in dominating the rest of the world in the last five centuries. To put it in Jurgen Habermas words, western societies were 'labor founded societies'. It became a vehicle of social order, social promotion and social success, all three at once. This is why the labor is considered to be '*un fait social total*'. The labor redefined time (work time and spare time) and imposed new social aspirations (the career, the *workaholic*). Everything becomes labor and everything comes out from labor.

Published in the *Que sais-je?* collection, *Le travail* is structured in three chapters that delineates the author's goals: 1<sup>st</sup> chapter *L'avènement du travail*, 2<sup>nd</sup> chapter, *Crise de l'emploi, transformations du travail* and the 3<sup>rd</sup>

(\*) A review of *Le travail* (by Dominique Méda), Paris, PUF, 2011, 128 p.

<sup>(1)</sup> David Lowenthal, *Trecutul e o țară străină* [Past's an Old Country], Bucharest, Curtea Veche, 2002, p. 224.

<sup>(2)</sup> Pascal Ory, *L'histoire culturelle*, Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 2011, p. 10.

<sup>(3)</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 27-28.

one, *Quelle place pour le travail?* Méda's aim is not to develop an analysis of cultural history regarding the labor. But, in many cases, his approach is tributary to cultural history.

The excursus begins by presenting the labor in tribal societies which envisages this activity only as a necessary one: 'Les faits sociaux qui structurent ces sociétés sont d'une nature autre qu'économique. Ils sont prioritairement sociaux, et font intervenir des liens de sang et de parenté, des symboles, des relations avec la nature et la tradition' (p. 9). Further on, for the man of Antiquity the labor was far away of being an ideal. Such a vision was acknowledged by Platon and Aristotle. In fact, for the philosophers of Hellada the individual and social ideal was to escape necessity and to dedicate to the truly *free* activities, like ethics and politics. The reason these two activities were considered the *free ones* was that they had an end in itself. While the slave was the human being encompassed by necessity, the free man was supposed to nurture the spirit of total freedom. To put it in Aristotle words, 'l'homme laborieux accomplit son labeur en vue de quelque fin qu'il ne possède pas, mais le bonheur est une fin qui ne s'accompagne pas de peine, mais de plaisir' (p. 11).

The labor as an ideological engine appeared in the 16<sup>th</sup> century – the birth moment of what Max Weber considered to be *the protestant ethic*. By reinterpreting the Bible, the conclusion reached in that moment was that human being must be judged by what it creates *hic et nunc*. The labor as ideology represented the shift from the millenaries' Christian Church vision. This new ideology asked people to give up on just waiting for Jesus Second Advent; instead, it guided people to action. So, labor was not only an activity, it became a way of *pursuing happiness*. Thereby, labor tends to be less a fatigue duty and converted itself into a factor of production. In the same manner property means less a social border, than a mechanism to preserve your work benefits. It is the 19<sup>th</sup> century to develop a social and political critique of the labor and of the society it gave birth to: capitalism. The social-democracy critique and Marxism emphasized the mercantile ideals that conquered society. For these two, labor itself was a way of losing your freedom; on the other side, the liberals claimed that the private property is the bought-back freedom. Whatever the answer, the reality is that labor was already an economic norm that 'normed' the society and the world, both. For instance, education

developed into a mechanism of *professionalization* allocating human capital in the economic field. The life of any individual tends to confound itself with his/her career. Meanwhile, the unemployment effects reveal the individual total *workaholism*. To have a job is not only the economic premise of the social success; it is supposed to confer also a psychological comfort.

If in the 18<sup>th</sup> century work was a path to emancipation, it is not the case nowadays. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the western societies became a *salaried society* where to *have a job is an entitlement*. Some benefices obtained through union fight reveals the state involvement in sustaining labor demands and the labor society. 'L'emploi leur [à travailleurs] donne un statut qui dépasse en réalité celui qui découle directement de leur travail' <sup>(1)</sup>.

But western societies are in this very moment consumer societies. And the actual economic crisis is the one to change the way we were used to imagine the labor, the labor society and the world in general. In a consumer society, the human being tends to be more than it is and is urged to desire more than it can achieve. In fact, individual needs are no longer a personal decision. It is the consumer society that multiplies and intensifies individual needs, especially by media. That is, an artificial growth of demands in goods or services. To put this in Baudrillard words: 'The human being became a science subject for the human being when cars became harder to sell than the production' <sup>(2)</sup>. Thus, consumption becomes a social activity. The worker spare time becomes a consumption time; he/she is encouraged to benefit the *good's humanism*. The world itself became a *society of the spectacle* (Guy Debord).

At the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century the main issue tends to be the possibility (or utopia) of transforming the western societies into spare time societies. In fact, to talk about spare time reveals the impossibility to escape the last two centuries dichotomy: work time and spare time. It is an indispensable dichotomy that keeps alive the consumer societies: to work is to earn money; to spend your spare time is to spend the money. Take a look at the malls: these are the new cathedrals of consumption. The very

<sup>(1)</sup> S. Pagaum, apud D. Méda, *.cit. op.*, p.56.

<sup>(2)</sup> Jean Baudrillard, *Societatea de consum (mituri și structuri)* (original title: *La Société de consommation*), Bucharest, Comunicare.ro Publishing House, 2005, p. 91.

consumption is a performance, and the individual doesn't want to miss the role of a lifetime.

The consumerist frenzy and the idea that work alienates and alters human relationships are the main causes to look forward for a new way to reinterpret work. The current agenda aims labor to be no more a cause of social exclusion and of economic inequalities. That is, labor must not be related to the notions of productivity or efficiency. The idea is to relate labor to human being. What becomes necessary – considers Dominique Méda – is to build a new social model, in which labor and people's life must cease to be separate. 'Mais il dépendra aussi de la capacité de l'Europe à construire un modèle social centré autour de la qualité du travail, du travail décent et de la protection du

travail, objectif appuyé sur des institutions bienveillantes' (p. 119).

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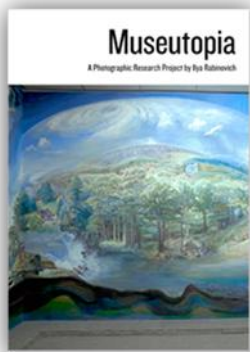
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# The Post-Soviet Museum: History Ruptures, Memory Continuities (\*)

Ludmila D. COJOCARU

Associate Professor, Institute of Social History 'ProMemoria', Moldova State University (Chişinău)

E-mail: lcojocari@promemoria.md



*Museutopia. A Photographic Research Project by Ilya Rabinovich* will be of great interest for a large audience of people from the lovers of photography, museums, history or Moldova's cultural life to the consecrated scholars studying visual arts, philosophy, ethnography, museology or memory and identity through the investigation of complex interrelationship between 'gaze, diaspora, trauma' (p. 15). The impact of dramatic transformations happened between the last decade of socialist period and the first two decades of post-soviet Moldova history still constitutes a disputable topic among specialists from different fields, as well as the emerging public history discourses on memory, identity and nation-building. Along the lines of Benedict Anderson work on nationalism and identity (Anderson 1991), the specialists in cultural heritage Peter Aronsson and Gabriella Elgenius consider, 'in terms of imagination, national museums are uniquely placed to illuminate that which is actually imagined with reference to an emerging, re-emerging or fully formed 'nation'' (Aronsson, Elgenius 2011, 5). In this context, the *Museutopia* aims to contribute to the understanding of post-soviet society development issues by revealing 'the complexities and contradictions of representing a nation state, its histories and transforming identities' (p. 7). After stressing the aim of Rabinovich art-project as 'a welcome invitation to decipher the hidden and implicit agendas of museum collection and displays[; n]o matter how sophisticated the display and arrangement of objects, subjects and ideas is, museum always conceal other, more delicate and political issues that only become discernible to those who are carefully looking out of them' (p. 7), the book's *Foreword* suggests in a delicate, but very terse manner that '[a]lthough the situation of the

national museums in Moldova might not be enviable, Rabinovich's project illuminates that it is amply worthy of closely attention' (p. 7).

The book is built mainly on a collection of sixty five colour photographs, taken in seven different museums in Chişinău and relates to the period 'from the Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic to the Republic of Moldova' <sup>(1)</sup> Relying on the Milan Šimečka (Šimečka 1988) assertion about organised collective forgetting in the post-Communist society, the editors Huub van Baar and Ingrid Commandeur appears to remain distant from the historical context their edited volume is related to; when pointing that 'Rabinovich has photographically mapped the representations of history that have appeared in *post-Communist* (our underlining) national museums in Moldova's capital city Chişinău', they do not take into consideration the syncopate historical development of the country where the Communist Party came to power after the proclamation of Moldova's Independence (2001-2005, 2005-2009). So, this period includes a part of the historical time captured by the Rabinovich's photographic gaze and refers the post-totalitarian country, but the country is still under the power of Moldovan Communist Party authoritarian regime (2005-2009). In spite of perpetuation of stereotyped views about Moldova ('one of the poorest countries of Europe', p. 6; 'a border region and a liminal space of the current European Union', p. 10; 'a peripheral state both unto the countries of the EU and unto the countries of the former Soviet Union', p. 166; 'at once at the borders and

(\*) A review of *Museutopia. A Photographic Research Project by Ilya Rabinovich* (editors: Huub van Baar, Ingrid Commandeur), Amsterdam: Alauda Publications, 2012, 182 p., notes, bibliography, index, photo-graphs, hard bound [ISBN 9789081531405].

<sup>(1)</sup> In the case of *Museutopia*, his [Rabinovich] photographs were enhanced by the inclusion of historical footage and texts from the museum she visited (Chişinău, 2008-2012) (van Baar, Commandeur 2012, 181).



between borders', p. 177), I completely agree with the editors proposal to approach this 'journey to Moldova' as an opportunity to see 'the ways in which the 'black holes' that have been hit in the past have ambiguously but powerfully created the ground for new forms of cultural nationalism' (p. 10). Native from Moldova and interested in studying the issue of memory and identity and the performative dimension of nation-building project(s), I would like to point reader's attention, especially of those who are less familiar with the historical ruptures and continuities the Moldovan society passed through during the last centuries, that beyond the 'legacies of Soviet museology' and 'ideological uses of history' in the process of 'hesitantly building a new national identity' (p. 10), the Moldovan multicultural society went through ambiguous nation-building projects, faced with competitive and composed character of memory communities, and still attests a highly performative nature of the official politics of memory and identity (see, for instance: Dimova, Cojocaru 2013; Cojocaru 2013; Bîrlădeanu, Cojocaru 2013). These features combust the processes of 'nationalisation of culture' (Löfgren 1989) and constitute serious issues in approaching the reconciliation route of the Moldovan society. A larger context of 'dramatic post-socialist transformations' (Hann 2002) can be most helpful to understand the 'ruined Communist cultural institutions, the poverty of history and the relics of museum infrastructure' (p. 10) fixed by Rabinovich camera lens than the editors view to present them in the narrow conceptual frames when 'past is still and powerfully haunting, while new museal spaces are shaped, novel identities are constructed and new utopias are in the making' (p. 11). Solving this aspect can allow *Museutopia* to pass beyond its aim of questioning artistically 'the way in which the fall of Communism has generated new forms of cultural representation' (p. 12) and, therefore, to open new insights for understanding the challenges of history ruptures and memory continuities in the post-totalitarian society.

The edited volume frames the 'photographic research project' by a series of essays 'that engage with and reflect on' the artworks presented by Rabinovich (p. 12). The first two essays preceding the staging of art-project are built on the dialog with Ilya Rabinovich. When the first essay (by Victor Misiano) is developed from the perspective of an artist 'in exile' with 'passionless gaze' (p. 20),

the next presentation (by Huub van Baar) allows the artist to reflect on twofold meaning of, as he uses to call it, the 'reverse engineering' method (p. 30): first, inverting the gaze and therefore 'to encourage the spectator to focus on the context of how things were done, rather than letting her or him accept and repeat the narratives of the exhibited artefacts'; second, aiming 'to photograph all the sites the Communist Party's ideological museums used to be and research the archives where the exhibition and documentation materials of the former ideological museums are preserved' (p. 30-31). The next two essays aim to present the Rabinovich works in a more general historical perspective (by Ștefan Rusu) and, respectively, in the context of critical museum studies (by Bogdan Ghiu). Rusu considers important to contextualise the 'phenomenon of the distorted representation of history in Moldova' (p. 161) and states the post-1989 'urge the return to the values and symbols that had existed before the invasion of the URSS [1940, 1944]' which in his view was only 'the start of a long process of coming to terms with a new identity' (p. 162). Ghiu points at the sensitive issue of contemporary museums, including the national museums from the Republic of Moldova ('being identity industries, museums are also constantly searching for their own identity', p. 169) and suggests a complex approach toward the concept of modern museum ('history has to move on' p. 177).

The essays and the selection of photographs complement each other in a coherent way, especially in terms of helping readers to find 'the hidden story' (p. 24) behind the photographs ('each of the works discussed could be characterised by its attempt to engage the viewer in an active and reflexive process of viewing, p. 17) and to read between lines the Rabinovich 'fragmented life' (p. 15) ('my works are an attempt to create continuity, a history and coherent identity for myself, by reflecting the strangeness of the places where I have lived, p. 20) as reflected in a strong relationship between individual and national identity dilemma ('I am convinced that the difficulties I am facing are symptomatic, not only on a personal level but also on a national one, p. 20).

In spite of the fact that many issues remained beyond this book discussion, the edited volume is a great result of the whole team involved in this trans-disciplinary project ('I wanted to challenge the stories they [the institutes] tell and the identities they create and

put them in more complex contexts', p. 31). The study of Moldovan national museums as significant cultural institution and actor in building collective memory and identity has been neglected for a long period of time in the Republic of Moldova. The roles these institutions can play in different historical contexts do not have the same trajectories and meanings in any post-totalitarian society. At the same time, 'the national museums are the result of the negotiated logics between science and politics, universalism and particularism, difference and unity, change and continuity, materiality and imagination' (Aronsson, Elgenius 2011, 5). Following the Rabinovich statement, I consider 'Museutopia represents both an ironic and a critical response to the current situation in Moldova' (p. 38). The well crafted design of the book and the sensitive approach of this art-project can serve, in my opinion, both as source for new knowledge accretion as well as a resource for building new studies.

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# ***Cultural History. Journal of the International Society for Cultural History, Volume 1, Numbers 1 and 2/2012***

**Alexandru-Ilie MUNTEANU**

PhD Student, '1 Decembrie 1918' University of Alba Iulia

E-mail: alexandru\_munteanu21@yahoo.com

Whatever the context, each and every time I run into the name of Peter Burke and/or into the word *cultural history*, I can't help not thinking, not reminding myself a very broad, yet in the same time, brief statement made by the British historian already mentioned, in which, in no more than a few words, he describes the contemporary context (from the last two-three decades, to put it more general) of historical studies and that of social sciences and of the humanities in general. Here is what Peter Burke says: 'We live in an era where the intellectual border lines between different fields of study are open, (...). References about Mihail Bahtin, Pierre Bourdieu, Fernand Braudel, Norbert Elias, Michel Foucault, Clifford Geertz can be found in the the works of archaeologists, geographers and literary critics, as well as in those of the sociologists and historians' <sup>(245)</sup> (Burke 1992, 31). The two numbers of *Cultural History. Journal of the International Society for Cultural History* make no exception from this state of affairs.

Both, *Number 1* and *Number 2*, are from the same first volume that appeared in 2012, at Edinburgh University Press. As it is mentioned on the interior side of the *Journal's* cover: '*Cultural History* publishes research papers on cultural history, covering any period or location, along with discussions of theoretical issues, and papers concerned with fields such as teaching, museums and heritage. *Cultural History* promotes the work and aims of the International Society for Cultural History, which was founded in 2008. It generates discussion and debate on the nature of cultural history and current trends, and advances theoretical and methodological issues relating to the field. *Cultural History* promotes new and innovative questions about the past, and invites contributions from both advanced and junior scholars.'

The first number covers 150 pages, with an additional three pages (v-vii), that

make up the *Editorial*, signed by Marjo Kaartinen, professor of Cultural History from the University of Turku, Finland, and by David F. Smith, Honorary Senior Lecturer at the Center for Cultural History, from the University of Aberdeen, Scotland. Following the *Editorial*, is a number of six articles, ranging from the more theoretical and methodologically orientated, like Peter Burke's opening paper, *Strengths and Weaknesses of Cultural History*, and Harvey Green's *Cultural History and the Material(s) Turn*, to articles like: *The Watchful Spirit: Religious Anxieties towards Sleep in the Notebooks of Nehemiah Wallington (1598-1658)*, written by Erin Sullivan<sup>246</sup>, *Kipling's Encounter with Buddhism and the Buddhist Orient: 'The Twain Shall Meet?'*, by David Scott, or Christopher E. Forth's, *Melting Moments: The Greasy Sources of Modern Perceptions of Fat*, or *The Study of Social Control in the Context of Cultural History: An Interdisciplinary Approach*, by Lauri Keskinen.

There is also one *Review Article*, written by Joyce Goggin, *De-Materialization in a Material World: Two Cultural Histories of Capital*, a very interesting review paper on Irene Finel-Honigman (2010), *A Cultural History of Finance*, London and New York: Routledge, and on Dieter Schnaas (2010), *Kleine Kulturgeschichte des Geldes*, Mnchen: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, that emphasises the increasingly stronger bond between culture, entertainment and economy in our present society (see p. 126-129, 134 etc).

Finally, there are two more sections, one called *Reviews*, the other *Brief Reviews*, each having three reviews. The first is Philip Daileader and Philip Whalen (eds) (2010), *French Historians 1900-2000: New Historical Writing in Twentieth-Century France*, reviewed by Elizabeth C. Macknight; then, there is Karla Mallette (2010), *European*

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<sup>(245)</sup> Author's translation from the Romanian edition of the book.

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<sup>246</sup> Winner: ISCH annual essay competition. See p. 14.

*Modernity and the Arab Mediterranean: Towards a New Philology and a Counter-Orientalism*, reviewed by Jacob Egholm Feldt; Steven Connor (2010), *The Matter of Air: Science and Art of the Ethereal*, is the final book, reviewed by Assimina Kaniari. The *Brief Reviews* are in the following order: Melissa Calaresu, Filippo de Vivo and Joan-Pau Rubiés (eds) (2010), *Exploring Cultural History: Essays in Honour of Peter Burke*, reviewed by Uta Protz; T. J. Boisseau and Abigail M. Markwyn (eds) (2010), *Gendering the Fair: Histories of Women and Gender at World's Fairs*, reviewed by Hannah Farmer; Stephen Greenblatt (2010), *Shakespeare's Freedom*, reviewed by Karel Vanhaesebrouck.

The first two articles mentioned above ('the methodologically orientated ones') are, as I said before, related in many aspects. Besides treating epistemological problems of *cultural history* <sup>(247)</sup> 'and its neighbour discipline *cultural studies*' (see Burke's paper, p.1) these articles are deeply inter-connected in, what I think, a very interesting and suggestive manner. Peter Burke makes a statement in which he puts the numerous *turns* and the never-ending battle between researchers about what matters most, the *material* or the *cultural*, in the position of a weakness. Then along comes Harvey Green's paper which argues that there is a 'material(s) turn' even to the *cultural turn*, to cultural history in general, because studying culture and writing cultural history implies studying forms of material culture, (artifacts, architecture, contemporary cultural history books etc). I am not saying that the author is wrong, on the contrary, his arguments, based on 'case studies' (mostly books <sup>(248)</sup> and vernacular architecture), are well constructed and it is impossible not to take them into account. But, that doesn't stop Green's article to be proof of Burke's statements about the

volatile nature of the methodological and epistemological foundations of cultural history (see Green's definition of *culture* at p. 61), which he (Burke) calls it to be a method of research, or just as 'history written from a particular angle or viewpoint (see p. 7), rather than a rigidly enclosed field of study in historical research.

Erin Sullivan's paper, *The Watchful Spirit: Religious Anxieties towards Sleep in the Notebooks of Nehemiah Wallington (1598-1658)* is the winner of the annual ISCH prize, in 2012. This article is a fascinating foray into the very intimacy of an ordinary Puritan believer, Nehemiah Wallington, from 17<sup>th</sup> century England. It gives the reader insights on the daily life schedule and, even more interesting, on how religion, spiritual beliefs influence it. The author's sources consisted in Wallington's personal journal, or notebooks, which the author balanced with, for example, medicine books contemporary with Nehemiah, thus offering the reader a close perspective on 17<sup>th</sup> century 'medical-religious' encounters. Sullivan's article is indeed an example of cultural history writing by its intimate approach on individual 17<sup>th</sup> century beliefs (culture), and especially, as I mentioned before, on how these beliefs, these cultural traits of a person can influence pure 'material' realities: personal health, daily schedule (the hours when Nehemiah went to sleep every night were determined by his thoughts concerning a healthy spiritual life) etc.

The journal's last three articles deal with different aspects from the 19<sup>th</sup> century, ranging, geographically speaking, from Northern Europe to the Far East.

The first of them, David Scott's article, *Kipling's Encounter with Buddhism and the Buddhist Orient: 'The Twain Shall Meet'?*, like Sullivan's, remains on an individual level in the sense that it is concerned also with personal/individual beliefs, this time of a British novelist, who, in his travels, 'discovers' that the Buddhist Orient is somewhat superior to the rest of Asia. The author analyses how Kipling's 'cultural images', or ethno-images, help build his novels' characters, suggesting that by his literary Kipling maintained a favorable image, fueled a London trend at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, that of a sympathy and attraction of the London inhabitants towards Buddhism. Although not a big inconvenient, a clearer

<sup>(247)</sup> Among the weaknesses that Peter Burke talks about in his article are: the various *turns* and approaches which can disorientate the average reader on what cultural history really is; the relativity in defining the term *culture*; the constant *come-and-go* between specialists in showing which matters the most: material causes or cultural ones etc.

<sup>(248)</sup> For example, *Wood: Craft, Culture, History* (2006) written by H. Green himself.

distinction, or less generalization on this London trend, would have been desirable. Personally, I find it very hard to believe that, for example, the next generations of the 'London labor and the London poor' <sup>(249)</sup> shared the same passion towards Buddhism. Still David Scott's paper shows us a suggestive case of cultural encounters, of the mental, or 'cultural aftermath' of an 'Edwardian's' encounter with Asia in general, because the author mentions the British novelists' impression on Islamic as well as on Buddhist Asia.

The last two articles, Christopher E. Forth's *Melting Moments: The Greasy Sources of Modern Perceptions of Fat*, and Lauri Keskinen *The Study of Social Control in the Context of Cultural History: An Interdisciplinary Approach*, leave the individual 'historical microscope' and analyze social and cultural phenomenon at a more collective level: Forth's paper deals with European's perception of fat, with a few mentions from the Antiquity period, but focuses on 'the shit of perception' from 1500's onward. The author builds his paper from an anonymous article published in 1822 in *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, which argued that the English 'took up more space on the streets', meaning that they are the fattest people on the planet, and that from all that fat the English industry could produce soap for the entire planet. From this, the author starts constructing and diversifying his research on perceptions of fat, reaching even how the Europeans' negative perception of fat made its contribution to their feelings of superiority over Africans in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, which according to European travelers were, many of them, very fat.

Lauri Keskinen paper analyses how new ideas, in this case, class based cultural trends, or for those times better call them *sub-trends*, can strengthen social ties between the labour class in interwar Finland, even to the point where it becomes a subculture and more, as the author argues, a form of social control. Keskinen focuses on different sport clubs and associations which offered the working class of Finland's few industrial centers a sense of belonging. The author's interdisciplinary approach combines behavioural (like

Foucault's concept of *practice*) with social sciences, the result being an interesting perspective on the *social* activity of learning, thus that of enculturation applied to Finnish working class *milieus* (see especially p.115 <sup>(250)</sup>, 118-122).

In comparison with the first, *Number 2* of *Cultural History* is shorter in page numbers (from p. 151 to p. 174), with another two pages (p. v-vi), where scholars are being encouraged to submit their papers, and where there is also a brief description and some piece of information on how and whom to send them in order to be eligible for the ISCH prize of 250 GBP.

Besides the *ISCH Prize 2013 for Cultural Historians*, the journal is divided into four sections:

1. *Cultural History – Now*, with two papers, Thomas V. Cohen's *Ruminations on Reflections on a Distant Crime*, and Kalle Pihlainen's *Cultural History and the Entertainment Age*.

2. *Articles*, is the second part of the journal, which has three papers. These are: *Threading the Needle, Pulling the Press: Gender, Skill and the Tools of the Trade in Eighteenth-Century European Towns*, by Deborah Simonton; *With Culture Comes the Nation: Women, Cultural Citizenship and Late Nineteenth-Century New Zealand*, written by Nadia Gush, and the third, *'Herein is Love': Performance and Identity in Three Welsh Memento Mori*, by Lynne Moore.

The last two sections of the journal are *Reviews* and *Brief Reviews*, each also having three reviews: Esther Cohen (2010), *The Modulated Scream: Pain in Late Medieval Culture*, reviewed by Jan Franz van Dijkhuizen; Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska (2011), *Managing the Body: Beauty, Health, and Fitness in Britain, 1880-1939*, reviewed by Susan Hogan; and Laura Salisbury and Andrew Shail (eds) (2010), *Neurology and Modernity: A Cultural History of Nervous Systems, 1800-1950*, reviewed by Clark Lawlor. The *brief reviews* are: Joy Parr (2010), *Sensing Changes: Technologies, Environments and the Everyday, 1953-2003*, reviewed by Donna McCormack; Stephanie Stockhorts

<sup>(249)</sup> Inspired by Henry Mayhew's (2008) *London labour and the London poor*.

<sup>(250)</sup> "By definition, (social) control is an activity, or a practice, carried out by a socializing agent, even without the agent or the one socialized noticing it".

(ed.) (2010), *Cultural Transfer Through Translation: The Circulation of Enlightened Thought in Europe by Means of Translation*, reviewed by Silke Reeploeg, and, the last, Patrick Coleman (2011), *Anger, Gratitude and the Enlightenment Writer*, reviewed by Brendan Dooley.

Following the same line as the first publication of the ISCH journal in 2012, the second number of *Cultural History* begins, not with one, but with two articles regarding epistemological and methodological problems related to cultural history. The author, Kalle Philainen, sketches the place of (cultural) historical writing in the so called entertainment age. Although heavily loaded with theoretical and epistemological aspects concerned with writing history (relativity, objectivity, the role of ideology in historical writing, truth, social responsibility of historians etc), Philainen's article emphasizes a crucial aspect that concerns not only historians and their (way of) writings, but also the public's 'taste' for history <sup>(251)</sup>. At one point in his paper (see p. 176), the author comes close to putting the problem in the following terms: history must either give up 'a bit' on the value of truth, and to be a bit more 'untrue' (as the author says) or it risks of remaining somewhat marginal in popular imagery and social impact. But then, he does say that: 'this 'alternative' is not a very useful one for history since the 'entertainment age' presents histories with another trap: the 'entertainment trap': (...)'. What is the author proposition? To put it very short: resisting the desire to entertain, keeping its 'documentary' aspect, history should not become 'fictional', instead it should: 'look to its 'material' nature' and to the latter's disruptive potential vis-à-vis stories (see p. 177).

Thomas V. Cohen's article revolves around the same epistemological problems of writing cultural history. Like Philainen, from one point of view, Cohen also points out a certain need of change in the way cultural historians begin their research and especially in the way they write/'deliver' it (to the public) (see p. 164). Cohen's paper starts by narrating

a local theft in small community in 16<sup>th</sup> century Italy and from this, he begins to unfold certain problems and difficulties concerning the reconstruction of historical events from a cultural viewpoint, like: what significance (cultural symbolism) did certain social and individual gestures and rituals had in the past? (see p. 162) or the difficulties that spring from the 'shifting meanings of material things' (see p. 161), like *grain*, in this article's case, and the temptation to use patterns, which epistemologically may come in handy and deliver a very professional approach, but in the same time, as Cohen argues, one must keep in mind that: 'The last thing cultural historians should be doing is exemplifying yet once more the tiresome wisdom of some charismatic theory' (see p. 163) <sup>(252)</sup>.

In the next section, as it can be distinguished from the titles, the articles focus on gender related historical phenomena. Deborah Simonton's paper *Threading the Needle, Pulling the Press: Gender, Skill and the Tools of the Trade in Eighteenth-Century European Towns* deals with two interesting concepts, that of *gender tools* and *gender(ed) skills*, referring to needles and needlework, which were associated with women labour, and with women's access to workshop labour and even businesses, in general, in 18<sup>th</sup> century European cities and towns. Although focusing on the situation in Great Britain (there is a statistical table at p. 188 and 18<sup>th</sup> century books, cited by the author, one written in 1761, by Joseph Collyer, for example, in which he recommends the use of 'genteel persons' in millinery; see p. 190), the author makes some references about the general European manufacturing and trading context.

In her article, *With Culture Comes the Nation: Women, Cultural Citizenship and Late Nineteenth-Century New Zealand*, Nadia Gush analyzes the concept of 'cultural citizenship', a relatively new concept according to the author and how this concept can be applied to the

<sup>(251)</sup> A starting historiographical reference on this topic would be Philippe Ariès's book, *Le Temps de l'histoire* (for this review, I consulted the Romanian edition of the book – see Ariès 1997).

<sup>(252)</sup> Here a recent reading of mine comes in my mind. Although written about four decades ago, it signals the same problem and the ups and downs of applying all sorts of patterns and other *scientist* models to a large number of unique! and *sublunary*! historical events. The book I am referring to is *Comment on écrit l'histoire: essai d'épistémologie* (1970), written by French historian and archaeologist, Paul Veyne (see Veyne 1999).

Imperial white settler society of New Zealand. She focuses on the role played in the emancipation of women and on the general building process of new, conscious, participatory citizens by women organizations, like Canterbury Women's Institute (founded in 1892) and the National Council of Women (1896). An emancipation which could also be called *culturalization*, because these two main organizations paid special attention to cultural based initiatives, like 'women's newspapers' (written *by* and *for* women) and literature. 'Reading constituted the citizen' (see p. 211), was the core belief that animated this type of actions. All of these in order to encourage them to embrace a different civic status, that of 'citizenship as /(by, *a.n.*) self cultivation' (see p. 215). Finally, a particular aspect which I consider it to be very well underlined by the author, is her statement, in the paper's conclusions, about the fact that this nation/citizenship building process, the way we understand to do it: 'is responsible for establishing parameters of inclusion and exclusion for the people who might hope to be imagined within it' (see p. 219-220) <sup>(253)</sup>.

The last paper of *Number 2* of the ISCH journal, Lynne Moore's '*Herein is Love: Performance and Identity in Three Welsh Memento Mori*', despite being well organized and having strong bibliographical references <sup>(254)</sup>, with chapters about 'theoretical considerations' in which the author defines the concepts and terms which she uses (e.g. performance, *memento mori*, identity, community etc), this article, however, might seem a bit harder to follow from beginning to conclusions, especially for non native English speakers, because of the abstract notion of 'performance' (that of 'culturally coded patterns of behavior', see p. 227) which is referred to in this paper centered on three shrine-like memento mori: one of a Welsh family, another of a Swansea Lord and of one group of copper workers. Still, Lynne Moore

offers the reader interesting interpretations regarding the mementos' intrinsic suggestions that come out of them, viewed both individually as well as in a more general Victorian context.

To sum up, the articles in these two numbers of *Cultural History* could be divided also into two large sections: the first category would be the one of the 'historically' centered papers, like: *With Culture Comes the Nation: Women, Cultural Citizenship and Late Nineteenth-Century New Zealand*, by Nadia Gush, *Threading the Needle, Pulling the Press: Gender, Skill and the Tools of the Trade in Eighteenth-Century European Towns*, by Deborah Simonton, *The Watchful Spirit: Religious Anxieties towards Sleep in the Notebooks of Nehemiah Wallington (1598-1658)*, by Erin Sullivan, *Kipling's Encounter with Buddhism and the Buddhist Orient: 'The Twain Shall Meet'?*, by David Scott etc. Secondly there would be the section of the more methodological and epistemological writings like: Thomas V. Cohen's *Ruminations on Reflections on a Distant Crime*, Kalle Pihlainen's *Cultural History and the Entertainment Age*, or Peter Burke's *Strengths and Weaknesses of Cultural History*, and Harvey Green's *Cultural History and the Material(s) Turn*. The latter category of papers, those that deal with *how to write cultural history*, are, I believe, a testimony of a new stage in the development of historical research and (cultural) history writing. A time both intellectually productive, but one that also witnesses a sort of a crisis, or otherwise said, a period that resembles, a bit, with a desperate search for better, more flexible epistemological 'tools'. But, no need to despair, for times of crisis may announce periods of new type of writing. In this logic, Cohen's paper and Pihlainen's tempt me to address the following question: do epistemological aspects weight really that much when writing about totally non-scientific/non-scientist, sublunary events and beliefs?

<sup>(253)</sup> Also on this subject (but in the case of post World War 2 France) see, for example, from Jean Sévilla's book, *Le terrorisme intellectuel* (2000), chapter *Black, blanc, beur*. (for this review I consulted the Romanian version of the book – see Sévilla 2007).

<sup>(254)</sup> See for example the first paragraph (and not only) on page 228, which is packed with footnotes.

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# ***Artefacts Culture and Identity. International History for Cultural History Annual Conference***

(Istanbul, 11-14 September 2013)

**Radu-Ciprian ȘERBAN**  
PhDc, '1 Decembrie 1918' University of Alba Iulia, Romania

Given the title of the conference, most of the participants – there were more than a hundred scholars and students – chose to contribute with works on realities, practices and objects representative for local history (from all over the globe).

With each of its meanings – 1) an object made by a human being, typically one of cultural or historical interest, and 2) something observed in a scientific investigation or experiment that is not naturally present but occurs as a result of the preparative or investigative procedure – the *artefact* was an ideal choice to suggest the generous 'limits' of issues that the conference were interested in.

There obviously were several proposals for theoretical discussion on concepts (for e.g. *memory boxes*), on connections between cultural history and psychology, on limits of memory and experience or 'autological' studies of cultural history (about 'the invention of culture' or about 'the long history of cultural history'). They demonstrate interest in the conceptualization, the sustained search to promote this type of history as a history of its own. Presentations and debates following one after the other brought into attention problems related to memory and oblivion, national identities, phenomena or practices (e.g. from the medieval love of friends to the post-modern same-sex love, gifting, death and healing festival, the practice of misappropriation, culinary customs, attitude toward other's culture, real and imaginary borders). They discussed competences (reading an Exhibition) or statutes of individuals (the worker, the woman) in different epochs.

Arts and the objects themselves were given the full attention, from figurative art works, furniture, textile, medals, libraries, photography (and even the Finnish wolves) to music, dance, cinematic heritage, architecture, fiction - not to mention the so called "virtual artefacts", as *social media*.

Since it is one of the most widely factors of union and dissension, and thus a 'good'

reason to make distinction between identities, religion – with its specific objects, practices and manifestations – could not miss the attention of researchers. On this topic, I attended the interesting presentation about a reconstructed identity in Finnish Lapland (*Whose heritage, and whose tradition?*), but most fascinating on this topic was the visit to the Armenian Hospital Museum in Istanbul – there is also an Armenian church – where the assistant professor Inanç Özekmekçi told us about aspects on history of Armenian identity preservation/re-construction in the Ottoman space.

As already shown, the issue of ethnicity and 'race' was present also. I remember that even in the last day the conference remained as captivating as it used to be. The last paper put down in the program (*Revista ilustrada: esthetic and resistance on the political art of Angelo Agostini*), that of professor Rogéria de Ipanema, brought into attention the personal enterprise of a journalist against the slavery in the Empire of Brazil. I remember well those 'satiric poetry creating a morphology of contestation and protest', those images that the presenter of the paper talked about with the same passion and charm we talked in the little breaks we had from a session to another.

As a paradox, some things are subject to oblivion even though they stay in a great museum. Obviously, a conference is not an object. As for me, this was the first international conference that I attended abroad, and will not forget it. I guess each one would be grateful to the organizers (especially to Rainer Brömer, Philipp Amour, Hakan Ertin and Inanç Özekmekçi). Friendly discussion, cultural exchange, scientific news – we had all these in a few sunny days at Istanbul! The conference progressed smoothly and appeared well planned to all.

Finally yet importantly, during a Bosphorus cruise I meet Professor Peter G. McCaffery who friendly asked me questions about Romania. I hope my text will be a little piece among things remembering us about him.