Romanian Cultural Identity and Education for Civil Society

Romanian Philosophical Studies, V

edited by

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Introduction

With the brutal seismic upheaval in 1989, it seemed from outside that thought had achieved a certain normality; yet on the level of the national psyche there continued to be anxieties, changes and demands for greater equilibrium in the collective as well as in the individual conscience. During a period of two or three years even the words "model" and "ideal" were banished from the vocabulary for fear that these words, through a kind of magic, would bring back the epoch of the "ideal" embodied in the person of the Leader. At the present time, however, at least on the intellectual level, there is a return to the logic and need of the ideal.

In this context, the present volume represents one tendency and direction in the search for a model, namely, that of redeeming of the national self by real knowledge and by rebuilding self-respect.

In a spontaneous and independent way, the authors of the studies assume ethical positions conceived mainly through a Christian filter. Moreover, each author felt the need to draw upon educational examples and suggest concrete models to be followed, detached from theory.

Part I on the construction of Romanian identity is especially fascinating as it weds the capacities of modern philosophy to the mythic dimensions of ancient and village Romanian culture to constitute a special sense of life and of community.

Here Chapter I, by Michaela Alexandra Pop, "An Ontological Definittion of the Romanian Important Identity," examines especially the insights of Micea Vulcanescu (1904-1952) regarding Romanian identity in terms of unity and individuality, finding it to be pre-critical or mythic. It has no nothingness or ontological impossibility, no imperative or irremedirable situation. Together this sets a special Romanian spirit and personality with particular capabilities for community and harmony.

Madgalena Dumitrana in Chapter II, "The Reconstruction of the Human: Social and Individual Destiny in Romanian Philosophy," also studies the thought of M. Vulcanescu and its special insights regarding individual and social values. This entails a special view of salvation through faith which is accomplish through living for others. It approaches philosophy and religion in terms of the person's search for an authentic way to life, for genuine self-definition. Whatever the person's life span, the main problem is authenticity. Both philosophy and religion help the person in this endeavor, outlining the paths to be followed. The author of the study chooses as the best solution the model offered by this thinkers who, looking into the world of the ideas, have found God everywhere. Whether their theory is lay (D.D. Rosca, Mircea Eliade) or openly Christian (Mircea Vulcanescu), they share a few ideas:

- Moral values have to be the criteria for all other values.
- There can be moral values without a Christian attitude.
- Society is as it is; the person has to work for society without abandoning his moral ideals.
- There is no individual happiness without the happiness of others.
- The person has to regain real communication with the others, with himself and with God.
- The purpose of human life is salvation that can be reached only through faith, courage and inner freedom.

Thus, Romanian philosophers are aware of the suffering and drama of existence. Understanding human weakness and the need for help, they follow not only in their theory, but more importantly in their lives the path of courage, compassion and faith. Individual destiny regains its meaning only in correlation with the collective fate. To pursue this path one needs the moral heroism that can be born only in Christianity. Thus they acknowledge existential concern, but argue primarily for heroic "courage and action, based on charity that springs from faith and leads to faith. Dumitrana proposes that in the face of the postmodern disarray Romania needs precisely this sort of moral heroism.

Chapter III, by Magdalena Dumitrana, "Intelligibility of the Spiritual Message in the Present Context," is a powerfully realistic message regarding the difficulties of the present generation in appreciating the spiritual dimensions of the Romanian heritage. It looks into J. Habermas' communication theory for suggestions on how to proceed and considers the ability of the Church to respond.

Chapter IV, by Michaela Alexandra Pop, "The Duality of Reason and Faith in Mircea Florian's Thought," explains the "ontological philosophy" of this influential Romanian philosopher (1888-1960). Florian proposes that the structure of being is composed of bi-polar unities: each polarity is a combination of a "dominant" and a "recessive" element which are not in fact contradictory but mutually supplemental. Pop treats Florian's duality of Reason and Faith in this ontological context, showing how in the bi-polar scheme they do not negate each other because they are asymmetrical. Pop concludes by showing how Florian's solutions can help Romania and the world today.

In this study Michaela Alexandra Pop aims to bring into the cultural conscience the problem of the relation between science and religion by one of the greatest Romanian philosophers, Mircea Florian. In this thought science is considered in a global and philosophical whole within which forty fundamental dualities are found. Among these the dominant position belongs to the duality of reason and faith. Being Christian, he tries to save religion without renouncing science, in other words he attempts to harmonize what seemed to be in disharmony. In this way, his analysis is both detached, being that of a scientist, as well as personal as the position of a believer.

In present Romanian society, which is in a transitional stage, not only from the point of view of the socio-economic and political features, but also and more importantly from the spiritual angle, the arguments developed by Mircea Florian carry weight due to their power for clarification. As the philosopher was "forgotten" during the communist years, his ideas present an impression of freshness and novelty for the present generation.

Starting from Mircea Florian's conception of reason, faith and mysticism, Professor Pop attempts to clarify its possible implications for the discussion about the role of religion in present Romanian society. The previous period, with its imposed atheistic ideology hindered good communication between religion and other segments of the civil society, especially that of education. Together with Mircea Florian, the author considers the tragedy of the modern world to be the separation between science and religion and sees religion as well as secular mysticisms as equally holding risks for civil life.

Chapter V, by Mihaela Czobor-Lup, "The Tension between Philosophy, History and Politics in Forging the Meaning of Civil Society in Romanian Philosophical Culture," examines three outstanding Romanian writers. The work proceeds from Vulcanscu on the meaning of expressive individualism as itself establishing an order in the very process of liberty's evading order; through Nue Nicolae Ioenescu and the temptation of Machievellism in which the failure of a culture is also

a construction; to Iorga on the individual and community in a certain post modern sense that questions the supremacy of reason found in much of Western philosophy.

Chapter VI, by Marin Aiftinca, "Universalism and Nationalism," treats the issue of national identity in a global times. All recognize the extremes to which fornational identity went in the interwar period and hence the potential danger today of our intensified sense of cultural identity. At the same time we remember well the oppressive totalitarian character of international ideologies which suppressed identities, persons and whole peoples. He is sensitive of the need for global or universal integration of concerns and for the dangers this could entail for personal and cultural identities. Perhaps the major task of the present is precisely how to combine these. This suggests the task not broached here of opening the level of metaphysical reflection at which identities are seen not in terms of contrasts but of relations. Here to the degree that one is personable and lives to the full one's national and cultural identity one is related to others.

Part II, "on Education for Civil Society," turns from the nature of the Romanian identity and its metaphysical and religious grounding to the process of educating new generations to share in this identity in the midst of changing times.

Chapter VII, by Gabriel Albu, "Romanian Pedagogy between the Two World Wars and the Problem of Freedom in Education: Contemporary Issues," examines the creative flurry of pedagogic research and activity in interbellum Romania, 1918-1939. The pedagogues Narly, Gavanescul, Antonescu, Petrescu and Gabrea are all represented. Albu demonstrates that Romanian pedagogy steered its own path between the Western models of 'New Education' emphasizing subjectivity and permissiveness, on the one hand, and Germanic Rigorism, on the other. Romanian educators stressed freedom and individuality, but did so as self-controlled introducing a properly spiritual dimension which the Western models lacked.

Gabriel Albu follows the course of tradition within the field of education, stopping at the one of the most fertile pre-communist Romanians. The two world wars both marked fundamental events in the history of Romania: the first brought Grand Romania—the union of the all Romanian territories—while the end of the Second World War marked the beginning of the communist period. The respite between them was a time of extraordinary development, within which emerged the great names of Tristan Tzara, Constantin Brancusi, George Enescu, Mircea Eliade, Mircea Vulcanescu, Eugen Ionesco, Emil Cioran, Henry Coanda. Education advanced also within this broad progress, raising and solving important issues of human formation.

In the authoritarian educational atmosphere of the epoch, Romanian educators claimed freedom for the students. Some points of reflection were highlighted: the relationship between individual liberty and society, the liberty of the individual related to the moral freedom, and human happiness.

Concerning the relation of individual liberty and society the following principles were evolved.

- The liberty of the society cannot be mistaken for the freedom of the individuals which compose the community.
- Every individual has the right to his or her own freedom, as well as the right to be helped in achieving it.
- The liberty of the individual supposes discipline; real freedom manifests itself only through community life; expressing oneself should be only within the limits of social harmony.

The issue of the individual with regard to moral freedom is resolved thus: individual liberty cannot work apart from morality; it can be understood only as moral freedom. Freedom requires necessarily a certain orientation or sense, which is given by the moral law. Hence, Romanian educators see observance of the moral law leads to the acquisition of inner freedom. The problem of happiness depends on the moral law which claims that one's happiness is to be sought in the happiness of the others. This kind of problem is not at all outdated. Present Romanian society, as a milieu of pluralism, difference, disagreements and confrontations, calls for initiative on the part of educators in rebuilding a pedagogy of freedom. This is described as pedagogy of changes, of supporting each one's own way to be and to be more fully; it is a pedagogy of sincerity, of communication and rationale dialogue.

Chapter VIII, by Michaela Alexandra Pop, "The Promethean Man Easternward or Westernward," provides a rich historical perspective on the conservative dimension of the Romanian spirit, develops a study of universalism and individualism in the philosophy of culture, and concludes with Vianu in a rejection of individualism as an aberration that generates extremism.

Chapter IX, by Carmen-Maria Mecu and Nicolae Mecu, "Paradigms of 'Junimea' in Education for a Civil Society," recounts the history of Junimea, a Romanian literary association of the 2nd half of the 19th century, which has had profound good influence on Romanian society. Founded by Titu Maiorescu, Junimea represents freedom, the 'critical spirit', rational authority, and tolerance: the Mecus show how the memory of Junimea has been a rallying-point for responsible freedom throughout the 20th century against Fascism, Marxism, and today's value-free postmodernism.

One solution for rebuilding a new society out of the ashes of the transition could be drawn from the history of literature. Carmen-Maria Mecu and Nicolae Mecu suggests bridging the gap in this respect between the tradition and the modernism within the Romanian society which is now in transition.

One important modes is to re-analyze the ways of communication in society. In this respect the task is to find appropriate models in one's own traditional culture. This model is found by the authors in the activity of Junimea literary association. The Gunma cultural association, whose name comes from the Latin meaning "young," was set up in another period of transition of Romanian society, namely, that from a patriarchal to a modern market economy and democracy. Whenever in Romanian history a crisis of values arose in the consciousness of citizens, humanist intellectuals appealed to the spirit of Junimea. This is perhaps the reason why during the first two decades of the communist regime in Romania (1948-1960), Junimea thinking and literature were either totally denied or selectively published and dogmatically interpreted. After this period, a partial revival took place, at least in literature and in this way the movement "back to Junimean" actually meant a new beginning of the dialogue with Europe. Keeping in mind that Junimea proposed the concept of literature independently from political power, one can appreciate how great was its step within an authoritarian and paranoid regime.

Junimea established a model of freedom in association and also one of non-bureaucratic efficiency. It promoted practical discourse in almost all fields of social life, trying to define the problems as well as to find some solutions. Junimea promoted a tolerant spirit regarding diversity, as well as a critical view on the evaluation of values. Not least Junimea called for balance between personal and community interests. Starting from the ideas and values promoted by Junimea, the authors of the study list a few principles which can contribute to a restoration of socio-human communication in present Romanian society.

Chapter X, by Mihaela Roco, "The Stages of Moral and Religious Thinking of Highly Gifted Teenagers," has a strong experimental character, but it's principal axis is religion. The study begins with a few considerations of the general attitudes of the contemporary period with common elements across the countries, including those in post-communist transition. The crisis of the moral and religious values in present society has resulted in a generalized negative orientation for individuals. This crisis is due in great extent to the way in which the moral and religious education of people is carried out.

The study reviews theories on the religious sense as well as the stages of moral development. As a consequence of this review the author analyzes comparatively the stages in the Romanian population with reference to Oser and Gmunder's theory about the universality of the stages of the development of religious judgement and also to Kholberg's levels of moral judgement. The subjects of the research are gifted teenagers—individuals with the greatest chance of becoming influential in the future.

A few results are found: the development of moral and religious judgement is precocious in overgifted teenagers; between the moral judgement and religious judgements there is a certain concordance, especially in the final stages and also in those with a high degree of maturity. The study ends with some suggestions concerning increased efficiency in moral, civic and religious education, with regard to both students and teachers.

Chapter XI, by Magdalena Dumitrana, "In Quest of the Lost Ecumenism," constructs an excellent deep history of ecumenism in the Romanian cultural context. She reaches deeply into the earlier cultural context in terms of the work of such more recent writers as Vulcanescu and Blaga for ideas of great present relevance, but not without clearly identifying opportunities missed and even counter currents. This is a chapter which needs to be read by all, not only within Romania, but across the religions concerned with the unity of civilizations in presently global time.

Chapter XII, by Magdalena Dumitrana, "Mission of Romanian Orthodox Church Today," reviews the history of Romanian Orthodoxy and its characteristics. In this light she develops a strategy for rebuilding the Church after the communist period. This begins with a reconstitution of the internal unity of Romanian Orthodoxy as the sanctification of man leading to a real metamorphosis of society. This requires special attention to popularizing the liturgy, engaging youth, and strengthening family life and clergy education.

Building external unity is especially a matter of developing ecumenical modes of openness and cooperation with other Churches.

The needs, in sum, are urgent: renewal in the theological education of the clergy, developing a more accessible Church language for liturgy and attention to the social or pastoral aspect of mission.

Chapter I
An Ontological Definition of the Romanian National Identity

Mihaela Alexandra Pop

Modern and the contemporary nations have been interested in defining themselves by marking certain limits between themselves and others. From a philosophical point of view, the modern nations (which appeared during the XIXth century) were more preoccupied with defining and characterizing their individuality than with participating in a kind of universality inherited from prior centuries. This passage from the universal (*kata to olon*) to an individual identity had great impact on the political and social levels. The interest in individuality made it possible to acquire knowledge and to appropriate each nation's characteristics. The process went on during the entire XIXth and even during the beginning of the XXth century in countries which had recently gained their independence. Romania is one such nation which won its independence during the second part of the XIXth century and ended this process only after the end of the first world war with the addition of the large territory of Transylvania in December 1918. Being a very young state, it is obvious that it had a lot of problems in defining and maintaining its national identity.

The interwar period was marked by an obvious interest in defining the Romanian identity. This interest was due not only to the influence of an European cultural wave redefining national identities, but also by the internal reason of being a young state with many problems of ethnicities and a variety of minorities.

This interest became manifest at all levels of cultural life: social, political and especially in literature and philosophy. The purpose of this work is to analyze only one philosophical attitude manifested by one of our significant personalities of the interwar period, Mircea Vulcanescu.1

Before beginning the critical presentation of his outlook, we must mention that this interest in the definition of the Romanian identity preoccupied many of our thinkers in the interwar period, not only philosophers but also writers, historians and politicians such as, Emil Cioran, Constantin Noica, Constantin Radulescu Motru, Lucian Blaga, Nicolae Iorga, Garabet Ibraileanu, Stefan Zeletin, *et al*.

This interwar period was marked by two opposite cultural directions: one pro-European oriented toward European achievements, the other self-admiring and oriented toward the promotion of the national specificity, a conservative and traditionalist attitude. The sympathizers of this second attitude felt that the Romanian state could be present in the European context only in terms of its national specificity, an idea inherited from the Romantic period of the XVIIIth and the XIXth centuries, and initiated by German philosophical thinking about *Der Volksgeist*.

One very significant cultural current was orthodoxy, which can be seen as an extension of the Romanian traditionalism during the interwar period.2 This rejected both the "authentic" Romanian values and the "organic" development of the society rooted in the old villages, as well as Western civilization which considered dangerous for the spirit of the region. The main spiritual leaders of the orthodoxy were Nichifor Crainic and Nae Ionescu.

Toward the end of the second decade of the century, several Romanian cultural personalities tried to avoid the "terrifying void" of positivism and technology and to acquire a new "spiritual equilibrium". Attempting to discover the real coordinates of Romanian spirituality and to reorient Romanian culture in a new direction, the younger generation formed an open association called *Criterion*. Among its members were Mircea Eliade (1907-1986), Emil Cioran (1911-1995)

and Mircea Vulcanescu (1904-1952). They had no doubt that they were the missionaries of a new spirituality. They cited Swedenborg, Kierkegaard, Sestov, Heidegger, Unamuno, Berdiaev; they were interested in orphism, theosophy, oriental mysticism and ancient religions; they talked about the providential mission of their generation, criticized capitalist mediocrity and materialism in all its forms. Their mission was to realize the unity of the Romanian soul, to determine the spiritual reconstruction of Romania as their forerunners had achieved its political unification.

Vulcanescu's attempt to define the Romania specificity or identity can be better understood in this spiritual context. His fundamental study in this sense is *The Romanian Dimension of Being* (*Dimensiunea romaneasca a existentei*) written between 1940-1944. It is an ontological study, but not from the classical point of view. The author warns us from the beginning that the Romanian categories of understanding are not Kantian deduction. His study is, in his opinion, a "phenomenological description of the idea of being in Romanian thinking". The author explains that his analysis is not oriented to a presentation of various conceptions about the Romanian dimension of being, but toward the linguistic configuration and the structure of the main symbols of the Romanian people, in other words, the basis of Romanian thought. "The purpose of his study is to reveal the profile of the collective mentality concerning the problem of being. The author seek a typology of the Romanian mentality, a category of its ethnic apriories The reason of such a study is founded in the modern idea that each ethnic collectivity has its proper way of understanding the world. "Each forms for himself a certain idea about the world and about man based on the dimension in which being is projected in himself."[3]

The author's purpose is to answer questions like: "When we say that something happens, does it happen in a Romanian way? Have we such a pattern? Do we use it to valuate or to critisize ourselves? Do we use it to understand others?"[4] He admits that the idea of being is a complex one and that it can have various meanings. We can think it in a quantitative manner or in a qualitative, formal, abstract way, that is, the characteristics of all that exists or of each thing individually. Such a classical distinction would be that between existence and substance or essence.

In quantitative terms, it has two aspects: unity and multiplicity, whole and part. Unity reveals the nature or specificity; it is only one, rich, strong, and always the same and identical to itself. Multiplicity reveals the creature, each living being, the facts or happenings; it is multiple, weak, unstable, always changing and under the sign of destruction.

The Quantity of Being

Being as Unity

The author remarks that the Romanian people consider the world not only as either spatial or temporal, but as both temporal and spatial at the same time. It is a continuous becoming which can be projected spatially, temporally, or both. This continuous becoming, passing or flowing has also a name which is a homonym of that of having a party or passing joyfully a certain period of time. The entire existence of the world is seen as a great pomp, showiness or display that fills time and the space. But all these have their proper time and space in the world. The world is in good order and arrangement, but this is not absolute. This is due to the fact that there is in this world something weak, some principle of disorder, a certain autonomy that makes it possible that not all the things could be complete and in their place. Thus, they do not manifest themselves in due time, imposing a search or wait. For the Romanian the world is a becoming world.

However, it is not only a passage from one state to another, but has also a dimension of fulfillment, of accomplishment; it has depth. Thus, an interpretation of the "signs of times"—not only signs of rain and storm, but also of wars, of times—is possible. This Romanian way of thinking is dominated by "the feeling of a vast universal solidarity".5 Each fact "vibrates" in the entire world. In this way, we can understand why one's life is connected to the destiny of a star or one's bad action can darken the sun and the moon, "Thus, a first characteristic of the Romanian dimension of being is the fact that it is considered in his entirety, it is considered a unity, a totality."

A second characteristic, specific to the entire medieval thinking, as Vulcanescu mentions, is the idea that all the things have a sense, a significance; the world is a book of signs. The Romanian world is not neutral or indifferent; "it is a world governed by good or evil forces, by calls and silences, by displays, appearances and screenings." Each thing in this world is an existence or being, and has something to say to one who knows how to listen to it. Plurality, dynamism and animism represent another dimension of the Romanian being. This generates such phrases as: "The Romanian was born to be a poet," or "the Romanian is unstable," or the remark about "Romanian skepticism" or lack of practical sense and perseverance.

This Romanian world includes not only the real, sensitive world but also the "other one," *l'au dela*. The passage from here to there is performed by a change in the nature of being. The other world is not outside our world. The other world includes this world, fills it and fulfills it. Thus, there is no gap, no essential rupture between here and there; there is only a passage or custom gate.

Vulcanescu gives an example for this special meaning of the adverb "there, over there". Romanians named the Romanian people who used to lived in Transilvania before 1918 (the year of national unification) "our brothers from over there" as they also name their dead relatives "those from the over there". The distinction between what is here and what is there is made by other criteria than those used in the West. First, the world of here is not only a world of "presences," *hic et nunc*; it includes also things that "used to be" but "they are no more" as well as things that "could be" but "are not yet". In this way, from a Western point of view the Romanian world is a mixture of being and nonbeing; thus, the world "over there" appears as something that exceeds the world of presence. In this way, the whole passage of things happens simultaneously both on the plane of *hic et nunc* and on an eternal plane. The dimensions of height and width are applicable also to heaven and hell; even heaven should not be situated "here," but "there".6

The idea of "nowhere" does not mean something outside the world, but the lack of capacity to place or situate something inside the world. The world is both whole and "everywhere". Things inside it are not situated in a stable place, in their place. They "go," "pass" and sometimes "come back". "Over there" does not mean "outside" but "otherwise," "in a different way". Thus, it is only a form of relation or modality, not something essential.

Being as Individuality

Multiplicity in opposition to unity reveals each individual creature: the happening, the individual and God.

The author draws attention to a significant word in Romanian (insindividual) which comes from the Latin *ens=subtance*, essence. This is an interesting transformation from the Latin meaning of essence and unity toward the significance of singularity itself. Vulcanescu makes another distinction between this "ins" (individual) considered as a relatively stable aspect of the being and what happens. "The individual is a permanent substrate and unity of characteristics, happenings and facts."7

The author goes on to make other distinctions within the concerns of multiplicity and individuality. He discovers the distinctions between creature (being) and thing, and between masculine and feminine which are very important for the Romanian mentality. The individuality of each being (human being—"ins") can afterward be determined on a logical plane by such notions as "chip" (image, face, modality), fundamental for his/her "root," (justification, motivation of existence) as a sum of all his/her possibilities, and "soarta" (fate) as a line of all his/her happenings.

For Romanian popular metaphysics, God is a real being, but paradoxically alone, existing over all existences, an individual ("ins") above essence, but omnipotent for this essence; and the prototype of masculinity. Thus, Vulcanescu considers that the idea of real existence has generated in the Romanian language a type of existence specific to human beings which could be developed not toward an energetic personalism, but toward a theophanic one. In this direction, the individual is finally an illusion, a mirror and a nonindependent phenomenon of the universal, being. This can explain, in the author's opinion, the Romanian "fatalism defined as an integration of the human being into the universal rhythm." This has as direct effect a ritualist dimension of any Romanian activity.

The Quality of Being

If we take into consideration the other category, the quality of being, there are two other aspects: (a) being as a characteristic: the fact and modality of being: and (b) the negation of being.

Being as a Characteristic

Vulcanescu considers the idea of being in Western thinking as something that takes place. The German *Wirklichkeit* or the French 'realite' express, from distinct directions, the same idea because they connect it to time and space. The Romanian significance of "it happens" is not only "it takes place," but also a place in time. The word "happening" (*intamplare*) means that a thing is being transformed or it "passes". For a Western, a thing is placed in space, takes place, thus, it is exists; for the Romanian, "what happens has its being even before existing and keeps it even after it is no more in this world." It is a "passage" through this world, not a "creation". Thus, the being seems to have at the same time both temporal and spatial dimensions.

The Romanian language has another significant word: to suffer, suffering (*patimire*) which means not only suffering (having physical or psychological pains) but also a metaphysical alternation of the being as submitted to the act of someone else. Vulcanescu remarks a certain inheritance here from the Aristotelian category of passivity. Existence is not a sum of actions but a multiplicity of happenings understood as changes of states under the influence of someone else. Thus, the human being is "under the power of times" as one of our historiographers said.

Negation of Being

The author starts from a characteristic of the Romanian as having always a critical attitude, tempted to be against any proposal. But this opposition does not destroy what he denies; he creates a reality that enriches. If the Western mentality separates any possibility of existence from impossibilities, the Romanian does not operate in the same manner. Vulcanescu considers this Romanian negation not as existential, but as essential.8 Thus, the Romanian opposes a way or

manner of being, not the fact itself of being. He does not absolutely reject something, but only marks a limitation. This distinction makes it possible to understand and explain the Romanian's conciliatory attitude. In fact, nobody can be, in his opinion, absolutely another person, just as no one can be absolutely different. The Romanian negation "it is not" is only a relative one. It is always supposed that it is not here or there or like this or like that; it is not yet. The Romanian negation is always, in Vulcanescu's opinion, the negation of a *quomodo* or of a *quod esse*, but not of a pure and simple esse. Even *not to be* does not have an absolute meaning. The entire ontology is, for him, regaional amid the whole being, a manner of being. Existence is recognized in a plane of being, but not in all the planes. The negation is only an inadequation between one plane and another. Vulcanecu provides a significant example to prove his theory. If the devil had been Romanian he would not oppose to God's orders an absolute *non fiat*; he would have demonstrated instead that he thought differently and in a better way the situation, etc. Conclusion, the Romanian negation has a luciferic dimension, not a satanic one. If Satan is an existential and active negator, Lucifer only speculates on the possibilities (on the characteristics and possibilities of being).

Another significant word which is analyzed is to annihilate, annihilation ("nimicire") which comes from the Latin *nihil*. That the word "nimicire" has an obvious existential meaning, but only a quantitative one, proves that the Romanian negation is not absolute. What disappears is the aggregate, the image or the structure, but not their being. Even if a person or individual be destroyed, he does not exist *hic et nunc* or is no longer active, but this means he is no longer in this world and in this time. By his past existence in this world he obtained a surplus of being which he retains. Thus, he still is because he can be considered distinct from what is not and which neither is nor was. There are then two planes of existence: a temporal one and that of subsistence: the first plane can be annihilated, but not the second. Annihilation does not reach being itself.

This special meaning of the Romanian negation is full of consequences. A main one is that there is a mixture between existence and possibility. Thus, anything that can be (or can be thought), is. It is, of course, only in a certain manner of being, but it is. Thus, there is a subtle passage from the plane of existence to that of possibility which assures a lyric dimension to Romanian existence. In this way, existence vanishes into a wider space of possibility.

The final conclusion is that the Romanian mentality is pre-critical or mythic and hence: (1) there is no nothingness; (2) there is no absolute impossibility; (3) there is no existential alternative; (4) there is no imperative; and (5) there is no irremediable situation.

1. *There is no nothingness*. The idea of nothingness does not have an absolute plane of existence. This idea proves that a being is not here, is not like this or that, or is not any more. In other words, it shows a certain deviation from its absolute way of being toward the way of being into the world or its submission under the power of time. It is thus, a certain deviation from unity to multiplicity. Here a Platonic influence (*The Sophist*) is obvious.

2. *There is no absolute impossibility*. If the existence has a regional meaning and if the negation discusses only the way of being and not the fact of being, it results that there is no absolute impossibility of being. Anything that can be taken into consideration, is. We could say that thinking in this way, there is no distinction between the real sensitive plane of being and the rational spiritual plane. The real plane of existence for Romanian thinking should be, in this case, the plane of possibilities, of virtualities, the plane where all things do exist in all their ways of being, actualized and nonactualized and even actualizable and nonactualizable. Vulcanescu considers this characteristic to be oriental. Behind the real, sensitive existence one can find what can be; thus the ancient notion of becoming is not an augmentation of being, but a reduction of possibilities. The

virtual dominates the actual. In these conditions, the Romanian does not consider lack of success in life to be a tragedy.

3. *There is no alternative*. Vulcanescu mentions that the Romaninan people is not pragmatic. This is proved by the prevalence of hypothetical attitudes over categorical ones. The verbal modes preferred by the Romanian language are those referring to the possibility or the future conditional as in the phrase: "What would have been if it had been otherwise than it was?" The conditional and the optative prevail over the simple future; the hypothetical plane is dominant. To choose one alternative means to stop on one of multiple possibilities. At the same time, the fact that it is enough only to think all these possibilities and that they belong to the same plane of existence annihilates the existential sense of the alternative; the imperative to choose among possibilities is annihilated. The "it cannot be possible to not…" which characterizes "necessity" becomes no longer useful. The decision is understood as a border, as a limit. It is a "choice among alternatives" and Romanian word for it refers to concrete, real borders among lands and countries (a hotara, hotarare; hotar=border).

4. *There is no imperative*. The consequence of the lack of decisions is to modify the significance of the imperative. The Romanian imperative has not the demiurgical sense of the Latin *fiat*! It is neither an order, nor the expression of a powerful will; it is an acceptance or agreement. Something similar to "Be it your will!". Vulcanescu considers that the imperative is felt by the Romanian as a lack of order in this existence or as a disharmony. The condition of legitimacy is felt as an organic harmony, as freedom.

As a consequence, the Romanian is not disposed to pragmatic attitudes, to practical, activity, to the end of an effort. He is tempted by the moments of his journey (work), not by its end. This can explain his special interest in the calendar. This interest is not a factual or practical one, but the consciousness of belonging to a unity. The calendar makes him capable of situating himself in the world. Thus, his act or activity is a communication, a gesture, a ritual, measured by its function, not by its result.

5. *There is no irremediable situation*. The Romanian does not have the feeling of an absolute loss, the feeling of something irremediable; thus he feels that facts are not so important. That is why any statistical report in Romania which is intended to be precise and accurate, will not be so. This is due not to the lack of scientific methods, but to the fact that the analyzed events are not very substantial from the Romanian point of view. What determines the Romanian to act is not the result of facts, but the need to be in agreement with the order of things, the need to fulfill his destiny.

Vulcanescu considers that there are two important consequences to this attitude: 1. The Romanian does not judge his existence as a very important problem; 2. he is not afraid of his death.

1. His existence is, as any other existence, a game of possibilities. He does not take it seriously. Thus, he will not be attentive or have a clear perspective on his future. This lack of interest is not indifference. What may be will be, and what is not could not be here, but it will be somewhat else. He is not hurried because any thing has its right time and he knows that.

On the other hand, Vulcanescu draws attention to certain moments in Romanian history when there was an impressive feeling of history, when a consciousness of responsibility called the attention of the people to present actual facts, something of a *now or never*, the danger of losing everything for a long, long period. But Vulcanescu considers this attitude as a fever of the moment. In Vulcanescu's opinion, this feeling is a periodic one in the history of the Romanian people: the

revolution of 1848 or the war for independence in 1877. After such moments, the Romanian nation return to its "sleepy" attitude. We could mention also the postwar period or even the post '89 attitude. This Romanian attitude is based, in Vulcancscu's opinion, on the vision of eternity; one has the feeling of participating to the eternal. This feeling comes from ritual and symbolic behavior.

2.The lack of fear of death is exemplarily expressed by the shepherd in *Miarita*, the national ballad. He is not afraid of his destruction, but wants to obey a certain cosmic order.

This phenomenological study applied to the ontologic dimension of being can be completed by some other antropological studies on the "Romanian Man". Vulcanescu considers that the basis of a nation is given by the metaphysical dimension mingled in the history of that nation: the "unity of fate, of destiny, the unity for which land, blood, past, law, language, custom, thinking, belief, virtue, work, living places, ways of clothing, pains, happiness, and signs of living together, ruling and oppression represent only proofs and signs of recognition."

The author presents a theory of "temptation" as possibilities of being, as stimuli with minimum resistance. In this sense, he finds several such "temptations" for Romanian spirituality and its becoming.

- the Dacian temptation is considered basic;
- the Roman temptation gave us the sense of laws, our character and consistency;
- the Byzantine temptation provided our politics and spirit of brightness and splendor, but also the spirit of intrigue, robberies and, on the other hand, tolerance and wisdom;
- the Slavic temptation gave us the sense of religiosity, but also flabbiness, excessive enthusiasm, tactfulness and tenderness;
- the French temptation gave us the easiness of expression, the spirit of imitation;
- the German temptation generated the interest for insight, the spirit of metaphysics;
- the Jewish temptation made a large contribution in arts, the exteriorization of feelings;
- the Hungarian and Polish temptation is, in Vulcanescu's opinion, a form of the Roman temptation mingled with the Byzantine one;
- the Balcanic (Greek-Bulgarian) temptation is a new form of the Byzantine one trivialized;
- the Gipsy temptation gave us nerve, affection, noisy expression, charm, synthesis and the picturesque life of suburbs.

As we can see, Vulcanescu makes an analysis of cultural anthropology. We could comment on some of these characteristics and their belonging to one or other "temptation," but this does not greatly change the scheme for it is a characteristic one. Together with Lucian Blaga and Constantin Noica, Vulcanescu laid the basis of this phenomenological analysis of identity in our culture. Its analysis defines the dimensions of the Romanian identity from an anthropological and ontological point of view. Though some of the data have changed a little during the last 50 years, due to the modifications in the Romanian mentality caused by communist behavior and cultural politics, as well as by urban life, these identity dimensions remain basic. It would be better for our leaders, as well as for our people, if the leadership would take into consideration such aspects when they have to make important decisions for our future.

Notes

1 Mircea Vulcanescu (1904-1952) was a philosopher, sociologist, economist and professor of

ethics. He was Professor Dimitrie Gusti's assistant and took part in many monographic research travels. He was one of the main figures of the Criterion Association of the interwar "young generation". Between 1937 and 1944 he was interested in the elaboration of an ontological model of the Romanian man which was published in the following works: The Romanian Man, The Dacian Temptation, Real Existence in Romanian Metaphysics and The Romanian Dimension of Being. During the Second World War he controlled the finances of the country in Ion Antonescu's Government. Afterward, he was judged and condemned to eight years of prison by the communist power. He died in prison at Aiud.

2 Keith Hitchins, "The Orthodoxism: Controversy about Ethnicity and Religion in Interwar Romania," in *Myth and Reality*.

3 Mircea Vulcanescu, *Dimensiunea Romaneasca a existentei*, vol. 3, Editura Eminescu, Bucuresti, 1996, p. 165.

4 *Ibid.,* p. 167.

5 *Ibid.,* p. 173.

6 *Ibid.,* p. 176.

7 *Ibid.,* p. 178.

8 *Ibid.,* p. 185.

Chapter II
Reconstruction of the Human:
Social and Individual Destiny in Romanian Philosophy

Magdalena Dumitrana

The most evident proof of humanity in man is evinced at the time he starts to ask himself about his own being. "Who am I?" and "Why am I here?" are the foundation stones of spirituality, the beginning and the end of man's dream on this earth; questions that are the seeds of philosophies, religions and poetry (1). Frightened by the vastness of the universal ocean, the individual has felt the need to make himself master of the only thing over which he has a right: the small boat of his own being. The only helpers in this endeavour are God in heaven and on the earth, one's fellowman. The very different nature of these two aides makes that man's first step in metaphysics at the same time both a union and a separation with them, since the endless effort in philosophy is to reach an equilibrium between up and down.

The double feature of human action in all its hypostasis—of simultaneous approaching and separating—accompanies the whole history of the individual and community. 'Up and down' as metaphorical-spatial places are symbols of the dualism of human spiritual life. In this context, one of the major dualities of philosophical discussion throughout time—a theme always rediscovered and resumed delightedly as it seems—is that of the relationship between the personal and the social in striving after an authentic individual freedom.

Individual or Society

Looked at from the most diverse angles, the relation between individual and society seems to meet a certain agreement on a point; namely that this rapport is unfavorable. But which term is unfavorable seems to constitute another point of controversy that is solved variously depending on the context of the discussion: philosophical, psychological, socio-political, etc. Referring especially to the philosophical literature, the conception shared by the majority opinion is the one looking at the man as an 'enchained' soul in society. Whether this 'enchainment' is seen as necessary or not, the oppressive character of community against its members is generally accepted. Or even more, in this respect, speaking about the existence of an antagonism between the world of spirit and the world of the a-spiritual, the Romanian philosopher D.D. Rosca considers that one of the strongest expressions of this tension is that of the relation between spiritual individuality and the social environment. The social value of the person, he says, is rarely proportional to his spiritual value; excepting a few great personalities, these two values are not equivalent. As a rule, the grandeur of a man who is spiritually rich is not 'social', and is not socially recognized (2).

A specification is required here, connected to this affirmation. Though it speaks of man and the human condition, philosophy seldom approaches the human being as such. The common man or ordinary person is not considered, but the special man who raises himself above the average: the person who does not represent the rule among people, the man who is capable of contemplation. In a word, what concerns philosophy is the fate of the philosopher.

On the other hand, the common people tend constantly, if not for themselves but mainly for their successors, towards raising above the pragmatic level and sometimes towards meditative elevation. In this context then, the philosopher's dialogue with the world receives a more

comprehensive content, including also the dialogue of the future philosopher with a society preserving the present. Therefore, though the metaphysical approach has an ideal character, in this case its resonance is practical and temporal, including both regular and special people.

A second important topic of the philosophical debate, linked to the first one in a way, is the theme of human involution and of the spiritual regression both in individuals and in society. Interesting argumentation of this point of view can be found in another Romanian philosopher, Mircea Vulcanescu. The essential features of the present world, he says, are two in number and these traits produce a deep alteration of the existential attitude, defining at the same time the features of human action in the modern epoch.

The first characteristic is theoretical and is expressed through the substitution of the theological conception about existence by a naturalistic point of view.

In the previous periods called by the philosopher the "theological epoch", man's life experience is centred on the feeling of belonging. The world is a closed structure, round and harmonious. The main relationship inside of it is determined by the Divine intentionality, by the link between man and God (3).

At the present time, yet, M. Vulcanescu affirms, the world of God is broken; the understanding and the experience of the existence as a totality being lost, the universe loses its coherence and the man becomes or rather, feels himself as a son of the chaos. The absolute seems to him only an empty abstraction; the only fulcrum he sees is the concrete world which is intelligible for him. Being able to touch it, he gains a feeling of security.

Due to the need of stability and security, in a compensatory wish for power, the man takes upon himself the attributes of the Divinity. In the centre of the universe that becomes now his, he builds the altar of his own deed, invested with demiurgical qualities; thus, he creates, for his own use, a new religion which busies itself with the worship of human acts.

Humanity's flight from God's hand, concomitantly with his behaviour of self-deification, are not without consequences at the individual level as well as the community's. A first result is the fact that the contemplation loses its value, being replaced by the action. *Homo faber* shades *homosapiens* (4).

A second effect joined to this new hierarchy is man's enrollment in the battle for power, power to which he becomes a slave; assuming himself the demiurgical quality, he is not able to assume also its real condition, that is, the power of mastering all the consequences of his creations. His victory is the victory of Icarus: the germ of the fall is hidden in the flight.

The third effect of the overthrow of the values surpasses the person, referring to the social; the spiritual erosion embraces the community that, following the example of the shattered cosmos, is also breaking itself. Loosing its integral and unitary character, the human society turns into an atomic society, in a voluntary association of narrow interests. Emptied of reality, of substance, the community appears only as an ensemble of inter-individual relations. Every person feels himself as being so much different from others, perceiving his own person as a stranger to people as they also seem him as strange. Man lives fragmentarily, divided inside, in his psychological life, as well as outside, in his social existence.

Therefore, the main cause of the individual suffering is, according to Mircea Vulcanescu, the forgetfulness and ignorance of the belonging to the universal and the partial experiences that modern men have. The appearance of a new phenomenon should be added to Vulcanescu's comments. The people who become gradually aware of this existential breaking and spiritual partition, are no longer only philosophers, individuals spread over here and there in the history of various cultures; today, the intuition of the dangers raised in the way of human becomingness, and

the active anxiety related to that, gain more importance inside social groups, leading them to start inquiries and actions aimed at regaining lost spiritual equilibrium. Evidently, these actions are not defining features of the society today, but still, they are an optimistic signal of certain potentialities of the community.

In fact, Mircea Vulcanescu's intention was never to deny the constructive force of the society, but to warn about the tendency to overestimate the value of the social:

... the establishing of a God-collectivity for replacing the Christian God and Father, assuming the last consequences of Durkheim's religious sociology that substitutes the natural transcendence of the social in place of the absolute transcendence of the Divinity is nothing else but a form of paganism (5).

He supports his affirmation by the example of Roman Empire and Soviet Russia. Soon, the Romanian philosopher had to endure himself a death by martyrdom, being the victim of an excessive sociologizing theory, in his own country (6).

Thus, it remains as an objective datum the fact that the tension between individual and society is a permanent natural phenomenon. Sometimes the conflict is diminished or even solved from the individual's point of view by his entering into a group, a community. He maybe is convinced of the rightfulness of his act, but most often he does that for avoiding a fight. Abandoning his singularity, he decides to be a part of the collective man, yet not as an element of the conscient level of this one, but as a trifling cell; he chooses the anonymity of the mass within which he feels safely; he moves together with the crowd in the virtue of a blind inertness, sure that the whole responsibility devolves upon the leaders.

A second alternative is that of an open acceptance of the opposition between individual and society. Few people choose this path. This opposition, philosophically speaking, is an abstract one; the intelligent man who opposes to the society is not anti-social and his attitude is not one of a total negation, but of a partial rejection; this conduct represents, in fact, a condition for the survival of the two terms of the relation. About it, Vasile Pârvan, a Romanian historian and philosopher, said:

... among people, the law of social existence is not the affinity, but the contrast ... the rhythm of life itself comes out of these conflicts and contrasts. Without them, the man would be predisposed to vegetate. Due to them he is forced to fight. And not only once the new thought of creation emerged from this kind of struggle" (7).

One of the main sources of the disharmony discussed here is that of the discrepancy between the criteria of evaluation. The measure used by the individual to assess himself and the things around is different from the standard used by the society for measuring. The last one appreciates what can be seen, touched, what is good for a concrete use. But the individual who is spiritually rich makes his work in his deep inside and his performance is not easy visible. It is inevitable therefore that his personality be ignored or more, be considered as rebellious. It is the community right not to encourage the deviance from the common view, not to allow opposite forces to aggress on its structures. The healthy community, D.D. Rosca observes, listening to its supreme law, *viz.*, the conservative instinct, looks for keeping—as long as possible—the equilibrium it has previously reached. From historical facts, the Romanian philosopher infers few main conducts of society against the spiritual individuality's "deviance":

- the stronger is a collectivity (that is the societies in which the collective interest is strong emphasized), the easier it sacrifices the individual;

- the State looks not for the promotion of some abstract moral values but for the satisfaction of its own interests. The values and people who embody these values find support in the state only to the extent to which they are useful to the interests of the State;

- the really great personality displeases the community out of which it emerges; as a rule, this kind of personality is unfitted to the political and economic goals and for this reason, the intelligences chosen to serve the State are of a secondary order.

Therefore, D.D. Rosca concludes, the bigger are the inner riches of an individual, the more his attention is centred on the spirit and its often gratuitous values. The spiritual outsider does not seek his goals in the practical life, in the concrete achievements or in the actions directly useful to collectivity. Thus the spiritual personality might appear in the community's eyes not only useless, but selfish and strange, even bizarre; it awakens indisposition and irritation (8).

As a normal reaction, the society eliminates those who do not prove of immediate utility and appropriates those who are ready to serve it and willingly to depersonalize themselves for that. This fact makes Vasile Pârvan, thinking of the members of a future society, to ask himself: what will be the characteristics of the young people? From what position will they decide the destiny of the nation?—as 'priests of food' or as 'priests of self-sacrifice'? (9).

The action of the social against a possible insubordination can take flexible and intelligent forms; it takes into consideration the submissive blind behaviour of the masses, but also the people's fragility as separate persons, exploiting the need for security that pushes them to act for the already existing conservative goals of the community. About this phenomenon, Mircea Vulcanescu affirmed:

... in order to coordinate the ensemble of the collective experiences and when it cannot use the force insinuating and imposing itself in the individual's soul, the collectivity tries to install itself in the individual's mind as an ideal reality, an absolute and transcendental one; in other words, to assume itself in the man's eyes, the attributes of a divinity.

As a matter of fact, this phenomenon as such, responds to an essential demand of the human being—the aspiration towards the absolute and this attempt to reconstitute the unity of a broken universe, even only in the framework of the social, is a proof of the ideal of totality that is still living in man (10).

The image of this almightiness of the social structure—in fact, a human being's work, but gaining a reality of its own, has the resonance of a Kafkian novel. In order to survive in society, man has to obey, willingly or not, rules and norms, that is to restrict its freedom and very often to put himself under the sign of devalorization.

Individual Values and Social Values

What happens then, with the man who, detached from the axis of the universe, is searching for a more tangible support? Far from remaining helplessly, he receives as a guidance, a nucleus of ideas that he faithfully applies. It is natural for him to believe in the reality and the truth of these ideas, for they speak about himself, mirroring him, sending back a complimentary image of his own person. The modern oppressive society is deeply involved in its slave-citizens' 'moral

welfare'. Consequently, the table of values, offered to modern man, is the response and the contrary of the Sermon on the Mount. Here it is this table, as is presented by Mircea Vulcanescu, in the style of a philosophical poetics:

Happy are the satiated ones for the kingdom of this earth is theirs and there is no other world.
Happy are rough ones for they will conquer the earth.
Happy are those terrible and unmerciful for they will not be afraid of anybody.
Happy are those who laugh and enjoy for they de not need anything.
Happy are the daring ones because the repast is for them.
Happy are those who sow the wind for they will be called sons of the storm.
Happy are the statutes for they will find the secret of many things.

And the enumeration continue:

The supreme value is the wealth which makes the man to afford enjoying as many things as he can in his short life on earth.

The power is a sure means to gain wealth; the tools for manufacturing the power are the astuteness, discord, conflict, suspicion, ruthlessness, self-praise, all of them being covered by the hypocrisy in a noble appearance (11).

Are indeed, the wealth and power, negative values in totality? Are they really so harmful that the philosophers have the obligation to anathematize them and to look for a new socialism? Not at all. The excess and the extremism are proofs of weakness, against which must Romanian philosophers guard themselves. More than that, they claim the necessity for spirit to be supported in a practical manner. One cannot create being in a continuous searching for living means, cannot think if has no respite for thinking; a certain material security is requested for keeping alive the strength of the spirit (12).

But what has to be convicted is the idolatry of the material, drawing along the reversal of the values. These values, concerning the role of the power and wealth need, in order to realize their potentialities, not to dethrone the true goals but to remain values-means, as is their essence. Their placement at the highest level of the human aspiration, their investment as life-aims, these are basic errors, generators of excesses in our epoch. Besides the two values-means are overlapped on the value of happiness, being mistaken for the last one. In its turn, the happiness becomes synonymous with the success that can be quantitatively evaluated. In this way a vicious circle is born, in which the spiritual value is appreciated with a material unit of measure and the material value becomes artificially a component of an abstract spiritual hierarchy.

Placing the values in inappropriate places, the result is only a double degradation, both of the spiritual and of the material. The next consequence is obvious: the increase of confusion, the growing of the difficulty or even, the annihilation of the capacity to find the right criterion for a correct judgment upon human existence.

The alteration in the values scale which leads to confusion, mistaking the means for aims and the reversal, and therefore, forgetting the incapacity to find the right criterion in a value judgment, the difficulty to discriminate between what belongs to spirit and what not,— these all determine a fundamental modification of the human condition that is a continuous restraint of man's freedom.

The constitutive element of this liberty that appears to be particularly affected is the aim of the human existence, the man's capacity to find out a purpose for his own life.

The fact that there is and has to exist a goal of life seems to be unquestionable. The idea of irrationality of the human existence or even of the universe, is only a child born by the man's mind and there are no philosophical reasons (excepting those belonging to a philosophical poetics, therefore to a subjective theory) to extoll this infirm product behind the aura of one single individual.

Moreover, the absurdity of the existence is not so much an idea but rather a sentiment and this fact emphasizes the relativity of the affirmation, limiting its sphere of application. Epictetus said that the "people are troubled not by the things in themselves but by the opinions they make about the things" (13). The assertions like the inexistence of an aim in human life or the lack of coherence in man's individual life seem to belong to this sort of opinions. In return, the sense of existence as an affirmative idea, passes beyond the limits of a single individual's imagination, being confirmed by a measurable objective reality in which the individual is part.

What troubles the perception of the meanings is the man's affectivity, his own internal seclusion and fear. Or, these feelings are directly caused by the absence or negative presence of the values (14). As George McLean says, the values are basic orienting factors for one's affective and emotional life (15). In its turn, this emotional disintegration influences the possibility to harmonize rationally the values.

However, excepting pathological situations, the individual finds out in a way or another, a direction in his life, a more or less fair haven that he can reach. This final target must not be assimilated with the purpose of existence and in fact, in this respect, nobody cheats himself. Thus, the relative security of a daily life determines the common person to accept, in an abstract system of reference, the existence of a goal of life and even to name this goal in function of the ideologies of his society. But he remains as helpless as before in explaining the aim of his own life; towards the end of his biological existence, this "what for?" of life, when it appears, generates only a grievous silence.

Where does this weakness of mind come from? What makes the human intellect to reach quickly its limits, trying in vain to answer these questions? The Romanian metaphysics as well as all philosophies bend over this subject, attempting to find some answers.

According to some Romanian philosophers the tragedy of man's fall begins with the loss of the capacity of communication. First of all, he closed the gates of communication with the Divine, walling himself in the tower of doubt. Removed from faith, truth and love become uncertain and relative values. Man attempts now to sustain himself by means of the power of his own mind, without understanding that by this mere act, in fact he closed up the source itself of Intelligence. The salvation through faith, considered before as a supreme goal and value, is replaced with the value of action and more specifically, the value of human action. Man's undertaking to substitute his own person, his temptations and creations for the work of salvation is great and tragic at the same time (16). But unfortunately, it has no truth and does not even lead to its own finding. Thus the man of the present time replaces the faith by the rational doubt and consequently the joy is turned into anxiety and the light at the end of the road becomes the shadow face of Fate. So, it is understandable in this respect that man's revolt against destiny menaces his most precious good— his liberty. Thus, the atheism can be taken also as being a sort of struggle directed rather against the fate than against God. And at a deeper level of atheism, it is accountable why the individual recognizes not even the Fate, preferring to find no meaning for its life than to find a bitter one.

A second gate the man closes is that of the communication with his peers. The idea of people's brotherhood as sons of the same Father is not experienced any more by the modern man. Denying the Divine, even if not as a general, abstract idea, but in this power and interest for action,—he no more can know or recognize this Divine; he cannot find It in the individual Self, or in the Self multiplied in the others. The prevalent sentiment is the alienation; the incapacity to communicate with his fellows makes him see himself far from them; feeling himself misunderstood, he refuses to understand. He uses his personal criteria of judgment as general ones, considering himself as the only owner of truth. Thus the modern man transfers the personal to the universal, granting an absolute character to the transient experiences. It is natural, shows D.D. Rosca, to understand things by experiencing them; and of course, one cannot experience without giving to objects a meaning in relation to his own person and also this meaning is supposed to have a certain value:

... even the purest intelligence, the most unselfish one records the existence according to its preferences that create certain perspectives ... things's existence is measured only by the degree in which they are related to us ... The judgement of existence, "this thing exists", presupposes beforehand the judgment of value: this thing has an interest for me: it 'regards' me (17).

So, the individual projects his personal truth both on the Divine as well as on the things around himself. The simple fact, real or not, of not being heeded by his fellows, is converted subjectively into a castle of solitude and isolation; acting in this way, man does nothing else than go against his own nature, oppressing it in the name of an illusion.

Against his own nature because "what characterizes people and defines them in comparison with other species and with God, is their instinct of transcending, is their thirst to liberate themselves from their own being and to pass into somebody else, the urgent need to break the iron circle of the personality ... The fundamental, predestinated instinct of the human nature is the outlet from oneself, the fusion with the other, the running from a limiting solitude, the élan towards a perfect freedom within the freedom of the other. (18)

The lack of communication between individual and other persons is transferred form the personal level to the community one, both horizontally, concerning the phenomena taking place in present, as well as vertically, reflecting the loss of historical meanings and the sense of belonging to certain group traditions. The link with the community expresses the link with one's own roots, as they are manifested through the cultural heritage. The intrinsic values of tradition, as George McLean affirms, acting as "cultural lenses," help the person to interpret and shape his relation with other persons and groups (19). Or, the very existence of these "cultural lenses" presupposes a free communication between individuals. These channels, once obstructed, hinder the building of a specific cultural framework and lead to a feeling of alienation, to a misunderstood singularity and to fear.

The distortion or the absence of the communication with the community and at a higher level with the Divinity, make the individual fall into a new trap, constructed by himself. This situation generates what Mircea Eliade called the "terror of history" and that is in fact, the social form of the fatalism. The suffering imposed by some groups, communities, upon other groups or communities, takes violent forms such as war or "mild" ones such as physical and psychical crushing. In the authoritarian regimes, this suffering takes the shape of terrible injustice, of the huge absurdness, sinking the human mind and soul, throwing the individual into a historical fatal

universe in which, almost all human beings live as a prey to a permanent terror, even though they are not always aware of that (20).

With the meanings of the community-world collapsing, and the feeling of belonging to each other dissolving, the personal universe of the individual turns slowly from a man-to-man relation towards a man-to-object one. The meaningful attitude towards persons dims and is replaced by a generalized attitude towards objects. In exchange, the objects receive characteristics of persons. Man's life-centre moves in this way from person to object in its various hypostases.

The next step is naturally the utilization of the one's own being as an object and consequently, the fall from the human dignity is accomplished. Therefore, the next bolt used by the man for fastening himself is the negation of his own essence. Without criteria, because he rejects or relativizes them, not trusting in his neighbor's truth, ignoring other sources of judgment, excepting his own intellect which is repudiated finally as generating confusion, the individual enslaves himself willingly to his impotence. On the path of searching for truth and the real, he wanders caught inside of the maze of a too subjective self-knowledge, a labyrinth having no centre and no doors. Therefore the doubts concerning the real meaning of life and its purpose determine almost naturally the meeting with the illogical and disorder in human life. Victims of the blind flood of existence that flows from an unknown source to an invisible end, people feel more and more their incapacity to fight against Fate.

Individual Destiny and Social Destiny

"Towards what?" remains thus the essential question that the human anxiety and restlessness do not cease ask. In other words, the answer relates if not to the aim of life but to its identification at least in terms of sense, of the direction in which the human life flows. For finding an answer to this, perhaps the first duty for man is to restore the harmonic communication with the source itself of his existence:

"The first obligation of man is God's first example, His cosmicization," affirms Mircea Eliade and he then clarifies:

It is true that only God creates; but any individual is able to arrange, to rhythmize and to enliven this creation. The growth and fulfillment are not possible then except through cosmicization. The path is nothing else than the rediscovery of the rhythm which can harmonize us with everything: it is concrete and unique outside of us ...; this harmony is invested with moral features ... and ... the heaviest sin is to refuse yourself to harmonize, but to live incoherently, weakly, abstractedly, unreally; because virtue is harmony and reality (21).

Mircea Eliade's true reality is nothing else than the spirit, existing both in things, as well as in ideas. The harmony with the genuine spirituality is the only sure path towards truth, towards the creation of meaning.

Mircea Vulcanescu offers a more specific solution: the abstention from breaking the world order, and the communion with cosmic harmony both have to be accompanied by the regaining of the sentiment of transcendence as is seen in the Christian approach:

What can be the Christian's position in such a world (as today's)? ...One period of time can be more Christian and another period less so. But the most Christian epoch remains all the time and not in the times the Christian man finds himself in temporally. To those who will say that being

above time we estrange this world and its sorrows, we shall answer that, on the contrary, we shall serve it better; the more we strive to put the real world in its appropriate place, which is to obey God's order, the more we shall be always obliged to meditate on its meaning and on the real meaning of our life which is beyond us. (22).

Therefore, the realisation of the harmony with the Divine, whatever is its name or His hypostasis, is the beginning and the path to the individual's reconciliation with the concrete world, with the community in which he is a part.

Also it has to be clear that in this endeavor, the man has to begin with himself. Not outside but inside of himself,—he will find the most deep and sure help, which is the support of the faith. This would be then, the first issue in the work for the human reconstruction. According to the Romanian thinkers, this is the safest road for reaching liberty. It is about what could be called the "attitude of faith" or more specifically as Mircea Vulcanescu named it, the "Christian attitude" in one's life. Its essential content is the permanent divine presence, the absence of It making the world a "vast desert of salt and ashes" (23).

Only the faith, says Mircea Eliade too, offers to man the possibility of escaping from a slave condition, enabling him with the capacity of absolute emancipation and action, features determining the power to intervene even into the ontological status of the universe ... This faith is the "liberty having its source in God and finding in Him its guarantee and support. (24) Besides the divine level the Christian attitude includes a second one, that of the brotherhood of all people; thus, the real meaning of the commandment "love your neighbour as you love yourself" is in part the sentiment of "being tied to your neighbour by the solidarity of suffering, by the community of faith and the belief that, for better and for worse, there is actually, no salvation only for oneself, but only for the whole humankind"; in this context, the society has to be a "community of ideas, feelings and destiny". (25).

So, according to this vision, the sense of life for every individual can be one only: to attain freedom by divine salvation. But the attitude of faith has not a passive character and it has nothing to do with a contemplative expectation; it is simply the spiritually necessary basis on which the human person builds himself actively and creatively.

Another alternative concerning the reestablishment of human values is offered by philosophical meditation. D.D. Rosca proposes a coherent model of this option, presenting it as the "tragic existence" pattern. His doctrine is meant to open, by means of philosophy, a "way to salvation", a path towards achieving and guarding the moral freedom. For beginning this 'way', the fundamental condition is to be, metaphorically-speaking, a religious man or a philosopher, that is, to inquire into existence, into the meaning of life. This question is generated by the feeling of an inner emptiness and in its turn, generates the same sentiment. There is no desire and no possibility for progressing without this emotional experience. The crucial knot of the theory is the moment when one lives the experience of something missing, the uncertainty concerning the human destiny, the philosophical apprehension facing the unpredictability of life,—all these metaphysical feelings determining the birth of the tragic conscience of existence (26). The metaphysical anxiety is the highest testimony, the surest proof of the existence of humanity in man: it fills his conscience with troubling questions; also, it has a pure selfless character because its pain does not belong only to the individual, but reflects the pain of the whole human race. The experience of the metaphysical anxiety is the moment in which it is decided, "the destiny of the wonderful and troubling reality that commonly and poetically is called: *soul*. It is about our destiny

as a spiritual being, as well as about the fate of the future civilization created by us. There cannot exist a more tragic spectacle than this one"(27).

The tragic conscience is the starting point for an attitude of rebellion and of courage for rejecting the acceptance of the present existence just for the simple reason that it exists. There are two moral attitudes derived from the tragic conscience. One of them is the attitude of pure contemplation of reality, which hides in its detachment, a secret discouragement. In its ultimate form this is called "metaphysical despair". The second one is an attitude of strong inner tension which sublimates itself in a spiritual passion, an action able to transform the real. This second alternative is the only way that, based on a heroic attitude in the fact of existence, can guarantee the moral freedom. The power which individuals acquire under these conditions is charged with a great obligation, that of the responsibility for the others' life and destiny. Thus, the tragic conscience creates a certain "life style" that involves courage, the 'combat', and also, the responsibility for the personal destiny as well as for the community's one. Like the other theories discussed above, D.D. Rosca's conception supposes too, an openness for passing beyond the person's limits towards the group, generally towards the social.

The elements upon which the metaphysical alternative insists is the power born from suffering, the courage to deny everything that tries to stop and limit, the capacity to create the destiny. A few years earlier, in his 'poetical philosophy', Vasile Pârvan noted: "For having an optimistic conception about world and life a strong soul is needed. Only a great enthusiast can believe in the existence of a universal moral law, above the moral ugliness, which apparently prevails in this life. Only an irreducible idealist or a mystic can be sure that the human soul is immortal" (28). What could be, therefore, the means used by man for acquiring this spiritual power?

These are, Mircea Vulcanescu answers, the understanding of the real meaning of suffering and the respect towards the others' grief. The purifying element here is given not by the personal pain but by the reflection of the others' sufferings in the individual and even more, by the reflection in man of the Divinity's sorrow for his own creation (29). In this way one of the main arguments in the pleading for the absurdity of the human existence is removed,—the argument of the inutility and cruelty of the misery in this world. The meaning of pain is, for man, not as much a gain in knowledge but rather a gain in remembering. He becomes able to rediscover what Mircea Eliade called the "normality" of suffering. For the individuals belonging to ancient cultures, the suffering was intelligible, being explained as a consequence of an infringement of the "norm". For the modern man, the opportunity to become aware of the rationality of the suffering can open for him the path towards the discovery of the "norm" and the meaning and of the action in harmony with these (30).

The intelligibility of pain leads to beneficial effects in the resistance of the social groups against the bitterness of the historical events. If the individual's weakness led to philosophies crushed by the "terror of history", to theories worshipping the pessimism, despair, *amor fati*, as virtues, on the contrary the peoples' archetypal belief in a meta-historical sense of temporal suffering helped them to resist and not fall into spiritual dryness or relativistic and nihilistic ideas about history, as some of the philosophical theories do. This opposition against the absurd is due to faith. And it is so, because, as Mircea Eliade asks himself, in our days, when the historical pressure does not allow any evasion, how could man be able to bear the catastrophes and horrors of history,—from deportations to collective massacres,—if behind them there is no foreboding of a sign, of a trans-historical intention...? This strength in the face of the mystery of the inevitable has to be taken over by modern man and enriched with faith:

Only supposing the existence of God, he (the modern man) conquers on one hand the liberty (which gives him autonomy in a Universe directed by laws) and on the other hand the certitude that the historical tragedies have a trans-historical meaning, even if this significance is not always transparent for the present human condition (31).

Another path for obtaining the energy of self-reconstruction and the liberation from 'fate' is that of empathic charity; the offer refers not so much to the material but to the spiritual. The only true human value, says Vasile Pârvan, is our capacity to live in the other's soul (32). And for Mircea Vulcanescu, "only giving from our soul can we live totally and the more we give, the more integrally we live" (33).

The first and the only essential obligation for man is charity, emphasizes Mircea Eliade, and the only means for obtaining personal happiness is to make the happiness of others. This charity is not dictated by prescriptions or by norms; it is not based on "must" but on "is", being a natural normal state in much the same way the flow of life is natural. The cup of soul, emptied of a selfish Ego, is filled with the spirituality of the offering: "The charity which largely floats in this universal life around us will find in our de-personalised being the goblet in which it will be collected for the others" (34). Like union in suffering, union in gift is another form of winning over loneliness and winning the accomplishment of man's fundamental instinct for communion with others. The discovery of the others supposes a discovery of oneself too; the happiness of others determines and implies one's own happiness. The charity as self-sacrifice gives to the man the opportunity, through offering to others, to find the freedom and the sense of the individual existence (35).

A third path for conquering power over fate is offered by D.D.Rosca in his concept of "life style"; this way to live is generated by the tragic conscience emerging from within and has as a main feature the *gratuity* or free gift; linked to this, another trait is the experience of beauty. The philosophical sentiment of gratuity is very close to aesthetic thrill, because

... the supreme poetry encloses in the roots of its inspiration and consequently in the emotion that is awakened, a state of conscience that differs from the feeling called metaphysical anxiety only in degree and in almost imperceptible nuances... (36).

In the same way in which the aesthetic sentiment is lived as a gratuitous, the life style too has to be experienced as a gratuitous, as an unselfish state. This life style is built by transcending the immediate experience in which the conscious knowledge diminishes the distance that separates the wish from hope, reducing the fear of isolation and helplessness and increasing the feeling of a cosmic safety.

But a conscious knowledge always implies an option together with the liberty to choose. The Romanian philosopher considers that only conscious and free acts are moral,—thus, the life built upon them has to have necessarily a moral character. This kind of life-style responds in fact to the man's inner tendency; but for realizing it, the individual has to attain a certain degree of moral freedom which will allow him to take a heroic and gratuitous attitude against the existence; his fight has to be not for its fruits but for the principle:

... one gives the proof of a strong inner liberty at that time when he wants to enthrone the justice and to realize the beauty in a world in which everything is adventure with an uncertain end. It is a positive testimony of a high spiritual superiority and of a strong courage to load your own soul

with moral scruples, to be thirsty for justice in a world where the recompense is not necessary connected to the good intentions and real results... to spend your life with generosity trying to find pieces of truth, being driven just by your genuine intention to find it, to fight for realizing grains of good and beauty having no conviction that your endeavour and self-sacrifice have really a sense, this is ... the supreme degree of inner freedom ever riched by man! This is the greatest spiritual power, this is the highest morality! (37).

Ideas for the Present Time

If a resume has to be made, several ideas seem to take a clear shape. The first of them refers to the necessity of a new look about values and their hierarchical range in the world in which we live, values related both to the inner being and to the community as an extension of the soul. The restoring of the hierarchy of values in its rights and the correct ordering of the criteria of the existential judgments are the main instruments for introducing a harmonic order in the human and social universe, order in which the most important feature is the morality. This re-arrangement of the world can be done by accomplishing one single spiritual condition, that is to possess an attitude of faith. At the community level, this attitude is expressed by the idea that the inter-human harmony is a reflection of the cosmic harmony; in a more explicit language, this reflection is called self-offering and living for and through the others, concerning the human personality, the attitude of faith is manifested in what is called moral courage or heroism.

Another important idea is related to the purpose of life (38), which is seen by the Romanian philosophers as being 'salvation'. The principal feature of the road towards the salvation is the active attitude of the man who, sustained by faith and courage, becomes the agent of his own liberation. The honesty of this action and its gratuity , that is the selfless with which the individual accomplishes his duty, are guarantees of salvation from the obscure labyrinth of the chaos.

A last condition for the new path emphasizes the idea that there is no individual salvation in itself, there is no personal happiness and there is no real spiritual Self outside of the salvation, happiness and the Self of the other, without the responsibility for community. In this respect, the supreme terrestrial value is linked to the creation of the community's harmony and not to its oblivion.

The main features of these philosophical views refer to faith and strength. There is a fate to which everybody is subjected by mere reason of his existence in this world. But there is also a destiny that can be subjected and re-constructed. There is a universal moral order of values and it is man's duty to re-connect himself to it. In this way the individual will be able to rediscover naturally his own specific demiurgic qualities, escaping thus from the accusation of having stolen them from Divinity. The essential condition of exercising his creational freedom is only one, but requires a real heroism,—that is, the self-offering as a self-sacrifice.

Thus, though the Romanian philosophers record the suffering and drama of existence, understanding compassionately the human weakness and wandering, they nonetheless claim to be the followers of a philosophy of courage and action, based on a charity that springs from faith and leads to faith. For these thinkers the individual destiny has no meaning as long as it is not built within the destiny of the collective soul. For them, therefore, the reconstruction of the kingdom of values in the human world is not possible without blending the individual with the social, without unifying the "I" and "you" in an "us" based on a moral heroism originating in Christianity.

Notes

1. In connection with that, the Romanian philosopher D.D. Rosca said: "the last and secret impulses of the metaphysical attitude are of lyrical essence"; the lyrical echo has yet to be "passed through the purifying sieve of a disciplined knowledge," in D.D. Rosca, *Existenta tragica* / the Tragic Existence / (Bucuresti: Editura Stiintifica, 1968), p. 22.

2. D.D. Rosca, pp. 139-140.

3. It must be noticed that this opinion does not exclusively belong to Christianity; it appears in antiquity and is coherently expressed by stoics who see the man as a citizen of a universal citadel, as a part of the community of divine hierarchies. See Marcus Aurelius, *Catre sine* / To myself / (Bucuresti: Editura Minerva, 1977), p. 246.

4. In this context, Mircea Vulcanescu considers very significant Faust's action in reinterpreting the Holy Book: Faust substitutes Logos for Deed. See Goethe, *Faust*, translated by Lucian Blaga (Bucuresti: Editura de Stat pentru Literatura si Arta, 1955), p. 80.

5. Mircea Vulcanescu, *Logos si Eros* / Logos and Eros / (Bucuresti: Editura Paideia, 1991), p. 52.

6. He was convicted by the communist regime to eight years in prison, where he died.

7. Vasile Pârvan, *Memoriale* / Memoirs / (Cluj: Editura Dacia, 1973), p. 100.

8. D.D. Rosca, p. 140.

9. Pârvan, p. 151.

10. Vulcanescu, pp. 69; 72.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 62.

12. D.D. Rosca, pp. 105-106.

13. Epictetus, *Manual* (Bucuresti: Editura Minerva, 1977), p. 9.

14. Any value that leads to untruth, in the broadest sense of the word produces negative effects and is a negative value.

15. George F. McLean, "Traditions, Cultures and Values," *Philosophical Foundations for Moral Education and Character development*: *Act and Agent*, ed. by George F. McLean and Frederick E. Ellrod (Washington: The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 1992), p. 100.

16. Vulcanescu, p. 77.

17. D.D. Rosca, p. 168.

18. Mircea Eliade, *Soliloquii* / Soliloquies / (Cluj: Editura Nu, 1990), p. 9.

19. McLean, p. 100.

20. Mircea Eliade, *Eseuri* / Essays / Bucuresti: Editura Stiintifica, 1991), p. 148.

21. Eliade, 1990, p. 4.

22. Vulcanescu, pp. 78-79.

23. *Ibid.*, pp. 46-48.

24. Eliade, 1991, p. 147.

25. Vulcanescu, pp. 51; 70.

26. Rosca, pp. 11-12.

27. *Ibid.*, p. 170.

28. Pârvan, p. 50.

29. Vasile Pârvan illustrates this idea quoting a beautiful poem:

O, Seigneur, notre âme immortelle
Est un miroir de ta splendeur:

Pitié pour toi, pitié pour elle-
Notre douleur est ta douleur!
(Vieux chant breton—J.H. Rosny)

30. Vulcanescu, pp. 74-76.

31. Eliade, 1991, pp. 111-112, 118.

32. Pârvan, p. 100.

33. Vulcanescu, p. 106.

34. Mircea Eliade, "Oceanografie" / Oceanography / in *Drumul spre centru* / The road to centre / (Bucuresti: Editura Univers, 1991), pp. 59; 31.

35. *Ibid.*, p.30. Very much alike in their content are Mircea Vulcanescu's words. Belonging to the same generation as Mircea Eliade, his tragic destiny made him testify for his belief by his own sacrifice: "Through self-sacrifice, our soul enriches and grows until it reaches the great power that we attribute to the Divinity. From this conscience, reconciliated in the sacrifice offered to the neighbour, our real human liberty rises; the liberty that is strength and is not afraid of anything, does not give account of its thoughts and deeds to anybody, does not have to kneel in front of anyone... And this liberty is in itself beauty too. Our soul shines as a star light: by its own light ... The clear sky and the peaceful sea are not greater in their serenity than the free man through justice, love and sacrifice. And through this liberty we are ourselves, that is we accomplish the first and most important condition of our existence on the earth". (M. Vulcanescu, p.107).

36. D.D. Rosca, p. 180.

37. *Ibid.*, pp. 172-173; 203.

38. A distinction has to be made between the goal of life, having philosophical connotations and the goal in life, that has a pragmatic meaning and is not our subject.

Intelligibility of the Spiritual Message in the Present Context

Magdalena Dumitrana

The Context

Within every historical period the reflexive subjectivity has its own urgencies. By the analysis of these pressures and the answer to them, the meditative subjectivity attaches its own revelation—an intellectual reaction doubled sometime by the spiritual, structured towards what it is considered to be the final sense.

In what way can the sense towards an epoch be determined ? We speak here about the detectable objectives, since the hidden ones, which are the genuine meanings, cannot be reached by the power of human mind. Usually, these significations are coagulated in what is called the ideal of the respective period, which represents in fact, the wish of a limited category of the individuals, endowed with social and political power. This category, well highlighted and shaped in the former historical period, is today, in the epoch of the democracies, more and more blurred at its borders, merging into the other categories of power. The more its invisibility is achieved, the more obvious are the effects of its actions. Here and there, the force of social and political decision embodies itself in voices belonging to the different zones of reflection, for presenting in a suitable language, the topics of the debates that have to keep individuals minds busy.

The present time however, tends to renounce the singular voices in favour of a force with a unrivalled impact: that is, mass-media, especially the one based on image. The advantages are evident: a direct relation, a concrete thinking, primary emotions, dependence on the image and an attitude opened to concessions for satisfying this dependence—all these are stimulated by the excessive use of images, constituting therefore the conditions for ease of direction from outside. Beside these, another feature is perceived as "good": minimum effort is proclaimed with the reduction of literacy to the minimum (only the capacity to receive media information is requested). As a consequence, a "natural" ghettoization takes place, by which the elites of the humanist reflection are insulated from the public.

In these conditions, the messages arrive to the destination distorted by the multiple levels of meanings, corresponding to the different levels of the receiver's ability to understand. The decodification is not related therefore to the original real message, but to the last level of meanings, belonging to the receiver, educated for concrete not abstract thinking. The answer is behaviour adequate to this level, and therefore inadequate to its true sense. Starting from this situation conceived as normal, a strong proliferation took place: in the zone of philosophy an overflow of hermeneutics, and in the field of the psychosocial too much trust in the prescriptions for good human communication. Both are connected to the appearance of expression and to the play of mind and imagination. Neither of them addresses truth as a ultimate category. In fact, the whole syndrom of the quotidian life, after an expression of Jürgen Habermas (6, p.319), is founded on the axiom of relativism.

The sense of history (of the manifest history) is one of proliferation, of multiplied extension. Between the nucleus and borders, more instances of intermediation intervene each having its own interpretation of truth; thence a feeling of losing direction and a negation of mening, derived from a shading of the original connections and from twisting the primary texture symbolising the initial

human kindredship, which today is so strongly rejected. The temporal existence is considered the essence of the existence; the every day, the social and the political become philosophical categories, and to live becomes synonymous with the existence. The distortions of human life, even of the individual's life, are projected at a general or universal level. This is what Habermas noted, saying that pragmatism, phenomenology and hermeneutic philosophy raised the categories of the action, speech and the daily living to an epistemological rank (6, p. 318). From there, the new epistemology comes down as an ideological conception. Still, there is another trait of this epoch is noise. Though apparently peripheral, in fact it is an essential component of discourse, without which it cannot be heard. Today's world is a riotous, feverish, "communicative" one, in which the internal language and Self have less and less opportunity to live. The word loses its value as a component of the creation and organisation of the mind, being subordinated to auditory and visual noise. It is no longer regarded with respect, being available for everyone and for any kind of content; the thinking behind this word is gradually losing its shape. The strident discourse about the world has as an expected consequence that it annuls the silence and therefore the basic condition for meditation. Constantin Noica, a Romanian philosopher called that "at the beginning was the silence. In this way starts any technique of the spiritual life, either religious or philosophical. The surface word has to be extinguished, in order to leave place to the profound voice of the essences" (8, p. 27).

If one should try to make a short description of the present period, one could say that it is a noisy and talkative time; however, by contrast, the most suitable name for it could be the Kingdom of Loneliness. Individuals or small groups form independent islands; apparently ruled by the same values, they remain isolated by the excessive signification given to their own subjectivity. On the other hand, the values themselves do not function as such, any more. They are only normative names, regulating the behaviour and the mind, and for this reason are easily changed. The social rules take places to the internal values. The ideas are communicative but uncommunicable. The extremely developed capacity to convey and receive information, leaves behind the spiritual quality of this information. It appears therefore to be an isolation of categorial thinking, which alone is able to understand its own language; it is reduced to a self-contemplation not only by its fault but also due to the diminution of the other social groups' capacity of reception. This is caused firstly by the assault of the perceptual-concrete thinking, by the ideological imposition of relativist ideas on the interpretation of the events and values at the same time with an rejection in a sophist modality of the immutable categories/truths (humanist values/spirituality/ divinity). It is clear therefore that the interest for the perenial is losing and the spiritual message is accepted only as far as this message is moulded as a relative experience, the relativism being presented as the unique "fixed" way of living (this would engender Churches of any kind). One can thus discover an illogic situation in which one, left without the axis of the absolute (of the historical-spiritual one), and longing for a steady ground under his feet, is educated by the general trends in one's society, precisely to the reject any instrument which would render one's life coherent. The spiritual message is still there, but the existence of the addressee remains uncertain.

The contemporary world is not an abstract concept, but it is constituted by more or less identifiable individuals. It is these individuals who realise the destruction of the normative milestones, but on the other hand they already find this destructuration in society as an objective datum. In the tensions of life they have no other choice but to enhance the strain. One of the most appreciated concepts today, globalisation, has as a strong negative effect on migration from one place to another, even the export of these tensions. At the level of the social micro-groups, globalization is far from having the beneficent effects predicted by its promoters. The population

structure is changing both quantitatively and qualitativeky. In other words, the receiver of the ideologies, philosophies and religions does not retain a homogeneity in a given space. Mixture is now becoming the key-word, and this has to be kept in mind for any kind of message that has to be conveyed.

The Reaction

But what is the message of the present epoch and who/what is actually more able to transmit it? What system of ideas allows the receiver to understand and interpret, becoming in turn a source of intelligible messages? The political and economic messages are not part of the discussion. No matter how democratic the state, the political decisions are taken by groups which do not and cannot involve the population. People can adhere or not to certain decisions, but the cannot influence them directly; they have the liberty merely to express attitudes. As for economic mechanism, the opportunitly for sending messages is even more restricted. Besides these, the events and messages at the economic and political levels have no spiritual and constructive load.

We try to approach here the question of whether philosophy or religion, as "organs" of transcendence still have the necessary power to make themselves understood by the new kind of the public, while retaining at the some time their power of mind building. Some authors are skeptical in this respect. The Romanian philosopher Radu Florian, for example, thinkers that philosophy did not fulfil its duty: the most influent trends of the philosophical thinking did not know to confront the great tempests and twistings of the century; they did not succeed in answering people's interrogations and ethical dilemmas. In their obstinate refusal to abdicate their human condition the philosophies did not constitute men's invisible support in their fight for moral survival. Most of these philosophical trends did not recognize the shocking crisis of the century, their unexpected succession and the catastrophies they determined. Precisely for that reason, the main lodes of philosophical thinking were not expressions of the profound spirit of the century which the philosophers of the crises of history have addressed, but they have remained extensions of the trends of the past century. More than that, philosophy became in modernity a preferential field for an ideological legitimation of the diverse social groups' 'interests, trying to obtain conformist behaviours, blocking the building of individual identity by the attractive offer of general similarities and harmonies. In a way, the crisis of the human identity is reflected by the crisis of the philosophies. In the Romanian philosopher's opinion the only approach which responds at least partially to the contemporary epoch is that of the Frankfurt School which, subordinating itself to pragmatic circumstances and coercions, succeeded in building a lucid conscience for the contemporary mind (5, pp. 115; 165; 242).

The key-point in modern philosophy is intelligible communication. Similar to the poetry, philosophy is not content with itself. It needs to display itself, to present itself to the audience, to be understood and to convince. The recipe of philosophical truths changes in the contemporary world, gradually renouncing the situation: "I talk and explain—you listen and understand", and replacing it by "I, with you, am seeking answer to our problems". From now on, the aspects which are accented within philosophical discourse are the relativity—either of truth itself or the understanding of the unique truth, and the need to unify the individual relativities of understanding. In this way, philosophy retracts a step, withdrawing from direct application of spiritual categories to human life. Moving to the secondary plain of interest, philosophy leaves "objective" determination to the socio-economic and cultural categories, considering that these, if properly interpreted, could ensure people's happiness. An example of this philosophical transition is offered

by Lucian Blaga, a Romanian philosopher and poet. He does not renounce divinity, but sees it as a hidden entity, remaining in mystery. In exchange, the zone for understanding and human development is found in the philosophy of culture. According to Lucian Blaga, man exists simultaneously, in two planes, completely different: firstly, he lives in the concrete horizon of the sensible world, having as his aim his own survival or self preservation; them, he exists in the horizon of mystery where the goal of his existence is the revelation of the mystery. This second plane is specifically human, while the first is common to all living beings. Man's essence is to live in the horizon of the revealed mystery which is immanent to the human conscience. The fulfilment of human existence takes place when this conscience becomes aware and understands the inherent mystery. It is the horizon of mystery existent in the human species is responsible for the artistic, philosophic and religious creations. Knowledge, in its highest meaning, takes place through the agency of some categories specific to this level, named by Lucian Blaga stylistic categories. These force fields or categories are common to large groups of people, acting over and under the national and cultural borders. They are not permanent and universal structures of human intelligence, in the sense of immutable categories, acting always in the same way, but general frames allowing one to take over and adapt the ideas of one epoch inside another. This last one is not able by itself to generate these concepts, but is enriched, thus retaining the continuity and intelligibility of the spiritual world (that is, the continuity of its own essence). Therefore, the stylistic categories maintain the community and unity of the individuals, beyond the variety of phenomena. The infinite horizon and dynamism are two examples of such concepts. The tendency to limit human beings to the horizon of the "real", sensible world and the explanation of the goal of human existence by the categories of this world, dispossess man of his very essence. What is missing unfortunately from the modern spiritual discourse, remarks L. Blaga, is precisely the capacity to put itself "in the service of the infinite and universal dynamism". In other words, we assist at the abandonment of the unique criteria that would ensure the intelligibility of the spiritual message (2, pp. 129; 201; 207).

It seems that Blaga was right. More and more, contemporary philosophers try to find a way to construct a harmonic world here and now (which they would not call ideology). Happiness as a goal seems too distant, as are the moral categories. What strikes one now, and not without reason, is the dreadful loneliness of the individuals due to the lack of communication. Given a relativism of the values (including the moral ones and individual happiness) there is indeed no other explanation of the human condition today.

Here an important philosopher, Jûrgen Habermas, proposes as a way of salvation the model of action oriented to understanding and to agreement. This is no longer centred on the subject's capacity to objectivize himself in the product of knowledge seen like any other element in the world. The paradigm of understanding conceives an interaction within which the participants mutually coordinate their actions on the basis of a common agreement upon the object. The relationship between participants is interpersonal and linguistically mediated: the Ego performs a communicative act, and other reacts within this frame. The Ego is put in an interpersonal relation which allows him to report to himself from the perspective of an other participant in this interaction. A veritable relation is seen to exclude a third person, which always transforms the vision into a world of which the self is an object. Habermas sees transcendental philosophy being dispossessed in this way of its preoccupation with the intuitive analysis of the consciousness of self—a task in which in fact philosophy has failed.

Therefore, Habermas views as possible:

- an action oriented towards understanding in contrast to one directed to success understood as one that presupposes rivalry among the agents that the use of any means to success only for oneself. In contrast, in communicative action the participants real an agreement concerning the action itself, its conditions, goal and interests

- an action coordinated by understanding that refuses to impose or manipulate, the accord being founded on common convictions

- agreement transposed into the linguistic situation of communication in which every participant receives alternatively the role of transmitter, receiver and observer (representing first, second and third person).

- the engagement by every participant in action of their cultural context, which in the interaction based of agreement becomes also a resource for action.

Communication based on understanding takes into consideration agreement about the truth, both accord concerning the normative context and mutual trust. The theory of the communicative action is an illustration of the way J. Habermas sees the actual role of philosophy as an interpreter looking towards the world of life. In this sense he considers pragmatic philosophy and hermeneutics as endowing the epistemic authority upon the community of people who cooperate and talk to each other. In the German philosopher's opinion, only the communicative daily praxis makes possible a reliable understanding; any visible or linguistically expressed understanding must be supported by reasons, which even if contestable are still substantiations (7. pp. 128-130).

The premise from which Habermans starts is optimistic; he considers the participants in the communicative interaction, Ego and other, as being equal in importance as well as in power of transmission, reception and capacity of understanding. In reality, in human communication, in whatever plane it takes place, an equality among participants in these regard is impossible. One of the actors is the one who makes himself understood; the other understands or needs to do so. Nor does an alternation of roles equalise them. The role in itself does not give the capacity of cooperation and does not unify either the actors or their cultural context. Within every mundane communicative interaction, there are power factors for which the Ego-Alter alternation represents rather a multiplication of the Ego; while the quality of the other is not taken into consideration. Concerning this aspect, Martin Buber said metaphorically that no man is only a person or only an individual. No one is entirely real or entirely unreal; everyone lives a double Ego. But there are people in which the person is so dominant than they can be called persons and others in which the individual is very dominant, therefore they can be called individuals. The more man and humanity are leaded by individuals, the more Ego deepens itself in reality and the personal aspect is condemned to a subterranean, almost illegitimate existence waiting for its moment to be called to the light (3, pp.92-93). The fact that Habermas seems to refer rather to individuals than to persons, is expressed quite clear by his statement that "between the extra-mundane position of the transcendent ego and the intra-mundane one of the empirical ego there is no possible mediation" (6. p.284).

Indeed, the spiritual is not visible in the communicative human interaction, even the one grounded on understanding; as Buber said, the mystical vision cannot face up to the electric sun (3, p.98). The absence of the spirit in Habermas' interaction determines also a reversal of the relations between man and language. For Habermas, the source of language is man, who can use it as he pleases. Buber would reply that rather than language existing in man, man exists inside language and speaks from him; the same happens with any word or spirit. The spirit does not exist in I, but between I and Thou, as is the air that one breaths (3, p. 65). Therefore there will be no

necessity for I and You to exchange roles, but only for each to open to the spiritual atmosphere. One's capacity to relate sincerely to another, not only establishes a genuine I-Thou relation, but also generates an authentic "We" concept, which restores and builds the human community; Buber explains this as follows:

What corresponds to the essential 'Thou' on the level of self-being, in relation to a host of men, I call the essential 'We'. The person who is the object of my mere solitude is not a Thou but a 'He' or a 'She'. The nameless, faceless crowd in which I am entangled is not a 'We' but the 'one'. But as there is a 'Thou' so there is a We… By 'We' I mean a community of several independent persons, who have reached a self and self-responsibility, the community resting on a basis of this self and self-responsibility and being made possible by them. The special character of the 'We' is shown in the essential relation existing, or arising temporarily, between its members; that is, in the holding sway within the We of an ontic directness which is the decisive presupposition of the I-Thou relation. The We includes the Thou potentially. Only men who are capable of truly saying Thou to one another can truly say We with one another" (I, p. 160).

The human interaction is never direct, never pure. Even based on understanding, it does not by far introduce the quality, but at the most a certain equivalence. The human communicative relation is always mediated: by the personality and experience of the individual, by society with its rules and laws, by history and culture. Economic and socio-cultural categories impose their own mediation for the interaction. So far reference is made to the mundane, and even in high culture the communicative relation has obey to the variable and relative. The result of this is despair, either psychological or philosophical. The mediation of the transcendent is the only way to extinguish psychological conflict and obtain philosophical peace. The third person, rejected by Habermas, cannot, however, be denied, for he/she implicitly exists in the I-Thou relation (as in We as well).

The third person can be conceived inside of the visible world structures; then, indeed, it may bring in the disequilibrium of the I-Thou interaction. On the other side, viewed as a spiritual aspect the transcendent He (or She) returns the normative principles to human existence and clarifies his goal. Accepting the mediation of the spiritual, we can accept too Buber's affirmation that the model of the interaction can be found in the Gospel according to St. John, which is the Gospel of pure relation. In this way, one finds himself in another field, this time "officially" dedicated to the spiritual—the religion domain. Part of philosophers detach themselves from the concept of divinity, while others find here the only logical answer. Thus, the first question is in what measure the Church, as an institution, considers that the present conditions need a new approach, perhaps a new interpretation destined to re-awaken people's interest in the divine way of existence. Church conduct is determined first of all by faith, by its dogmatic truths, but it is also strongly influenced by the social and political context within which the Church develops its specific activity.

In the socialist period, its priority was survival and preserving at least a visible point of reference. The Church's goals in the socialist zones were therefore very different and with a more limited time horizon than the Churches in capitalist areas. Subsequent to the political homogenization of most world states, the tasks of the Churches from the former socialist countries were intensified in line with the strengthening of its own identity and of the believers' "possession". Concerning at least Romania it can be said that the Orthodox church finds itself in the new context, while still in a period of development. This includes outlining the different aspects regarding the religious life of the clergy and lay people, as well as in a phase of redefining its

relations to the other Churches (especially the Catholic and Protestant ones), which themselves are in a period of development and invigoration.

Moreover, it is the first time when the Orthodox Church is obliged to take a publicc stance concerning political decisions touching moral and spiritual issues. If in the socialist period the Romanian Orthodox Church acted mainly in order to maintain the faith alive, separating itself as much as possible from the political power according to Jesus' words,1 now it is assaulted by politics. Understanding the people' trust in the Church, which was confirmed a number of times, despite of the different events and actions aiming to diminish it, the political groups preyed on this important source of influence. The attempt failed, partially because the politicians could no longer retain masque of faith, but also because the Romanian Orthodox Church was not a supporter of any political trend or opinion (though, at a certain moment, due to the multiplying of the attacks against it, the issue of political participation was taken into consideration). Being autocephalous, and therefore independent in every country, the Orthodox church has to meet a variety of problems.

The certain fact is that the Romanian Orthodox Church makes efforts to adapt itself to the new reality and comportments, diversifying it ways of intervention and fields of interest—always with reference to the moral, cultural and welfare aspects of life. The spiritual message remains, however, identical, as well as the modalities of its presentation. In distinction from the Catholic, Protestant and Neo-Protestant Churches, which draw upon the experience if non-socialist territories, the Romanian Orthodox Church is just at beginning of an understanding of the individual's psychological evolution. It is therefore beginning to understand the needed to adapt the spiritual meanings to the economic and political context, and to the social categories of the age.

The difficulties deriving from the compulsory teaching of religion in school are already an important alarm signal about the quality of faith in the future adult members of society. The Romanian Orthodox Church still seems to need period of meditation for building ideas and attitudes which are not only coherent, but also clearly explained and continuously pursued.

The Catholic Church with another modality for approaching society and its individual, faced earlier the problems which are new for Orthodoxy. As a consequence, the efforts to solve these problems already have a history. The Second Vatican Council, acknowledging the essential contemporary changes and the modifications of the human condition, strove to define the present world in its objective and subjective features. On this basis it built the system that sustains Church activity in the contemporary world, and expresses a balanced point of view upon some domains that particularity constitute sources of human happiness and unhappiness: private property, economic activity and political life. Restraining itself from judging and from too direct involvement, the Catholic Church reserves the right freely to preach the faith, to proclaim its social doctrine, to accomplish without obstacles its mission among people, and to express moral judgement even on facts related to the political order, when required by fundamental human rights or important for the salvation of souls. For this the Catholic Church uses only instruments which are in accord with the Gospel (4, p. 379).

The institution of Church, unlike philosophers, has the important advantage of possessing the means for the translating the religious message into "common language". Apart from the theoretical branches and liturgical symbols that are not familiar to the majority of people, the Church sends individuals, clergymen or laics, with the special mission of "real" talk to "real" people. On the other hand, as any other message carried by people in a totally mundane context it is quite likely that this message will be distorted, intentionally or not; the concrete results prove this. Also, very specific local interests determine many of the religious interpreters to take part, if not in the political battle, certainly in the fight for power. An closer look, one can discover in

undoubtedly religious areas that the spiritual lode is maintained due not to the present messages, but to tradition, customs and rituals that people have preserved or to which they now return, precisely as a defence against the distortions of religious life. On the other side, these bulwarks of faith are weakening, or are being taken over and utilized by powerful interests. It is therefore, difficult to affirm with certainty that in the contemporary epoch the Church is sufficiently wise and strong to maintain or foster the means of receiving and promoting spirituality in man.

Open Issues

Considering present times and the values strongly promoted by doctrinaire and ideological systems, through technological means and living persons as models one could hardly expect the viability of the spiritual content in the time to come. In attempting to solve the problems of life the philosophies fail in the concrete; their message is too far from the understanding of people in a market economy. On the other hand, they loose their old clients who lived in the philosophical heights. Finally, on this path, willingly or not philosophy abandons the aspiration for eternity because implicitly it too abandoned hope.

The alternate route to spirituality seems also to be in an even more unfavourable situation. The major armed conflicts of the contemporary world develop under the name of religion; the warriors of death claim their affiliation to one or another of the religions. In exchange, in the zones of peace, spiritual effervescence is replaced by neutrality, formalism or return to inferior forms of cult. At the other end of the thread, the individual who is supposed to be the one influenced by the spiritual message appears to be less and less able and desirous of searching and understanding the meanings of the existence.

The picture seems gloomy and predestinated to very slow development. But this is the scene viewed from the contemporary mundane position. However, a short look back into history, shows that the diachronic perspective of humankind is composed of a multitude of dark moments and of threats of total disappearance. Yet nothing irreparable took place, nothing capable of impede the renewal, again and again. This phenomenon moves the alert conscience to change its point of view and reference values, as well as its ways of acting. A battle against darkness, using darkness as a weapon is clearly meant to fail. One cannot illumine a room by switching off the sole remaining bulb.

One the world's tendencies has always been one of rest and concreteness. Trying to understand the ineffable, man struggled to catch and fix it in something: in a frame of the idea, an image or a sentiment. This is a normal tendency born in the world and at the same time with the world, but it is not a value, a path in life, or fate.

If the politics, finances, or technology live naturally in the shadows, the philosophy and religion contain the light of their destiny; without light they cannot exist.

There is a certain embarrassment to mention the influence of the Holy Spirit in other situations than the religious books addressed to a "specialized" reader. As long as the lay barriers are maintained, gloom takes on the appearance of fate for the world. Only by renouncing the position in the shadows approaching the world as illuminated can it be possible to reverse man's world view. This fact has nothing to do with the powers of finance or different interests in concrete material achievement; it is not addicted to philosophies, dogmas and other ideological structures. Of itself spirituality is accessible; it does not contain obstacles. The only condition is individual authenticity. If this be truly realized, authenticity is the ground that allows the person to be, not only a receiver, but also a messages transmitter. In more simple words—the disinstitutionalization

of thoughts and sentiments, and the release of human honesty in its most general meaning, constitute the reliable path for creating both messengers and receivers of human spirituality.

Note

1 And Jesus answering said to them: Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's (Mc. 12:17)

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Chapter IV
The Duality of Reason and Faith in Mircea Florian's Thought

Mihaela Pop

Mircea Florian is a philosopher who wrote the most of his works during the Romanian cultural period which flourished between the two World Wars. Together with Constantin Râdulescu-Motru, P. P. Negulescu and Tudor Vianu, M. Florian is a brilliant follower of Thu Maiorescu's attitude of being a *servant* of the national culture. Some of the active directions followed and worked out and followed by Maiorescu's followers were to avoid originality bought at a false price and instead to search for deeper knowledge, to hand down sound scientific and cultural information and very patiently to enlighten the younger generation. Florian was obviously devoted to this attitude as one could easily notice from his entire intellectual activity as a professor, researcher and publisher.

The depth and breadth of his knowledge were gained by hard work, adopting the attitude of a researcher who is always disposed to another and yet another apprenticeship. His hard work and well directed work assured him an authentically original and obvious cultural independence. His manner of work and life can be compared to that N. Hartmann.

Born in Bucharest in 1888, he graduated the The Faculty of Letters and Philosophy of the Bucharest University in 1911 where he attended courses given by Titu Maiorescu, C. Rädulescu-Motru, P. Negulescu and others. He got his Ph.D. in philosophy at the University of Greifswald in 1914. His Ph.D. thesis was a critical research on time in H. Bergson's thought.

Back in Romania, he ascended step the academic hierarchy, enthusiastically helped by his professor, P. Negulescu. He gradually enlarged his studies centered on philosophy with courses on ancient, medieval, modern and contemporary philosophy and, sometimes later, on logic. Even if in 1948 his professional activity was brutally cut off, he continued, even when he was enlisted as an "external collaborator" of the Institute of Philosophy (1953) to translate fundamental philosophical works being thus faithful to Maiorescu's tradition. A relevant example is the translation of Aristotle's *Organon* to which he added a valuable critical introduction. He died in 1960.

A Restoration of Reason

M. Florian considered that the Romanian philosophy had been too much influenced by romantic sentimentalism and anti-intellectualism, by its lyricism and intuitionism, by the naturalist pathos which did not serve at all the rigors of rationalism. It was time, in his opinion, for an authentic ontological philosophy (comparable to Hartmann's ontology) to put an end to the irrationalist crisis and to eliminate the delusive messianism.

A retrieval of reason was necessary even if in this way the opposition against intuitionism and anti- intellectualism, against "sensualism" and mysticism would have been consolidated. Florian brought back to our attention the postulated (the reality together with the non-reality), the experience, reestablishing the science in its rights and connected to this idea philosophy as ontology.

It was also the time that Romanian philosophy could lay the foundations of an ontology, not an "existentialist" one, en vogue at that moment as nowadays, but an "authentic" one in which the main domain should be gnoseology and epistemology.

The author established a basic relation between understanding and existence, being.1 The ontologic aspect, existence, precedes understanding, thought and the rational judgement process; the former is fundamental, being based on reason and science. Thus, the new philosophy should be a rationalism renewed by science, while the scientific philosophy can become autonomous. It is capable of going further than metaphysics or positivism. It re-thinks in a larger manner "the experience as a principle of the philosophical reconstruction including life with all its aspects".2

The author intends to reveal the dynamics of the polar aspects of the "world structure." Instead of traditional monisms, he reveals the dualities, the antitheses existent in the "universal structure of the postulated" and which play an inter-changing role: dominant or subordinated but compensatory at the same time. In this way, the author will build the series of the "recessive dualities" of the universe among which we can mention: matter—form, time—eternity, individual-general, djfferent—similar, one—multiple, finite—infinite, existence—understanding (knowledge), rational—irrational, immanent—transcendent, real—unreal, being—non-being, being—value, freedom—determinism, action—understanding, optimism—pessimism, ljfe—death, science—religion, historism—superhistorism and others.

The recessive element (the one that comes the second) is capable of acquiring a superior existential significance, of climbing up on "the shoulders" of the dominant element (for instance, the understanding in relation with the existent, the being). This ability brings into attention an uneasy, confusing aspect.

Starting from this basic structure of Florian' s philosophical thought, we are going to see how the duality religion—science and, implicitly, faith—reason could function. The studies where the author analyzes this duality are: *The Antinomies of Faith, Religion and Philosophy* published in 1936, the essay *Mysticism and Faith*, published in 1946, and chapter 39 *Cosmocentrism and Anthropocentrism* of his valuable treatise of philosophy, *Recessivity as the World Structure*, published in 1987.

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In the first study, the antinomies of faith, Florian tries to define the characteristics, the origins and antinomies of religion. He observes that Religion and Philosophy are convergent in some points: the universe as an organic unity with specific characteristics (continuity, substantiality, eternity, unconditionnality) and the analysis of the eternal element, the transcendence. But they also diverge in other points which are based on the opposition belief — knowledge, faith—understanding, revelation —reason, and the object of the analysis is also different being in one case, supernatural, transcendent and, in the other case, immanent, natural. The conclusion of these distinctions: "there are differences of substance not of degree. And then, Florian proposes the

following thesis that he will demonstrate in the other chapters: "the contradictions between Religion and Philosophy are, in fact, antinomies inside faith.

Florian wants to demonstrate that there is no science (philosophy) that can undermine religion. This one contains in itself the "seed of uncertainty". The author does not intend to analyze the two ways of understanding (science and religion) or the possibility of making convergent the two distinct kinds of reality, the two different ways of being (this is an ontological perspective). He starts from the assertion: reality is existence because "being real supposes a single characteristic, that of existence, of being. It is not reality itself, but its content becomes different from itself.3 In this way, in Florian's thought, natural and supernatural become "two contents, distinct, of course, of the same reality".

Once this fundamental thesis is demonstrated, Florian starts the theoretical analysis of religion which he considers an interweaving of "affective subjectivity" and "rational objectivity" containing the myth, the dogma and the mystery.

The first inner antinomy of religion revealed by the author is religion—mysticism, an antinomy he will analyze more profoundly in the larger study—*Mysticism and Faith.*

If the main topic of religion is the divinity of God, the sacred in opposition to the profane, the mysticism is based on he absolute and ultimate power of an idea—that of the One as an Entireness. The author brings to our attention the fact that his absolute idea is not necessarily only religious, it can also be moral, social, political. This makes possible a mysticism of nationalism, of democracy, etc.

Another significant inner antinomy is the one between religion and morality. Florian considers that morality based in the principle of autonomy (nobody can will for anybody) was not a part of religion at the beginning. Initially, the divinity was 'over the good and the evil" and only later on morality was seized by religion. It belongs to the immanent, the natural sphere. More than this, the morality is based on the duality existence (being)—value but this antinomy determined the subordination to religion. Morality needed religion to impose itself as a social phenomenon. The author defends his thesis maintaining that the primitive populations were not interested in moral justification of divine actions. The only one characteristic of divinity was the absolute power of this or these divinities. In actuality, even the possibility of eliminating the morality from religion could be a proof of their later alliance.

Another inner antinomy of religion, perhaps the most significant one, is the intellectual antinomy. It is the "tragedy of religion"—the pendulation between the transcendent and immanent, between the extra-rational and rational. In order to maintain these assertions, Florian makes a brief historical analysis. The human history is conceived as an eventual pendulation, winging back and forth, between the transcendent and the immanent. Even at 'the beginning, the Greek theology was rational, the divine was an idea (*nous, logos*). At the same time, the moral criterion was not very severe, restrictive because the Greek gods became ethical principles as far as they were assimilated to reason (*Logos*),. which was the explanatory principle of nature.

Christianity brings the non-rational element, the divine grace, the revelation. Besides, the moral aspect is wrongly emphasized as the Christian religion brings "the kingdom of justice through the rule of love". Florian considers Christianity a religion of compromise: it includes almost all the religious forms but also, the magic aspects, and it goes deeply into a series of moral aspects as the value of person, the autonomy of heart, etc. In this complex structure, the antinomy faith-reason will play a main role. Their same object is the transcendent, but by distinct ways of access.

The antinomic relation will cause distinct directions and attitudes in the medieval Scholasticism. The Augustinism considers that reason can understand the transcendent. The Thomism denies this capacity. The divine, the transcendent is given to us through revelation; the mystery can be only believed, it does not need to be rationally understood. In this case, the rational element of faith is only the preamble, the first step of faith,

The natural theology is restrained in a few aspects: God's existence and His attributes, the immortality of the soul. Conflicts arise between reason and faith because their objects of interest are two different worlds. The domain of reason is the nature as God's creation. Here the faith does not interfere because what was rationally demonstrated does not need any more to be believed. But science can not contradict faith because the truth is only one and supreme. Petrus Damianus will carry this thought to its limit: no dogma can be demonstrated and it doesn't need to be, either. In this way, a significant distinction arises and it will be favourable at first, just to that domain which was eliminated from the superior position—the science. The result of this separation, of this gap between dogma and scientific theory will mark the arise of the new experimental, empirical science.

Descartes will take over the Thomist solution but he will show that the transcendent can be rationally demonstrated and thus, the Augustinism will be somehow re-established. In this case, God becomes an element necessary to the new science. And the philosophy establishes its relation with theology. It can rationally understand and judge what is mystically received in theology. The Cartesianism will flourish in Malebranche, Leibniz and Wolff.

On the other side, the empirism considers that the reason gives rationality to the religion (Locke). The consequence will be the deism of the 18"' century which eliminates the revelated truths and considers the religion only a natural theology. Hume and Kant will oppose to the deist direction their thought. Hume reveals the limits of reason making some room for the mystery. Kant will put an end to the deism and will reject metaphysics. He will thoroughly criticize the deistic arguments in favour of God's existence. Kant considers that what is rational is what is given (postulated) by the possible experience. The domain of religion transcends the domain of the possible experience. The faith is not subordinated any more to the theoretical reason (the "pure reason") and it will be based on "practical reason". Thus, Kant will "make room" for religion restraining a little of the domain of science. His aim is to found religion but keeping untouched the autonomy of morality. He will assure thus the independence of science, religion and morality.

During the modern and contemporary history of European thought, two significant directions are relevant for the author: a) science (philosophy) must be completely separated from religion; b) science includes, absorbs the religion under the form of deism. This direction points out the reason's capacity of including even the transcendent domain. The rationalist ideal acquires a new look by the idealistic metaphysics represented by Fichte, Schelling and Hegel. The transcendence, in this philosophical orientation, is an expression (manifestation) of the reason, the Absolute Reason. The innovation of this rationalism is the historicism. The philosophy expresses historically the evolution of the Absolute Spirit and religion is a lower manner of thinking the history of the transcendence.

During the 19th century, other directions will be manifest. They also discuss the relation faith-reason and keep on rendering valuable under various aspects, the prior directions. For instance, Haeckel's and Ostwald's monism is considered by Florian "a religion of science, a combination of Spinozism and Hegelian evolutionism".

A. Comte will consider the transcendence as if it should be real, a useful fiction. The religion will be an inferior explanation (as it was for Hegel) which should be surpassed by metaphysics and, finally, by positivism.

The other well-known positivist, H. Spencer, considers that religion covers the domain of the unconditioned Absolute. Science and religion would be only apparently opposed because they both have reality as their common base. Their concord would be achievable only by a common and abstract truth which should cover not only religion but also science. But this truth supposes a final mystery which joins them. Thus, Spencer's religion is a sort of agnosticism. The science recognizes the final mystery of reality but its domain is the only one which can be known, the one based on relativity. The religion has only to worship the mysterious Absolute. This agnostic way begins there where knowledge (science) ends. This manner of thinking determines Florian to ask himself: "If religion is only worshipping the unknowable, don't we look as if we are worshipping our own ignorance?"

Florian also analyzes another scientific attitude: phenomenalism. This direction of thought considers religion a human act, a phenomenon, a manifestation of life and thus, it can be an object of science and not an opposition to science. Religion, as a human phenomenon, shows a psychological aspect and a historical, social one. Thus, it will obey sociological, historical and psychological research. Durkheim and his followers are known as phenomenalists. They consider religion the idealized expression of sociality. Florian points out the obvious intention of this direction,—"to ignore religion's specificity—the *transcendence*."

His conclusion, at the end of this brief analysis of the modern and contemporary direction of European thought: any one of these manners of solving the conflict between faith and reason does not respect or take into consideration the fundamental characteristic of religion. Florian considers the positivism "the most deviated direction as it tries to reduce transcendence to human and social reality." In this way, in Florian's thought, natural and supernatural become "two contents, distinct, of course, of the one reality."

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The opposite direction, where the capacity of reason to understand the transcendence is rejected, is analyzed by Florian in the chapter "The irrationalist epilogue." He considers the irrationalism was originated during the medieval mysticism. From Pascal to Chateaubriand, from the English moralists to J. Rousseau and the romantics, the irrationalism permanently produced new and various forms. Fr. Schleiermacher, the founder of a wide irrational theology and the one who demolished the natural theology, considers that the substance of religion is not subordinated to any theory but it is based on intuition and feeling. It resists any theoretical and intellectualist construction. The substance of religion is the revelation based on feeling and judgement of value. The religion is thus reduced to a subjective act of faith eliminating any dogma. R. Otto will go on this direction, in Florian's opinion. Otto will stress the role of subjectivity, of feeling as a

religious *a priori*. Florian stresses the idea that the substance of religion is not the subjectivity as it was conceived by the above mentioned authors but the absolute reality.

An important moment of the irrationalist direction is the dialectic theology (or the theology of crisis) initiated by S. Kierkegaard and continued by K. Barth, Fr. Gogarten and F. Brunner, in Florian's opinion. The dialectic of this direction accepts the contradiction, the paradox but rejects any concord by synthesis. The thesis asserts that man is God's antithesis, he is what God is 'not'. As a consequence, he will never communicate with God. In addition, the mysticism is rejected. The only one relation that could exist between God and His creature is the one from up to down; man receives the divine message only as a revelation of faith. Kierkegaard sees only alternatives; the contradiction is, for him, only a paradox which generates despair and a state of crisis.

N. Berdiaev is considered by Florian the representative of the orthodox direction filtered through the Protestant mysticism (J. Boehme). This is why even for the orthodox Berdiaev, the "religious conscience is essentially antinomic".4

Florian also analyzes the phenomenology of Max Scheler and the Neotomism of Maritain and H. Bergson. In his conclusion, Fiorian stresses the "tragedy"5 of religion which structurally pendulates between the proper domain—the transcendence—and the philosophical domain of the immanent -the rational. The philosophy takes note of this situation but does not accept it. It has to reveal the antinomy but also the concord, the harmony that should be reinstored. The elements of the antinomy are very thoroughly analyzed and without any partiality by the analyst. The argumentation is full of "intellectual pathos" of religion which structurally pendulates between the proper domain ... the transcendence—and the philosophical domain of the immanent—the rational. The philosophy takes note of this situation but does not accept it. It has to reveal the antinomy but also the concord, the harmony that should be re-instored. The elements of the antinomy are very thoroughly analyzed and without any partiality by the analyst. The argumentation is full of "intellectual pathos".6 Florian proves that the main antinomy is internal but it is projected at an external position between Religion and Philosophy.

Mysticism

The topics discussed in this early study are more thoroughly analyzed in the essay *Mysticism and Faith* published in 1946. In his introduction to this essay, M. Florian reasserts the idea that science, religion and philosophy analyze the same type of problems: the essence of life, of the world, its origin and purpose. The author makes a new distinction mentioning the existence of two fundamental functions: the function of knowledge, of thinking rationally and the function of creation. On the basis of the first function, a basic distinction between science (philosophy) and religion can be made: the doubt, as a common element, is a dissolver, is dangerous for religion and dynamic, inciting for philosophy (science). This one has to reveal clearly the significance of fundamental notions, concepts, it has to analyze all that is postulated (given by the existence). This "given by the existence" is understood by Florian as the real in general, thus, the transcendence is also included.

An other more profound analysis of an idea of the former study—this "given by the existence" joins the abstract and the concrete or the de-finite, the individual, in their way towards the Unity. Florian remarks that Religion too (not even Faith but also mysticism) is oriented towards Unity, Totality. What would make them fundamentally distinct would he the preponderance, the supremacy of one of the two functions mentioned above. Thus, philosophy and science are

dominated by the intellectual function of knowledge. Religion is based on faith. and this has the role of vitalization, of recovery, of creation, being submitted to the creative function.

Having once established these directions of study, it is easy to understand the orientation of the author's interest towards mysticism. In his thought, this is an "ideological phenomenon subordinated, in a small proportion, to the intellectual function of knowledge"7 though its dominant function is the creative one as we have already seen. Florian is convinced that science and religion could structure a "disciplinary frame" for the mysticism just due to the intellectual function of knowledge which is common to the three domains. In this sense, the purpose of this study is to find out the permanent "*fonn*" (frame) of the mysticism, not a special content of a certain historical moment.

The author stresses the idea expressed in the prior study: the fundamental characteristic of the mysticism is its orientation towards the Absolute on the basis of an undestroyable certitude. The mysticism supposes a certain moral excitement. Its essential characteristics woulde be:

1. the mystic object is the Absolute:
2. the undestroyable certitude of the existence of the Absolute;
3. the characteristic of Totality and Unity that can unify the object to the subject in the Unity.

Florian denies any definition based on the remotest, antagonist elements: mysticism is neither an illusion nor a superior manner of thinking and knowledge.

Another distinction is "the mystic experience" based on feeling, experiencing and which has applications in the axiology. Florian's conclusion: mysticism is not an intellectual way of knowledge but a way of living. It is not gnosis but bias. Knowledge supposes a separation between subject and object while mysticism is based on a melting down of the soul in the supreme Unity.

Florian remarks that even inside the mysticism there are two antinomies: a quantitative one, based on the opposition between the universality towards which it is oriented and the characteristic of exceptionality (individuality) supposed by mysticism. The second antinomy is a qualitative one because it supposes the highest degree of holiness but which is, sometimes, too close to madness. Another idea repeated in this study: mysticism has not only a religious significance, it also has extra-religious significances: social, political (nationalist, fascist mysticism for example) but also artistic, especially musical significances.

A basic characteristic of the mysticism in general would be the fact that it "blossoms" especially during hard times (despotism, oppression). Florian considers that the extra-religious mysticism of the period between the two World Wars is a continuity of the one specific for the end of the 19th century especially in the modern painting where the mystic of colour and the mystic liberation from the classic form is dominant.

Florian observes a continuity in the various contents of the mysticism but this continuity is not always identical, it supposes certain deviations. For instance, the romanticism perpetuates the pre-romantic period of the 18th. century but it has also criticized it for its rationalism.

The irrationalism of the 20th' century perpetuates the 19th century mysticism but accuses it for its positivism. Otherwise, Fiorian considers that as romanticism was a phenomenon complementary to the rationalism, in the same way, mysticism would be the "shadow" of the positivism. We can already remark here a first expression of the future dual and recessive dialectic which will be exposed in the author's most important study.

Generally speaking, mysticism has a basic vital impulse; it is based on the feeling of the unity of the existence (being). The eros, the aestheticism are also domains of the mysticism. Feeling is

the supreme value and it is based on the intensity of the sentiment. The mystic vision is pantheistic and expresses the triumph of the immanence, the melting down of the ego in the Unity of the Totality. The Greek thought on which the Christian negative theology is based is a mystic conception (Plotinus, Proclus, Pseudo-Dionysius, up to Rilke).

The Christian mysticism stresses the divine grace as a fundament of the mystic feeling (as a warranty, in fact, against mysticism itself, against the mystic dissolution). Meister Eckhart speaks about the unity in the *Urgrund*. Rilke also mentions that special "melting down of the ego into the Other". Pseudo-Dionysius or Schleiermacher also mention the ego's passivity. But the passivity hides, in Florian's opinion, the recessive element. Florian considers the mysticism "an extreme form of gigantism, an inflation of the ego, a *deificatio*, a *dei-formitas.*

Analyzing the duality rationalism—mysticism, Florian finds that both have a universalist characteristic, they are ahistorical. The idealism, as a form of rationalism, stresses the superior reality of conscience. Mysticism is based on interiorization absorbed in the Unity. Both directions had interweaved in Augustinus, then Pseudo-Dionysos, Fichte, Schelling and Hegel.

Even between mysticism and materialism could be evident a special aspect—the passivity. The role of love in mysticism is analyzed in this context. Mysticism is knowledge through love. This theme occurs in Plotinus and it is continued by Augustinus or Max Scheler. If the metaphysics of love has an ascendent movement in Plotinus, as it was in Plato, the Christian caritas supposes the opposite movement, the descendent one as God's love towards human beings is stressed.

Florian finds out several types and moments of mysticism:

-primitive mysticism—the orgiastic one;
-superior mysticism—based on love and the speculative doctrine;
-impersonal mysticism—which supposes the melting down into the Unity;
-Christian mysticism—supposing the personalist and active tendency.

Florian remarks that the Christian religion is not mystic by its substance; it has the individual person in its center and the active characteristic of the act of faith. Jesus brings out a personal, interiorized faith. In this context, Florian points out that the Roman mentality stressed the personal aspect while the Greek mentality generated an "Oriental Christianity mystically coloured", a contemplative one of neoplatonic influence. The author mentions that this interpretation, this 'oriental" direction does not occur in the old texts of the New Testament. In fact, the mysticism is neoplatonic in its substance. The human soul emanatès from the common, fundamental substance. The extatic Plotinian unification offers an aesthetic happiness, a joy of love, an exaltation. The Christian Church has always and attentively surveilled any Christian mystic act.

Florian mentions the main characteristics of the Christian mysticism. The voluntarist aspect which would include the steps of the ascendence and the important and distinctive fact that the Christian mysticism does not reach the final mystic moment: the unconsciousness and the fusion but only the symbiosis. In comparison to the mystic man who, in any other religious mysticisms (except the Christian one) loses any consciousness even the one of the fundamental sin, the Christian one is more realistic, more rational. The Christian religion is centered on faith.

In this context, the author makes a brief presentation of the three main Christian doctrines: the catholic, the protestant and the orthodox. He also stresses the main characteristic of each one.

The protestant doctrine is dominated by faith; the catholicism supposes the Church authority based on reason as a first step of faith and the mystic experience as its highest moment. The orthodoxy places at the same level both faith and mysticism considered as passivity, quietism.

Faith

Faith, generally speaking, is, in Florian's opinion, a spiritual attitude of adhesion, feeling, attachment but it also supposes action and will. It also supposes reason, intellectual thinking and judgement even if the fideism limits the faith to mysticism (credo quia absurdum est). Florian considers that the theoretical judgement is present in faith. Virtue is, in fact, "a synthetic intelligence." The mechanism is a little surprising. It's not the divinity that assimilates, swallows the ego but the ego annexes the divinity because the de-fined, limited ego becomes the Absolute Ego. That is why Florian considers the mysticism an intensive activity of the ego. The mystic experience is, in Florian's opinion, a strong, energetic advance of creativity.

If we stress the theoretical (rational) element, any faith is faith in/of something or in something (meaning an ideatic content). If we stress the non-theoretic (irrational) element, faith is feeling, intention.

In a large, general understanding, faith would be, according to Florian's definition, "the agreement to all that is lived, felt",8 an adhesion to the entire experience. Thus, faith is co-extensive to life, it is understood as agreement, adhesion to experience and knowledge. But, a second, superior step to understand faith, supposes the fact that we believe more than we know. Faith, as emotion and will, is added to knowledge. Thus, faith is a constituent of the truth. Mentioning Kant's thought, Florian makes the distinction among opinion, belief and scientific knowledge. His conclusion: faith has its sufficient reasons but it has not necessity, determinism. As a consequence, its definition will be: faith is adhesion beyond experience and knowledge and scientific judgement.

The faith-opinion joins the objective experience with the subjective, personal one but the contribution of the personal experience depends on the objective one. The faith-absolute certainty joins objective data, impersonal experience and subjectivity. The impersonal experience takes into consideration an invisible reality, a spiritual one but "without passing beyond any experience."9

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In comparison to faith, science does not pass beyond experience, it reveals the treasures of experience. The intellectual activity is not one of invention but of discovery.

Florian makes also other distinctions, inside religion this time, between science and faith. A first distinction: the opposite evaluation of the human nature. Religiously thinking, the fundamental characteristic would be its misery, the nothingness of human being if he is not protected by the divine power. On the contrary, from the science point of view, man is limited in his thought but this does not impede him to reveal the secrets of nature, to correct, to eliminate the miseries. This opposition also includes the human self-pride. Science does not reject human pride and confidence in human power, the man of science is a believer who lacks humility in opposition to the religious believer. But the man of science can also be humble—the well- known example is Socrates who represents the "humility of the intellect".10

Florian mentions another way of analyzing the relation reason-faith: their identity. In this case, the act of faith would be a science *sui generis*, different from the science of reason. But this interpretation is rejected by Florian. It asserts: there are no more types of knowing the real object (a rational type and an irrational one). There is only one type, the rational one. After this brief but attentive analysis of faith in general, the author tries to establish the essence of the religious faith.

He starts from the distinction made by the Christian theology between faith in the religious divinity and any other faith in something absolute (duty, humanity, country, culture) which Florian names "faith in the Absolute-without-God". The religious faith has in its center the divine order, the transcendence. After having made the distinction between *fides* and *fiducia*, the author points out what is specific for the Christianity: the faith in Revelation, in God's Son. This faith assures the authority of the Church because the Church is where God's Word is heard. Florian observes that the steps of the historical foundation of Christian faith would be: the Church which takes over the Tradition keeping up the Holy Word (expressed in the Bible and the other initial holy works) based on Revelation. But the proper order of the Christian foundation in itself would be: Revelation, Holy Bible, Church, Tradition.

The fundamental characteristic of religion in general and of the Christian religion especially is a profound, a deep unity between the transcendent world and the immanent one. This is also the internal basic antinomy of the faith as Florian had asserted even in his study in 1926. The Christian religion is historically oriented and. history is the condition of Revelation. But the Revelation has a transcendent significance, an eternal one. The Holy Bible is extra-temporal, surpasses the limits of time. The specificity of each religion is the belief in a supreme order, completely different from the natural one.

In a diachronic analysis, Florian tries to extablish if the relation between faith and science is a conflictual or harmonized one. He observes there have been several ways of analyzing this relation:

a) faith and science are not different—they are identical. This direction, Florian observes, has no obvious historical evolution.

b) they are completely different:

—(b1) they have different methods of knowledge but the same object of knowledge;

—(b2) they have not only different methods but also their object of knowledge is different.

In the case of b1, the object is an unique truth but the methods used to reach it are different: revelation (for faith) and reason, judgement (for science). This orientation would include the texts of the Patriarchs and the deism of the 17th and of the 18th centuries. Adopting a polemic attitude against R. Otto's thought, Florian makes a subtle and sound distinction based on his understanding of the concept of experience, reality. R. Otto considers the divine—a completely other reality in comparison to the human reality. Florian considers that the phrase "completely other" should not be compatible to experience and it would represent only a mystic method of analysis. Only the phrase "completely otherwise" could be a real expression of faith.

The impression of a "surpassing" is caused by the narrow meaning usually accepted for experience. Religion enlarges the conceptual meaning of "experience" in order to assure to the concept of cause its entire extension. But the religious experience is based on the act of faith where

the decisive function belongs to the non-rational factors. These situations can be explained by two aspects that specifically colour the faith:

a) the leading role of the adhesion (the emotional factor) that stresses the power, the force of faith and justifies the role of Truth in the moral life.

b) this role of adhesion can also generate weakness, belief in an imaginary, unreal and mystic world which could become dominant by a personal decision.

Florian recommends the development of the intellectual activities in order to protect religion and faith against mysticism. The author also points out a theoretical value of religion: the religious layer of reality makes possible the postulation of a Supreme Spirituality. This phenomenon is also possible in the case of atheist faiths which suppose the transgression of the sacred in the profane. This phenomenon takes various aspects: religion of mankind, of motherland, of an ideal or of values, religion of art, of race, of the transcendental ego, etc. Florian mentions Carl Christian Thy who had found the expression "disguised religions" which he used to identify several cultural social and political attitudes as: atheism, astrology, anti-semitism, anti-alchoolism, materialism, yogism, vegetarianism, etc.

There are some significant conclusions that could be drawn from this work. Florian finds out a polarity between magic and religion: the mystic feeling and faith. Both however are oriented towards spirituality, the latter more than the former, contrary to all appearances. The mystic element avoids knowledge and tries to reduce everything to the feeling of a unique and indistinct existence (being). The mysticism maintains the initial form of any religion (of irreligiosity for Catholics)—the magic practice which is dominated by the fascinating attraction of life in its intensive, impulsive form.

Mysticism is tolerated by Christianity only when it was submitted to an important change: from an aim in itself it becomes a means in God's service. The author points out that mysticism manifests an undermining tendency in the entire culture. In this way, man is seen as a part of the universal being with which he commununicates by invisible connections.

Faith, on the contrary, stimulates the interest for knowledge and represents the transcendence under the moral and philosophical form which are "autonomous forms of culture".

Conclusion: "The spiritualization of religion is especially a moralization but also, a philosophical abstractization". If morality is based on the creative function as well as religion but under a weakened aspect (which made possible its joint with religion) philosophy is based on the cognitive function.

Science and Religion

In Chapter 39, "Cosmocentrism and Anthropocentrism" of the treatise *Recessivity as structure of the world*.11 Florian analyzes the antinomy science-religion. He starts from the following assertion: the science of nature is cosmocentric and religion is anthropocentric. Trying to explain the two concepts and antinomic terms, the author says: the cosmocentrism is the explanation of the universe by itself, man being considered a "sub-product" of it. On the contrary, the anthropocentrism places man "outside the world". The original phase- of the anthropocentrism is the theocentrism. Due to this antinomy, religion and culture (science, philosophy) are antagonistic. The metaphysics has tried to transfer in rational theories the spirit of religion but this ambiguity, this pendulation between science and religion has represented the great default and tragedy of the

European thought. Florian proposes a solution to this dilemma: the philosophical dialectic of recessivity. It is a dialectic in two steps: one is the dominant at a historical moment and the other one "follows it" taking the advantage in another historical moment.

The author makes a brief review of the main historical moments of the cultural evolution. He finds out that in the beginning, the anthropocentrism was the dominant element through the various religions and the recessive element was an "unconscient cosmocentrism". The roles change during history. The modem and contemporary periods mark an increasing boom, development of the cosmocentric pole.

Re-analyzing the old antinomy (religion-science) Florian observes that inside religion itself there are antinomic tendencies: a tendency toward the absolute object opposes to the tendency toward the intimate subject (the well-known antinomy between transcendent and immanent). The dominant pole in religion will be the spirit while in science it will be the matter. Thus, the anthropocentrism opposes to the cosmocentrism. But, the author observes that even in the Judaic religion one can remark a sliding movement from a cosmic process to the human drama. However, the anthropomorphism is dominant in religion. Gods are by analogy to human beings; they have certain specific duties in the human every day life. And even the religious antinomy between fear and consolation, hope is based on the anthropocentric factor. Religion always supposes a tendency of purification of all that is human but this is impossible to be achieved completely and more than this, it revenges right against religion itself. The complete separation of the divine spirituality from matter, corporality can, of course, assure the ascension to the transcendent world but it also has contradictory consequences. If divinity eliminates any other kind of being except itself:

a) the religious tendency is to give up the spiritual transcendence; the result would be a pantheism;

b) if the universal nature is suppressed, the result would be an acosmism—the Nothingness. An example of giving up any determinism is the negative theology. The divinity is defined by Nothingness as a plenitude, fullness without determinations.

In order to understand how this dualism operates, Florian analyzes the Greek rationalism, the Judaic and Christian religion and the new, modem science. The author remarks that the entire European culture is based on these three elements. The last one, the new modern science, even the most recent, is also the most vigorous.

Greek Rationalism

The Greek rationalism is fed up by a religion which lacks a dogmatic theology and fanaticism. It is tolerant, human, being based on the joy of life and beauty. These characteristics oppose it to the Judaic religious intolerance. A characteristic of the Greek religion is the fact that it is expressed in the poetic works of two famous poets:

Hesiod and Homer. This characteristic makes this religion match to the definition of the aesthetic anthropomorphism. A very fertile compromise is achieved in the Greek culture: the reason (nous) is worshiped. The result: a myth of reason occurs.

If the Greek thinkers were, some of them, materialists, developing an incipient cosmocentrism, others, rationalists, at the end of this culture, the last thinkers were rationalists and mystic theologians. The end of the Hellenism is a tough period where the syncretism, cultural and

religious both, finds the suitable background for its manifestation. It is the right background necessary for contrast and opposition among the most important religions.

Christianity

Florian considers that the new Christian religion which becomes more and more manifest during the Hellenistic twilight does not differ significantly from the Greek rationalism from which it had borrowed a lot. The author mentions Wundt, for whom the Christian religion is "the last offspring and supreme of the ancient spirit."12 But, he also mentions an opposite opinion, Ch. Dawson's, who considers the Christian religion "a moment of profound separation from the ancient civilization". Florian mentions that the main distinction consists in the fact that the Christian anthropocentrism is much more marked, much more virulent. In fact, this distinction separates Christianity from all the other religions which are more abstract and metaphysical, in Florian's opinion. "The Judaic religion is well connected to the every day life of the Jewish people".13 The divine rule is not something abstract but it is inscribed in the human history. In this way, the cosmic process joins the human drama. In this way, the history is seen as a process and not as a cycle (as it was seen by the Greek thought).

Florian mentions the Protestant V. Monod's opinion in *Dieu dans l'Univers*. He has found two ways of access to the divine world:

- through the space—in the Greek culture—the divinity is the first unmovable motor of the Universe, isolated from man and the Universe itself;
- through the time—in the Judaic culture: God is permanently related to man in his historical life. Thus, history becomes the irreversible story of the relation between God and man.

The Christianity begins by accepting this historical vision but it will mix it with a spatial one which is much more a cosmocentrical one.

Florian also analyzes the Greek thinkers' reaction to the Judeo-Christian tradition. God's descent among mortals supposes, from the Greek point of view, the distinction of the cosmic harmony as divinity, being perfect, cannot be submitted to the terrestrial becoming. Celsus can not accept that a whole people can have a revelation, that God, without taking into consideration the entire becoming of the being, of all the existing things (which are submitted to the law of necessity) is ready to reverse everything (even the cosmic order) in order to give satisfaction to mankind. Mentioning Labriolle's opinion in his *La reaction païenne*. Florian shows the most important antichristian arguments:

1) The idea of an universe created *a nihilo* and which passes from time to time through historical crises (changes in the human life): the sin, the redemption by embodiment. It is absurd to think possible to change an universe only because something has changed in the relation God-man.

2) It is also absurd to accept as reasonable the divine pain for His human creature and the redemption of this creature's gestures by the embodiment of the Holy Son. Such thought contradicts the divine impassibility (characteristic of the pre-Christian gods).

The anti-christian arguments helped the Christian tinkers to evaluate their own novelty, the originality of their faith. Thus, Origen will argue against Celsus and Augustinus against

Porphyrius. But this interchange of opinions and arguments will found a solid and structured Christian medieval thought that will not cut its connections with the ancient Greek thought, on the contrary, it will try to integrate it.

After having made an analytical presentation of the medieval thought, Florian remarks that it attached great importance to the concept of general, universal especially for theological reasons. All dogmas postulate the superior reality of the universal. God is an universal substance under three hypostases; Adam is the man, in general; the sin is the same at all the people; bread loses its material specificity and becomes a spiritual entity, etc.

The nominalism is the thought that turns the attention to the individual even if the principle of individuation had been deeply analyzed by St. Thomas. The nominalism will favour the foundation of the rising science of nature (Galileo's sentence, for instance). The new science joins the individual, the particular with the general, the universal of the new mathematics, with quantitative, spatial and numerical relations. In this way, the cosmocentrism becomes more and more evident. The universe, from the modern science point of view, represents a "closed causality"; the cosmic process is not any more subordinated to any spiritual cause, it is a continuous chain without end. The basis of the natural science is the principle of energy preservation by equivalent changes; it is not any more the principle of genesis from nothing.

The foundation of scientific thinking made man capable to affirm his individuality. "Man re-places himself in the Centre of the world not theoretically but practically in a humanistic way of thinking, an anthropo-modellating way", says F1orian.14

Science and Human Dignity

According to the basic scheme, modern science is accompanied by the recessive anthropocentric pole. Considerations of the relation matter-spirit generate four solutions largely exposed by Florian in the prior study:

a) spirit (reason) is reduced to matter by the materialist point of view;
b) matter is reduced to the spirit by the idealism;
c) both of them form a unitary reality non-determinated (a psycho-physical parallelism affirmed by Fechner in the 19th century);
d) the dualism which affirms the heterogeneity between spirit and matter and their reciprocal action.

Florian analyzes those attitudes which try to weaken the competence of the scientific knowledge in order to make room to the faith and the antbropocentrism. His analysis is not a complete and systematic one but a "typical and significant one", as he considers it. We mention only the most important of these attitudes:

1) Science studies only the phenomenon not the reality itself (Locke, Kant, A. Comte and H. Spencer). Florian admires the science decision to limit its analysis only to phenomena that are considered by it as the only one reality. This decision is "an act of philosophical wisdom" as the science was protected against the skeptical attacks and thus, it has become more and more solid.

2) Science is only a list of practical prescriptions for useful applications but which are not connected to the reality itself (M. Scheler, B. Croce, W. James).

3) An other way of weakening the science by taking up to its limits the phenomenalism reveals the mystery that surrounds us and which we can never understand completely.

Florian ironically remarks that this way of thinking does not take into consideration the fact that mystery is a recessive concept. It is not defined as "something we do not know anything about" (because in this case, we could not speak about it) but something we know only partially. "The authentic mystery does not limit our knowledge, it only cancels any of its limitations".

4) The romantic irrationalism stresses role of the feeling. God is not known, understood rationally. Feeling cannot be an object as nature is, it is a non-given, a non-object. The distance between object and subject disappears in the act of feeling. Floriàn considers as "non-convincing" the romantic attitude. Anything which is felt must be, first of all, given to be felt.

Florian also analyzes other philosophical attitudes as the vitalization of the material universe (Leibniz—Goethe): the subjective idealism (Kant, Fichte, Schelling, Hegel); the modern anthropocentrism (L. Feuerbach).Even Comte's positivism, cosmocentrically oriented at a first analysis, is profoundly antliropocentric or, better said, "sociocentric", considers Florian.15 To the objective synthesis of mathematics and cosmology, Comte opposes the subjective synthesis of sociology. The universe exists for man and it is known by him only in the social being. "The sociology reestablishes the anthropocentrism on a positive basis", declares Florian. To the objective synthesis of mathematics and cosmology, Comte opposes the subjective synthesis of sociology. The universe exists for man and it is known by him only in the social being. "Sociology re-establishes the anthropocentrism on a positive basis", declares Florian."16

Another thinker of the modem anthropocentrism is S. Kierkegaard. His man is subjective par excellence. The subjectivity is also accepted by Husserl's existentialism and especially by Heidegger's. Florian considers that the existentialism has kept the subjectivity but has eliminated the christian faith, which was obvious in Kierkegaard's thought. The existentialism is, in Florian's opinion, a humanism.

Leaving for a while the domain of philosophy, Florian analyzes the domain of science. He makes a distinction between the modern and the contemporary science. If the former (up to the 1980s) were based on invincible principles, the latter has undermined these principles. For instance:

- space and time are not any more objective and measurable criteria—Einstein's theory has made them relative.
- mathematics used to deal only with the finite and the infinite as a non-defined progression—Cantor's theory speaks about trans-unit ordinal numbers
- in logic the *tertium non datur*,—the excluded third has been seriously weakened by Bouwer's mathematic intuitionism.
- in astronomy—the idea of the expansive universe justifies the concept of genesis (a created universe having a temporal beginning).
- in physico-chemistry—the atom ('final entity', without parts) is divided in subatomic structures which do not obey mechanical determinism).

All these new discoveries and theories make evident "a crisis of the scientific truth". Florian considers this crisis—"the result of a mixture between the recent scientific discoveries and certain philosophical interpretations imposed by the 'faith retaliation'".17 The anthropocentric dimension is considered by Florian the recessive pole and religion has always tried to reverse this position.

But, in the author's opinion, science must not limit or even restrict its domain of interest in order to make more room for faith. This one should be seen as the attitude of the ego, of the immanent toward what we know. But faith without knowledge cannot exist. And the essence of religion— the spirit -can reach a form closer to science "if it has not the imperative of the absolute and does not postulate the messianic retaliation of the recessive relation".18

Analyzing the extra-religious beliefs, Florian considers that the only valuable attitude supposes the man's creative spirit beyond any error and defeat.19 "We can limit the magic of the <vital illusion>, restraining our expectations and hopes only to possible achievements.20 Finally, the author asks himself if religion could be only an illusion. The answer is negative. If it were only an illusion, it could not be understandable why mankind has accepted religion not only in ancient times but also today, and why men such as Einstein could consider it a reality. The reality of the spirit (the religious truth) is in perfect concord with the recessivity of the spirit in its relation with the matter.

From this brief presentation of Florian' s works treating on the relation faith-reason, we can easily extract his recessive thought. This recessivity supposes a deep asymmetry in the universe structure. The existence, the being in its entirety is structured, in Florian's view, on antinomic elements; one being dominant and the other one, recessive. This does not suppose that the latter should be degraded: on the contrary, it can be superior to the former causing the occurrence of a new quality. Florian considers the relation between contraries, a unitary one. These contraries form dualisms which can structure an asymmetric scheme of the world. They can explain the occurrence of any new phenomenon, of the development and unity of the world and even the unity between matter and reason. The author offers an original vision of the world, a realistic, dialectic and humanist thought. There can be mentioned several fundamental themes:

- there is only one reality where diversity, multiplicity is dominant;
- the human conscience, subjectivity is an objective real factor connected to the corporality but non-reducible to it. The human subjectivity considered in its absolute dimensions, as transcendence, is specific to the idealistic metaphysics and to religion which postulates the overturn of the recessive relation between matter and reason. But human subjectivity is an "object" of reality—an object which can introduce in reality finalist significances and values. The importance of the second term, the recessive one,—the reason—makes evident the man's role, the role of the conscience in thinking and knowledge. A fundamental author's interest becomes obvious: the escape from any "ism" by means of a deep knowledge and understanding of their characteristics. He surpasses the unfruitful debates about rationalism and irrationalism, about mysticism and fideism, he refuses the eclecticism. His intention is to pass beyond the traditional metaphysics but also, beyond positivism. His intention is to "re-articulate" the philosophy as object and methodology.21 But this "re-articulation" can be achieved only by a coming back to facts and their foundation on the basis of a rational and rigorous analysis.

The enlargement of the reality sphere including the non-reality and the new vision on the experience as a principle of a philosophical reconstruction containing life with all its factors represent two concepts and philosophical themes which are fundamental in Florian's thought. They are subordinated to an ontological vision of the universe structure having a dual and polar character. The philosophical system which the author obtains in this way "does not sacrifice the reality and does not create a reductionist synthesis." But this "re-articulation" can be achieved only by a coming back to facts and their foundation on the basis of a rational and rigorous analysis.

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Florian's thought offers clarifying explanations in so complicated domains as faith, mystic and religion. He offers a new vision based on the distinctions and subordinations to the two poles of the relation faith—reason. It is just for this reason that the informational and educational role of these studies is also important and actual even nowadays, in our present historical context, after more than half of a centruy since they were published.

There are clear distinctions that the author had made between mysticism and religion, between mysticism and Christian religion, especially when he explains that God must not be discovered by mysticism but by faith, or that the proper mysticism is paganism, is complete immersion in nature,—is pantheism. The superior mysticism, the Christian one, is associated to the faith but subordinated to it. These ideas clarify the relation mysticism-religion and thus, Florian' s studies are perfect guides for the understanding of this relation.

The duality faith-reason and consequently, religion—philosophy were the author's main concern. He intended to solve aspects apparently unsolvable. Being a philosopher, but also a Christian, Florian desired to save religion without eliminating the science (philosophy). This antinomy has not only a generic character for him but also a personal one.

Contemporary Issues of Faith and Reason

The contemporary Romanian society, dominantly Orthodox, the understanding of the differences among the three most important Christian confessions by means of a correct and objective information of the young generation would avoid the reciprocal accusations of proselytism and could have, as a consequence, a conscious adhesion to one of the three confessions. In the same time, when certain deviated manifestations from the orthodox dogma would occur they should not determine disproportional reactions of the Orthodox believers as has already happened.

An educational measure having beneficial consequences and which has already been applied is a special class of religion during the elementary school. It is possible that it should be extended to the secondary school. But even for this decision there is a distinction that must be made: the Orthodox clerics and teachers who arc teaching religion should familiarize the young people with all the three important Christian confessions and not only with the orthodox one in order to educate them in the spirit of religious toleration and understanding. It's no use to tell to young people that Orthodoxy is the most important or even the unique Christian religion and the others are only religious deviations. A partial education favouring only one confession can't be considered a real and objective education. Only a correct and complete information could eliminate any possibility of certain extremist manifestations of religious intolerance. In Florian's terms, even the dominant pole would be the affiliation to a confession, the community, the recessive pole, the individual would be permanently active, would collaborate by an education based on analysis, comparison, comment on distinctions among confessions. All these would incite the individual thinking and

understanding and would have an important consequence: a conscious attitude based on a responsible freedom of chose.

The religious education could be extended afterwards to the other religions and beliefs, first of all, to Mosaicism and the relation between Mosaic and Christian religions and then, by successive extensions, it could be extended to the oriental religions.

In its geographic region, Romania lies at the cross roads of several religions and beliefs. A profound knowledge of their significant distinctions and similarities would assure the religious peace, the co-habitation and fruitful understanding of various religious communities.

The antisemitism, very active before the Second World War or the recent war in Yugoslavia, are examples that can be analyzed during religion classes just in order to avoid misunderstandings and intolerant acts.

The Romanian conflict between the Orthodox Church and the Greek-Catholic Church should also be known and analyzed. But also, in this case, an objective and documented explanation is necessary, without partialities, without passions. How is it possible that two Christian Churches have conflicts between them at a material and economic level? Why the Orthodox Church does not accept to voluntarily give back the Greek-Catholic properties abusively confiscated by the communists in 1948? Which are the Orthodox Church arguments? Which are the Greek-Catholics' arguments? What has happened to the Greek-Catholic population in Transilvania during the communist regime? Why are they such a small minority (1% of the whole population)? These could be problems that should be answered. To avoid such talks or to change them by intolerant assertions do not bring any solution to any one of the parts arid less, to the civil society that has the right to be correctly informed and educated.

We discover today that Fiorian was right when he declared that reason cannot be eliminated from religion (faith) even if it should be placed in a recessive position. Reason cannot be eliminated especially when one talks about the education of young generations who have to know the history of the relations between the Churches of two Christian confessions in our country.

Beyond the religious mysticism, Florian draws the attention to the extra-religious mysticism which can become offensive against civilization and culture. This kind of mysticism can become anti-intellectualist, anti-spiritual and anti-cultural. It blossoms in "hard times" when reason and its freedom of expression are abolished. The author makes transparent allusions to the mysticism of his time (the period before the outbreak of the Second World War), a mysticism exalting "the pure vitality embodied in Force and which boasts of its irrationalism."23 This mysticism affirmed the rising of a new "religion" (dangerous and thirsty of blood)—religion of a nation founded on race. The nationalist, fascist mysticism used to be the daily experience in Romania during the 1940's. But this mysticism has not ended as the Second World War has. On the contrary, it has been continually manipulated and fuelled depending on political interests of the moment. In fact, the nationalism under all its aspects is continuously fed even nowadays by political groups in Romania and all over the world for purposes that are far away from high ideals as the love for one's own country, or history, or people.

In 1946, Florian was experiencing a certain form of social degradation (the fascist totalitarianism) but he could also understand its similarity with the other extreme form. The nationalism, fascism, nazism, legionarism were forms of extra-religious mysticism which had defeated the religious faith in the name of a false idealism, spiritualism which was degraded of course. Florian could also predict the direction that could have a mysticism generated by atheism and materialism. If Hitler's totalitarianism can be easily discovered on the basis of Florian's description, the author also gives us all the necessary premises for a subsequent identification of

communist totalitarianism (Stalin's at first). In all these cases, the dominant pole is the general, the collectivity under its abstract expression—the unique Party, the "Great leader". The individual is gradually annihilated downwards to the level of becoming a number. Let's think about Ivan Denisovitch's depersonalization. He is one of the numerous people who became only a number in the communist goulags. Let's also think of the famous individual file which used to replace the person. This file contained records, delations about each individual, his biography, with all critical moments of his life, his descendents, their private properties, their political options, etc., etc. In a word, the file was the man and the party membership card was the identification card. The depersonalization, this loss of personal identity was so intensive that some symbols had the power to substitute the individual himself. This is why it is necessary to acquire a deep knowledge of the communist totalitarianism as a form of the extra-religious mysticism and, of course, of the Romanian communism. The great majority of the people have a knowledge of the communism based on the daily and personal experience but not a real understanding of it. The negative consequences of the communism in all life domains should be explained, analyzed. The Centre which was recently opened at Sighet (North Romania) intends to reveal all the tragedies caused by the communism. It can be considered a beginning but it is not enough known by the public opinion. Debates in mass media, communications, symposiums should contribute to the understanding of this phenomenon, its effects on today's economy, culture and society in its entirety. If the bibliographies studied in schools have contained memories, historical studies about communist prisons, about the long period of persecution, it should become possible to familiarize the young generation with these problems. And, of course, a moral trial of communism where it should be necessary to mention even by approximation, the number of the victims of the communist oppression in all the ex-communist countries. Only in this way people could become capable to take distance but consciously from this ill-fated period of their life. A real and substantial information about the social and political aspects would be beneficial for the young generation and for the entire civil society.

Recently, the TV channels have informed us about a "new" and "strange" event that took place in one of our large towns—Craiova. A group of 50—100 young people declared themselves anarchists. They do not accept and recognize any more the idea of State, boundaries, public order, etc. It is a form of incipient nihilism. To not be submitted to any prohibition, this is the ideal of these young people. The concept of freedom is largely misunderstood in this case. It becomes a negative one as it supposes a rejection of any restriction or prohibition imposed by reason and society. In the same time, the way chosen by mass media to make public this event was wrong in my opinion. Firstly, it was one of the "Sensational news" and afterwards it was repeated in a short film based on interviews with the parents of some of these young people. They were complaining about the impossibility to control their children. This short film has generated panic, a feeling of helplessness in front of this "new", almost "completely unknown" phenomenon. No debate was organized, no echo in mass media, no explanation of the phenomenon of anarchy. The impression was that mass media was not capable of taking a position, of having an immediate and complete reaction at such challenges. Such phenomena remain unexplained, unrevealed, hidden, generating a feeling of mystery which has an opposite effect to the one expected. Instead of rejecting the increase of the number of its sympathisers it attracts many more. This phenomenon is similar to the way the satanism has occurred and spread out in Romania during the last years. The satanism is also a mysticism but a religious one. Both forms of mysticism have gained sympathizers among the young population who is not yet enough prepared for the social mature life and who have easily accepted the mirage of belonging to a "special" community. There can be evident the same conflict,

the same antinomy between individual and collectivity. The young people are more vulnerable as their personality, their individuality is not yet enough established.

The problem of personal identity, a serious problem for the young generation, could find a false solution in the identification with a collectivity only by the affiliation to a "special" group. This "special" characteristic of the group is considered a sufficient recommendation for his/her personal identity, for his/her personality. There are also, of course, other motivations: social, political, cultural, economic. If all these aspects were analyzed not only in schools but also in mass media, if the civil society had active and organized forms capable to answer to these challenges, the reason could play its stimulating role in the character building and in assuming the right way of social and personal behaviour.

It is obvious that any one who would support a mysticism not controlled by reason and morality would end in barbary and violence. Thus, Florian's theoretic analysis is drawn to its ultimate practical consequences. Florian considers that the only valuable extrareligious belief is "the manifestation of man's demiurgical spirit in spite of any errors and defeats": it is not just opposition for the pure satisfaction of being against something but it is a positive delay required by a rational moment of analysis; it is the moment of individuality, of the rational ego which can deliberate (after a sound understanding) the personal adhesion to that collectivity, group. Only by judging, rationally weighing any individual gesture man can keep up his human condition—as a rational being. Annuling the rational individuality could cause the annihilation of the critical spirit and thus, the decay from the human condition itself. Freedom does not suppose any more an opposition to social rules but it becomes an individual duty for a critical judgement in the relation ego—world (collectivity). Freedom, as an opposition at any price, is not any more an absolute freedom just because it limited by this "at any price". Freedom has to be understood as a consciously adopted obedience just because it imposes itself voluntarily to certain limits and restrictions.

The tragedy of the European culture and, consequently, of the Romanian is caused by the antinomy between science and religion. The European culture oscillates continuously between the impossibility of keeping up a faith which should be unquestionable because all sorts of mysticisms are connected to it and the impossibility to reject it radically and completely.

The most important problem, in this confusing situation, is how could we understand and control the antinomies and the interactions between faith and reason, how could we act so that this "tragedy" could be overpassed. This complicated problem is permanently present. It needs subtle solutions. It is a part of the archetypal mental structure of the European civilization. It should also represent, for the Romanian civilization, a problem of social education especially because, nowadays, various religious and extra-religious mysticisms are obviously active and present during this period of political, social and cultural changes.

Another fundamental aspect of Florian's works and which could also become a model of social education is based on his analyzing method, a method founded on reason and logic structure. Florian had reached a unitary thought. He rejected unilaterality and excess. His opinions and attitudes are firm, decisive but very subtle. Florian is a model of researcher and of a wise man attentively observing the facts. His works are sober demonstrations and a lecture that can be, nowadays, as actual as they were fifty years before.

Our century has made various and unqualified concessions to different mysticisms. A remedy against them could be considered a sound knowledge of the relation between reason and faith in all its "articulations".

Notes

1 We have to mention that we translated by *being, existence, existent* the Greek concept *to on*.
2 M. Florian, *Recessivity as a world structure*, p.31.
3 M. Florian, *Antinomies of Faith* (Bucharest: Ed. Academiei, 1968), pp. 36, 42.
4 *Ibid.*, p. 195.
5 *Ibid.*, p. 201.
6 I. Ianosi, Foreword to *Mysticism and Faith*, p.12.
7 *Mysticism and Faith*, p. 31.
8 *Antinomies of Faith,* p. 136.
9 *Mysticism and Faith*, p. 14.
10 *Ibid.*, p. 16.
11 Cited by Florian in *Recessivity as structure of the world,* pp. 298-344.
12 Cited by Florian in *Recessivity*, p. 309.
13 *Ibid.,* p. 310.
14 *Ibid.*, p. 322.
15 *Op. cit.*
16 *Ibid.*, p. 325.
17 *Ibid.*, p. 329.
18 *Ibid.,* p. 331.
19 *Ibid.,* p. 333.
20 *Ibid.,* p. 335.
21 See I. Ianosi, *Foreword to Mysticism and Faith*, p. 16.
22 *Ibid.*, p. 17.
23 *Mysticism and Faith,* p.145.

Chapter V

The Tension between Philosophy, History and Politics in Forging:
The Meaning of Civil Society in Romanian Philosophical Culture

Mihaela Czobor-Lupp

Two of the most important concepts in forging the meaning of civil society are individualism and liberty. Therefore, the purpose of the present paper is to try to detect in the Romanian philosophical culture, in spite of the dominant conception according to which a liberal tradition is missing, a specific meaning of both individualism and liberty. This is possible, according to the point of view of the present paper, due to the most recent trends in the Western liberal thought, that allow for a reconsideration of the meaning of individualism in the direction of expression and the moral formation of character, as the mediating factor in human relationships. At the same time, to try to sketch the meaning of both individualism and liberty in the Romanian philosophical culture means to start from the specific problems that seem to trouble the Romanian philosophers, and from the issues that seem to be at stake for them.

Such an issue, related to the topic of civil society, seems to be the relationship between philosophy, history and politics. This issue seems to constantly traverse especially the works of the Romanian philosophers during the period between the two world wars. It is, in fact, the issue of the beginning of a culture. When does a culture becomes visible for other cultures and for itself? When does a culture enter history and the realm of politics, leaving thus the realm of the eternal and recurrent patterns of a traditional society? In what follows I will try to analyze the conceptions of Mircea Vulcanescu, Nae Ionescu and Nicolae Iorga about the tension that exists in the Romanian culture between philosophy, history and politics,—one of the real challenges that the forging of civil society has to face in the Romanian space, but also as one of the real grounds the civil society can start from. This is due to the fact that in debating the relationship between philosophy, history and politics what comes to the foreground is also the issue of identity, the issue of individualism, and liberty, the issue of the relationship between individuals, as well as the issue of authority. And all of them are essential to grasping the meaning of civil society in a philosophical culture.

Vulcanescu and the Meaning of Expressive Individualism

Mircea Vulcanescu seems to opt for an alternative that, instead of dismantling traditions, or radically inquiring into them, incorporates the body of traditions and gives it a European opening. The power of the opening consists in the fact that Vulcanescu builds his alternative by going back to what the phenomenologists call the *Lebenswelt*. It would be significant to point out that while the phenomenological European tradition constructs the concept of *Lebenswelt* as an alternative to the exhaustion of traditions, as an alternative for a too abstract reason, for a repetitive one, as an alternative that is meant to open up new meanings, Vulcanescu makes use of the notion of *Lebenswelt* not in order to renovate, but simply in order to begin, to trace the background for a philosophical understanding of the Romanian way of life. He works, in a sense, with the easiness of someone that does not have to face the burden of traditions.

The fact that Vulcanescu seems to bracket traditions does not mean that he thinks, like the ideology of Enlightenment, that he can free himself from any prejudice, in the phenomenological and hermeneutical sense of it. On the contrary, what he wants is to locate the main structures, the

patterns, that pre-form the emergence of any meaning in the Romanian cultural space. The traditions he is free from are traditions of the Western culture and history. These are the bracketed traditions. In a sense, his enterprise is similar to the differing reactions of both James and Nietzsche to the excess of abstract rationalism. While Nietzsche identifies the excess of abstract rationalism with the exhaustion of the European culture, with the impossibility of going back to the sources of meaning, James transforms the preeminence of the abstract rationalism into pragmatism, into the fragmentation of any global picture of reality in so many different contexts that make meaning possible. While Nietzsche seems to be overwhelmed by the burden of so many traditions, Vulcanescu, like James, cuts a straight way through the given traditions in order to open up a space that makes possible the expression of a new set of traditions. What Vulcanescu tries to do is to enrich the space of the given traditions and not to conceive his enterprise by contrast with what is already there.

As a result, Vulcanescu's philosophy can intersect those contemporary philosophies that, in the attempt to counter-act the dominant traditions, like the tradition of instrumental rationality, uncover less dominant, or buried, insulated traditions, deviations from the mainstream. In this respect, Vulcanescu's conception can bring new perspectives to the meaning of individualism. His choice is the expressive individualism.

He starts from the premise that there is something to express, and that this expression is a construction. The core of the expressive individualism is the individual itself. Vulcanescu attempts to rebuild the individual starting from the way being is signified on the level of language. From the very beginning Vulcanescu connects his undertaking to the instance wherein because it transcends the individual it can give an account of it. Vulcanescu, by the method he chooses, aligns himself to the Counter-Enlightenment, to the European traditions that try to counteract what generated the instrumental rationality.

These traditions start with the German Romanticism and go as far as the post-modern, post-structuralist and post-liberal trends of thought. Therefore, Vulcanescu's conception should be understood in this context, in the context of the attempts made nowadays to offer a new meaning to concepts like truth, objectivity, reason and rationality. Taking this context as the starting point of the approach of Vulcanescu's thought, the result could be represented by a new manner of conceiving individualism, a manner that does not lose sight of the main element that confers its meaning, the individual itself. As a consequence, the expressive individualism gets its meaning and its relevance for the contemporary political and moral thought from the perspective of the attempt to reconnect morality and politics in a way that does not sacrifice the inherent plurality and diversity of the modern world. The crux of this reconnection is the way identity is conceived. Therefore, any attempt to re-gain new meanings of individualism is linked to a broader philosophical context, the mediating term being that of identity, while the larger field of analysis is being structured by concepts like those of liberty, action, authority, the relationship of the individual with the world, with the different facets of the otherness. That is why Vulcanescu's expressive individualism can be compared and affiliated to the different versions of individualism which tend to emphasize the expressive side of the human action and of the constitution of individuality more than the instrumental, efficient, utilitarian aspects of it.

There are, in this respect, several Western thinkers who try to retrieve exactly this aspect, the expressive facet, of human action and individuality. Among them there are thinkers that belong to different philosophical traditions, like Rawls and Arendt, Ricoeur, Taylor or Habermas. What all of them have in common is the attempt to retrieve the value of the expressive side of human action. If Habermas emphasizes the communicative aspect of human action and rationality, Taylor is

concerned with the authenticity of human action and individuality. While Arendt speaks in favor of plurality as the only condition that gives an equal value to any human action, Rawls praises a social union based on the grounding of the value of any plan of life on its finite and therefore incomplete character. At the same time, Ricouer points out the importance of the historical narrative, as the continuous attempt to build a world where the author and the reader or the listener of the narrative met each other. All these points of view seem to highlight the importance of expression as the fundamental structure of identity building.

The manner of bringing Vulcanescu within this contemporary space of debate implies on a first level the analysis of his conception about the meaning of world, space, time, and action in the context of what he considers to be the Romanian dimension of existence; and hence, on a second level it implies the figuring out, based on this analysis, of the emerging meaning of the individual and the underlying conception of the way identity is constructed. According to his interpretation, within the Romanian dimension of existence, world is not like a hierarchical architecture of essences, but is becoming and flowing, where what really counts are the events. The order of world is not given and fixed, but it is constituted by the concreteness of human deeds. The human deeds are those that make up the substance of the world. As a consequence, the individual is tightly related to the world. The individual cannot be conceived, not even for a moment, as being outside the world, in the position of an observer that detains the rational project of the world. For Vulcanescu there is no possibility for the individual to insulate, to get isolated. The isolation of utopia or the insulation that makes possible parody does not take place from such a perspective. Therefore, according to such a perspective, any attempt to build identity cannot proceed by the dismantling of the whole array of traditions, by bringing the whole of traditions into question. On the contrary, from the standpoint of Vulcanescu, to built an identity is possible only within the context of the inherited traditions. That is why understanding the meaning of being within the Romanian culture means to explore language, that medium that deposits, and handles over traditions.

As a consequence, for Vulcanescu the notion of order has a positive meaning. According to Vulcanescu, everything is embraced by order, either social or cosmic, becoming as such together with it. The symbiosis between order and the elements that belong to it, grounds a high respect for order and community, establishing at the same time a peculiar meaning of liberty. The notion of liberty cannot then be grounded on an abstract notion of the individual, on a conception that bases the notion of individuality on the prior existence of the individual in relationship to community. At the same time, Vulcanescu's conception is more like the contemporary conception of individualism that values community and traditions as being fundamentally meaningful for the grounding of the individual, for the building of identity. The conceptions that belong to this area are either of a hermeneutical orientation or belong to the liberal thought that constitutes itself based on a critique of utilitarianism. Among the liberals that try to re-signify the meaning of individualism could be mentioned Charles Taylor. In accordance with his conception the individual cannot define itself in the absence of a background of traditions, that only in this way make possible the emergence of the individuality, as specific and different. In tune with Taylor, Vulcanescu does not deny the value of individuality, but emphasizes the fact that without the ongoing effort to express an order and traditions any attempt to define an individuality in its specificity and difference is futile.

In support of this complementary relationship between individual and community there could be added the conception, sketched by Vulcanescu, of the individual. The individual is not an atom, an abstract individual, but he is related in a dynamic, mobile and alive way with the world and the

other individuals. This indicates that what makes the core of the conception about individuality is not a substantialist perspective, that sees the individual as *in-dividuum*, as having a hard and undivided core, but what truly counts as the ground of the existence of the individual is his becoming and the continuous effort to re-assess himself. The idea has a deep echo in the ontology of Whitehead. According to Whitehead, the individual and the universal are tightly intermeshed, they become together. As a result, order becomes only at once with the individual, while the individual himself is a bundle of events, is a permanent process of becoming himself, a striving to assert himself as both an element of the order and as absolute novelty as compared to the given order, as one more possibility for the emerging structure.

The danger that lurks beyond the philosophical seduction of such a conception, is that it allows for a moral mobility that makes impossible the rectitude of a Kantian morality of duty. The moral mobility made possible by such a conception of the individual generates a sort of moral innocence, an opacity to the norm, a parodic defense of norm. At the same time, to conceive the individual in terms of process and becoming, in terms of the events that address the continuous challenge of an endless self-definition has the advantage of emphasizing the role of circumstances, of experience and reality, the capacity of the individual to mould reality and work with it not in an apriorical manner but in the spirit of the events, of what is going on. This induces a pragmatic flavor to the conception of the individual, pointing out in the direction of a new conception of meaning, truth, and objectivity, where what matters are construction, the recursive revision of principles, the ongoing effort to approximate the universal from the standpoint of different and finite slices of reality.

The pragmatic orientation that is at work in the way the individual is understood avoids at the same time any instrumentalization insofar as the meaning of reality speaks more in favor of a hermeneutical or a constructivist interpretation. Within the confines of "the Romanian dimension of existence" reality means temporal passage, and it also means what is already past, something that gained its real character from the time that passed away, and not something that is actually present, here and now, demanding to be faced and explained, made meaningful controlled, tamed, or encountered. If reality consists first of all in a temporal passage, then it can never be defined in a final way. Reality always escapes, slips away. At the same time, reality means also the past events, the reservoir of past events that were consecrated by their elapsed character. It would be interesting to stress the fascination that past exerts over Romanian thinkers, like Vulcanescu and Eliade. Prima facie this could be identified with a Romantic feature. Up to a point this could be true. Nevertheless, on a deeper level the importance of the past has, maybe, more to do with both the concept of crisis, that marks the beginning of the 20th century, and with the conjoined attempt to find a place for the Romanian culture in the European landscape, to demarcate the beginning of the Romanian culture, as will become clearer from the conception of Nae Ionescu.

These aspects show that the concern for past has primarily to do with the attempt to define history, to find a meaning for it, to think together culture, politics, history and metaphysics, to come to terms with the historical and the eternal (universal) dimensions of a culture. In this respect, the theoretical and philosophical concerns of the Romanian thinkers could be placed next to the conceptions of Leo Strauss, Patocka, Arendt or Heidegger, all of them being also preoccupied with the possibility to overcome the crisis of European culture through an attempt to think anew the meaning of the beginning of Western culture. Such a perspective on the Romanian thinkers would be able to avoid the structural dilemma of the Romanian culture that implies the unsolvable confrontation of two standpoints. Either the Romanian culture had its own, original path, but in this case there is the difficulty of finding a bridge to link the Romanian culture to the European

space, accompanied by the inevitable complaint and frustration that has to do with the issue of minor cultures as opposed to the major ones. Or the Romanian culture developed all the stages, or some of them, that characterized the emergence of European culture, but in this case there is the painful difficulty to outline the exact and final traces of such a becoming, difficulty that is even more complicated by the impossibility of establishing only one pattern of the European becoming.

Therefore, the premise that underlines the concern with the concept of "beginning" means to reject the notion of progress as the primordial notion of history. To work in favor of the notion of beginning might mean to support a conservative, but in a any case a reactionary, conception of history. This is due to the fact that the role of the notion of beginning in defining a culture stresses the fact that a culture becomes as a multiple reality, a reality that actualizes through its becoming only some of the potentialities that are inscribed in its beginning. The point is that these potentialities can be the more deeply uncovered, the better the commencement of a culture is interrogated and inquired into from the standpoint of the present. To proceed like this means to encourage a conception of history where time is not linear, but is focal: namely it presupposes the present as the focus that conducts the interrogation of the past, bestowing on the past not only depth but also a multiple, actual or still in germ, *becoming*. When, for example, Eliade analyzes the nostalgia of the origins, he does not speak in the name of an idealized past, of something obsolete that has to be retrieved, but he stresses the importance of the longing for the origins as a creative factor of history, as the power to originate, to open up new possibilities where history can inscribe itself.

In the same manner, Vulcanescu defines reality as the passed away events, as something that has to be maintained as alive as possible, as something that has to penetrate the present and find an expression within the focal time of the present. To quote an already trivial truth, that Collingwood is not afraid to evoke and make one of the central points of his conception of history, but nevertheless actual and unfortunately still considered as being not important enough, the past is never past, done with. If the past is never done with, then the present does not automatically come out of the past, it is not already inscribed in the past. The present is a construction. The present should be the effort not only to keep alive the past, but to make it to fit into the actual flow of events. In this point the Romanian and the European culture meet each other. The attempt of both cultures makes us to think together the interval between history and the beginning of history, and to immerse any effort to enlarge history in the interval that separates what has already been and what could be.

From such a perspective, the event, the fundamental entity of the world, is never envisaged as action, as fact, or as the working of the individual. This would mean to admit that the world can be escaped, which is not the case. The world is eventually continuous. What keeps the world together is the reality of history. The reality of history means that the individual is the focal point where the past and the present meet each other. That is why an event is rather the changing of a state of affairs, something that happens to the individual, rather than something that the individual started, initiated. At first glance such a position can be put under the accusation of being a passive individualism, where then the individual finds his identity only by retreating himself from any social, political, historical medium. This is a label that has already been applied to the Romanian mentality, a cliche that obstructs a more complex understanding of the phenomenon. Not even Cioran's attitude can be defined as a passive individualism, although the author of *History and Utopia* insulates himself, and flees from any social, historical or political medium in favor of his perfect discourse, the incarnation itself of utopia.

When it comes to Vulcanescu, there are two details that should not to be ignored. There is first of all the fact that the preeminence of the world does not mean the obliteration of the individual. On the contrary, the preeminence of the world means above all the continuity of the world. The world is a spatial and temporal continuum. There is no radical distinction between the visible and the invisible world, as well as no belief in the existence of an absolute beginning or end. The disbelief in the absolute beginning or end reiterates once again the idea that the beginning is not a lost chance, but an inexhaustible reservoir of meanings and alternatives that cannot be all at once actualized, an open beginning. At the same time, if the world is the totality of what affects the individual, of what happens to him, then the individual grounds himself not in the incisive way of the one that conceives himself as the absolute source of his thoughts and actions, but in the way of long-suffering (*pathos*). To relate to the world in such a way means to refuse to abdicate, which is half-way between offensive and retreat. It is half-way because, in a sense, the world is faced and resisted, but at the same time resistance comes as a secondary act, because what really matters is the continuity of the world, and this continuity is made possible only if the individual stands in the world.

Therefore, the primordial element is not "the individual", but that individual that has the capacity to combine the elements of the world in such a way that the world keeps on going without crushing his individuality. In a sense, what is at work here is a sort of mundane *askesis*. The meaning that the individualism develops here intersects the meaning of invidualism as conceived by Weber. In a similar manner, the individual, his will and desires are exerted not for themselves, not on behalf of the individual, but with the purpose of diminishing the vanity of the individual, of reducing his ego, without denying it. The act of the individual points out beyond the individual. In the Protestant ethics, the passage of the individual beyond himself takes place in the moment when desires are refrained, and the result of work is not consumed but invested. To consume the result of work would mean to recognize the individual as the absolute source of the thing, as being entirely expressed by the thing and as being entirely absorbed by the act of consumption. To invest the thing would mean to pass beyond the individual towards a more impersonal realm, where the individual is and is not present. What is present is the capacity of what he created to enter into relationships with what the others created, and what is not present is the direct power of the individual as the creator of the thing, the power to create, to imprint his mark on the world.

Therefore, the individuality of the action is not destroyed, but its meaning is changed. To be an individual becomes a continuous challenge, it becomes a process, where the individual is only insofar as it negates itself and therefore opens up the space for his constant self-positing. The main difference between the type of individualism described by Weber and the type of individualism that is implied by the analysis of Vulcanescu is that while for the Protestant sort of individualism 'denying oneself' has as its scope only the social realm, the expressive individualism has as its scope a realm that blurs the borderline between the social and the cosmic dimension. The individual is conceived more like a person, where his main feature is to express, and not to invent a new order. At the same time, the individual conceives himself as being free to evade any order, insofar as the final meaning of order transgresses any human frontier. The individual is more a potentiality, the sum of his dispositions, and the sum of his capacities to annul all his facets. Caught in between all his possible facets, the individual, like an authentic Romantic character, cannot decide for any of his facets, playing one aspect off against another1 , in order to maintain the freedom of action, which is the freedom to reject any determinate incarnation. This way of conceiving the individual could also explain the belief both Cioran and Noica have that history can

be evaded and that everything can be started all over again, that the history that has to come for the Romanian society and culture is all in the future.

At the same time this type of potential individualism, where the becoming of the individual is played on the level of what the individual could become, induces a creative tension that speaks in favor of plurality and tolerance. The individual might not have the radical capacity to posit himself in a clear-cut way, but he has the power to understand, accept and give free-way to other different manners of being. A proof in favor of this interpretation can be offered by the meaning of negation and opposition according to the Romanian understanding of existence as seen by Vulcanescu. To oppose does not mean to destroy, but to enrich reality. Therefore, to oppose means to be able to show, to express the alternative, the other different ways of being. Negation opposes different ways of being rather than deeds. Therefore, it opposes in a qualitative and not in a quantitative way. Negation, highlights Vulcanescu, does not have the instrumental role to separate the possible and the impossible existence, the necessary and the contingent existence, like in the Western metaphysics. In the Western metaphysics the instrumental role is created by the need to clearly demarcate between what can become real and actual, giving thus the norm and the law of the world. It is true that this way of conceiving negation and opposition has the obvious, and historically demonstrated, advantage of working in the direction of the political, social and historical world, of enhancing a determinate and orientated vectorial path of the world.

What makes the standpoint of Vulcanescu of interest in the context of the Western contemporary philosophy is its significance for all the attempts that are made in order to find alternative scenarios to the determinate and dominant path of Western mentality. According to many of the Western thinkers the dominant path is the instrumental rationality, the rationality that praises efficiency. What is requested, among others, in order to achieve efficiency is the capacity to delineate precise options and ways of acting, and then to pursue the chosen path in a determinate manner. Therefore, what is asked for is an instrumental sense of negation, a capacity to work with reality in a definite manner. The point is that such a way of dealing with reality, although enriching in the direction of the adopted design of reality, seems to neglect and even repress other possible ways of framing reality. This explains the fact that both Continental and Anglo-American philosophers are searching for alternatives to the dominant meaning of rationality. Heidegger's conception of ground and the distinction he makes between manipulative and interrogative thinking reflect such an attempt. But also, the pluralist doctrine of Isaiah Berlin, a philosopher that comes from the Anglo-Saxon tradition, which is supported nowadays by John Gray, illustrates in the realm of the history of ideas the attempt to recover lost, buried or neglected traditions in the becoming of Western mentality. Charles Taylor is another representative of this contemporary trend, insofar as his conception of individualism tries to recover the concept of authenticity as the crucial point of defining individuality. Foucault as well can be added to this list, due to his whole conception that is built on the attempt to forge new identities, conceived as the only ongoing escape the individual has from the network of power relationships.

What brings Vulcanescu in the proximity of all these thinkers is the model that underlines the expressive individualism and intersects it with all the other conceptions forged in the same spirit, a philosophical model that reflects a new way of conceiving identity. According to this model all the interpretations of reality are conceived as having an equal status, due to the fact that there is no absolute and unique criterion to design an absolute hierarchy of them. The only possible criterion comes from the potentiality that each level of reality and each interpretation of reality have to meet each other, to face and see each other. This potentiality refers to the capacity each level and interpretation of reality has to delineate itself from the inside, to draw its own boundaries,

to admit its own limits. In order to meet such a condition there is necessary to let all the levels and interpretations of reality to emerge, to come to their expression. As a consequence, the condition for making value judgments and hierarchies is the coming together in the same space of all the possible alternatives. Once brought together all these levels and interpretations, the only criterion that can act in the direction of making hierarchies would be the capacity each of them has to enrich reality, to enhance new possible ways of understanding and basically constructing reality. The model seems to have the capacity to combine both the finitude of each level and its incompleteness that opens up an indefinite space of construction where can be, potentially added, an endless number of alternatives.

If, according to the Romanian understanding of existence as seen by Vulcanescu, negation does not mean destruction, but enriching of reality, then, the way negation separates means to deepen the way each level and interpretation of reality is. To deepen the way of being means to admit the limits. To acknowledge the limits means to underline the way something is in its own specificity. To highlight the specificity is possible only when the space of what something is not is uncovered. Something becomes therefore what it is only due to the admittance of what it is not. Separating itself from what it is not means to allow room for the different. Allowing room for the different, which is both complete and incomplete, means to make possible the ground for constructing a common reality. Thus the ground is both open and closed, caught in something determinate, but disclosed to something else, insofar as the determinate exists only as half actuality and possibility. The relationship between the mutual recognition of limits and the enriching of reality are complementary. Such a way of seeing negation is not negativist but limitative. To be a limitative model means that there is no global perspective, and that otherness is never absolute, insofar as sameness is preserved only to the extent that it recognizes the potentiality otherness has to contribute to its own existence and to enhance reality.

The crux of such a model resides in the notion of expression, insofar as expression seems to have the capacity to affirm both the sameness and otherness. The expression is centered both on the content it expresses and on the receiver of the content. Expression is never meant to reach back to its emitter, if only due to fact that expression can never be simply reproductive. It cannot be simply reproductive due to the fact that the act of expressing itself as an act of bringing together disparate elements changes the meaning of each, melting them into something different from the intention of the author. The notion of expression is therefore complementary with the notion of world and not with the notion of intention. In a hermeneutic manner, the level where both the identical and the different meet each other is the world. This means that in the attempt to understand the other a new reality emerges, a third dimension that brings together the two sides, and not the reproduction or the confirmation of either side. Vulcanescu seems to adhere to such a model due to the accent he puts on the limitative role of negation and due to the manner in which he conceives the relationship between the individual and the world.

The expressive individualism Mircea Vulcanescu opts for meets therefore several characteristics. There is first the relationship between individual and order. The individual is neither the ultimate source of order, nor is he entirely subdued and crushed by an overwhelming order. The individual is the mediating and mobile element of an order that is preeminenint but only insofar as it is expressed by the individual. To become an individual means to find a way to prolong the order, to come to terms with an order that finds its channel towards form only through the unique expression of an individuality. By letting order be, the individual places himself under the rigors of a discipline that links him to his world, that enhances in the individual a strong sense of belonging. This feature of the expressive individualism could explain both the apology Noica

makes to the culture of peasants and Cioran's rage in destroying any affiliation to traditions. This ambiguous attitude comes therefore from the twisted relationship of the individual with order. No one can become an individual without 'signing' to an order, but at the same time adhering to an order means to highlight one's own specificity. The resulting tension could generate either the attitude of Cioran that dislocates himself from any tradition or the attitude of Noica that tries to find the way towards a specific Romanian order of values through what is most perennial in it, through the eternal order of the peasant culture.

Another feature of the expressive individualism refers to the way the individual is constituted and to the way the individual relates to the others. The individual becomes his own specificity only to the extent that he ongoingly restates himself on the background of a dominant order. He is never the absolute source of order. Between the individual and the cosmic and social order there is an intertwined becoming, a becoming-together. The individual allows himself to be only insofar as he allows the others to come into being. Becoming an individual means to enrich reality, to make it grow. Individuals exists only on a regional level, only insofar as each is located in his own setting, context, horizon. Reality is therefore always emerging. No absolute origin or purpose can be assigned to it. This means that history can be never entirely recovered. The historical memory exists only as sliced, as fragmentary, as local. As a consequence, there can be no sense of the freshness of history in the manner of a conception that bestows on progress the power to rejuvenate and renew history. History is always too old to be rejuvenated by being projected into an absolute, rational and overall purpose. Being too old to be rejuvenated, history is also never too exhausted to be maintained, to be kept going. This is due to the fact that history is never consumed on a global level. Being never consumed on a global level, history is both old and new, predictable and unknown in the flow of its events. The individual that participates in the creation of this reality and history is an individual that prolongs himself only insofar as he is able to grasp the close relationship between him and order, only insofar as he is able to focus the regional character of his existence, only to the extent that he sees opposition as the recognition of the other, as being half reflection and half creation, only insofar as his action is co-participation, or, as Whitehead would put it, con-crescence.

Based on the way the individual and his relationship with order and history are understood, the meaning of liberty can be deduced. To be free means therefore to be able to participate in a local order, to a determinate horizon. It means to celebrate one slice of existence, and at the same time to co-exist with the others. Liberty means to let the others come into being, to make room for them to express themselves. This meaning of liberty enhances tolerance. Unfortunately, this meaning of tolerance has been often misunderstood and wrongly defined as lack of originality, passivity or as a retreat from history. Being free, according to the expressive individualism, means to celebrate form, but not as the capacity to organize, to abstract a structure from the flow of events, but to celebrate the events as such, their appearance, their expression, their uniqueness. The attitude towards the world is to a large extent aesthetic. As Zeletin points out in *Tara magarilor*, the inhabitants of his parody are fascinated by the power words have over them, they are seduced by the form of any speech, they live entirely on the surface, in an aesthetic culture. Events are thus ordered but not beyond themselves. They are ordered insofar as they are deeper immersed into themselves, insofar as they are retained in their original setting. Only being conserved as such, events can become history, can drive time forwards.

As a result, liberty is never linked to the concept of power. To be free does not mean to have the capacity to resist. To resist would mean the attempt to decompose the events, to withdraw them from their context, to bestow on them the mark of the individual,— it would mean not to accept

them as they happened. On the contrary, liberty is understood as opening, as a high degree of confidence in the way the world is. The individual is free only insofar as he does not affect, but, on the contrary, discloses himself in order to be affected, exposes himself, lets himself to be penetrated. In this respect, the attitude of the individual towards the world is still natural, and not cultural, as the tendency is to preserve and not to destroy. There might seem to be a contradiction between the absence of a cultural attitude and the presence of the aesthetic attitude, insofar as the last one implies creativity as the power of the individual to posit himself as an author. The contradiction eliminates insofar as the aesthetic attitude is understood, on one hand, as the capacity to celebrate each event as being meaningful by itself, as being value-laden and not neutral, and, on the other hand, as the capacity to pay attention first of all to form, to the way something is directly glanced as a whole. To celebrate each event as meaningful by itself means to accept that there is already an emerging order. To focus first of all on the whole means to relate to the world in a way that praises the impact that the world has on the individual, and not the capacity the individual might have to take the world apart in order to understand its mechanism.

The celebration of order is both benign and malign. It is benign insofar as it indicates a meaning of community based on the non-exclusion of any aspect of it. Community is based on the incapacity to neglect, on the incapacity to ignore. Every detail could be relevant, insofar as every detail means every piece of reality that is indeed significant for the never finished overall becoming. From such a standpoint there is nothing that could be contingent. Everything is meaningful. That is why order is both omnipresent and dispersed. There is a general feeling that order is present, but no one can locate it. At the same time, this general meaningfulness opens up towards the malign aspect of the celebration of order. The malign aspect refers to the incapacity to change. Being conceived in a manner that not only makes it omnipresent, but also unidentifiable as a whole, order appears as a mobile structure, that cannot be entirely grasped. Therefore, it can be changed only in a radical way. A detail that does not work, insofar as no detail is meaningless, could generate a radical innovation. An undetectable order points in the direction of the incapacity from the part of the individual to incorporate destructiveness in the construction of its identity. A focalized order means a focalized action, the possibility of a plan, and the possibility of an ordering of action itself. To focus means to ignore what is irrelevant. If nothing is irrelevant, then order is dispersed, although still very much present, while destructiveness is highly concentrated as a global and radical reaction to any instability of the emerging and omnipresent equilibrium.

An extreme consequence of the combination between the dispersed character of order and the concentrated character of the destructive elements is the meaning of liberty as the liberty of the exceptional case or individual. The only way to forge a solution to the attempt to combine the need for order and the inability to integrate the random, contingent and destructive elements in the emergence of order, when expression is the key element in the coming together of world, is to emphasize the meaning of liberty as the capacity to evade any order with the purpose of imposing a new one. Thus, the importance of expression is preserved, without giving up the primary character of order. The exceptional individual creates order to the extent that he expresses himself.

Nae Ionescu and the Temptation of Machiavellism

Nae Ionescu is one figure in the Romanian culture that incarnates the meaning of freedom as freedom of the exceptional individual. Ionescu himself was an admirer of Machiavelli, but beyond the admiration he had for the Florentine historian, Ionescu's personality gets more coherent and meaningful if interpreted from the perspective of Machiavellism. As understood here

Machiavellism means both the term coined by R. Aron, and Nietzsche's conception of the creative and powerful individuals, gifted with a sane sense of selfishness. The way Aron understands Machiavellism presupposes the co-existence of extremes, the attempt to reconcile the apology of liberty and the apology of tyranny, the simultaneous presence of the belief in the power of human will and the power of destiny. The simultaneous presence of the extremes and the attempt to reconcile them generates an experimental politics[2] . This is characterized as a politics of the moment, which is instantly transfigured as an alternative possibility, as an evasion. The evasion is possible due to the endless reservoir of political facets[3] , a politics based on the variety of roles and aspects of human action, a politics that implies the circumstantial situation of playing one political role off against another. This is one aspect that encourages the exceptional, unique case or individual as instantiations of freedom. The way the politics of experiment speaks in favor of the freedom of exceptional individual as an exemplary instantiation of liberty is due to the fact that the importance of experiments stresses novelty. The meaning of the accent on novelty is given by the need for novelty, the continuous struggle against any lasting pattern, the almost irrational attempt to escape any constraint, any order, just because order is so important and omnipresent, just because order cannot but be the absolute order.

At the same time, for Aron, Machiavellism is based on a method that engages the observance of historical facts[4] , the positivist neutrality of the observer who is convinced that the outside survey of the organic unity of society, according to Ionescu, or of the social order, according to Aron, is possible. This detachment is grounded on the belief that there is a human nature, a political nature, and a political determinism[5] , a necessary movement of politics that includes all individuals, with only one omission, the exceptional individual, the one that understands the necessary unfolding of history. In one of his articles from the newspaper *Cuvintul Nae*, Ionescu analyzes the murder of one of the members of Garda de Fier. What he addresses in this article against the Romanian public opinion is the lack of political attitude towards the event at stake. What he understands by political attitude is exactly the capacity to identify with the necessary flow of history, of society, with the "great turn that the contemporary world undergoes"[6] . To make the proof of a political attitude means to understand that according to the inevitable movement of history that induces "the passage of any human community from the individual to the collective type"[7] , the individual is going to be immersed in community, becoming the instrument for the achievement of the historical becoming of community. At the same time, according to the way he defines it, Ionescu's method is based on the effacement of any personal options[8] . The reason for obliterating any personal values is given by the purpose of discovering the objective aspects of reality. This is a methodical illusion. The methodical illusion implies the belief in the possibility of detachment and self-exclusion from the described reality. This methodical fallacy is what nourishes and legitimatizes the multi-faceted personality of Ionescu, his capacity to play so many and different roles, with the lack of engagement of the one who is convinced that he can evade any partial order, in the name of that order that can be invoked beyond any concrete society, in the name of the absolute order of history.

Machiavellism, according to Aron, is also characterized by a certain attitude towards religion and morality. To the extent that Machiavelli rejects moral values, as being an unacceptable ground of political action, he rejoins morality only through the mediation of politics[9] . At the same time, Machiavelli considers that religion has an important role to play in the city. His vision of religion is pragmatic. The only purpose of religion is to preserve the sense of civic union, while any interest in dogmas is eliminated. To create a religion means, for the Florentine historian, to create a Constitution. The significant idea for the present analysis of Nae Ionescu's thought has to do with

the fact that if religion has only a pragmatical function, and if morality is rejoined only through the mediation of politics, then all values belong entirely to the cultural space, to the realm of city. Considering that the space of city is the result of the heroic act of its founder, the leader, then he is the only absolute source of all values. On one side, there is the leader, the source of all values, on the other side, there are the masses, which have to be educated, formed, enrolled, in a way that brings to mind the modern concept of propaganda. Masses are the instrument to achieve both the political action, namely, to get and to keep political power, and the working of moral values. The result is the famous amorality, which comes from the instrumentalization of both moral values and the effect they have on the masses.

Compared with Machiavelli, Nae Ionescu bestows the same importance on religion. What might create the wrong impression is the asocial character of religion in his vision. According to the testimony of Mircea Vulcanescu, Ionescu preached a Christianity characterized by asocial*asketism*, "a severe and asocial Christianity, entirely oriented towards the after life...", "an asocial and exclusively theocentric Christianity, having as its maxim the love for God". In comparison with this asocial *asketism*, the "love for our fellow", points out Vulcanescu, which seemed for his contemporaries to be the key of the whole Christian doctrine, seemed to be for Ionescu another of the Western vagaries10 . The bond with God, constituted as an image of authority, is, according to the commentary of Vulcanescu, even if not achieved inside the individual, "between God and the whole of the world, which is linked to me by that feeling of intimate solidarity, in sin and suffering, based on which it can in togetherness be said: We"11 . The point is that the asocial character of Ionescu's interpretation of Christianity exists only in appearance. It is true that there is an asocial orientation of Christianity in his opinion only insofar as the relationship with God has the role of isolating the individual. But the individual is isolated only in order to be better and more deeply connected to community. This means that the links between individuals are possible only on the level of global order and to the extent that the global order has its origin in the divine authority. On the other side, on a political level the form the divine authority can take is the authority of the leader, defined as the sacerdotal authority of the one who proclaims himself as the source of all values.

As a consequence, the moral, social, and political coherence is assured only by the thought and the deeds of the exceptional individual, the individual that eludes the rule, because he is the one that creates the rule, legitimizes the values and imposes the norm. What for Vulcanescu represented the freedom to express the affiliation of an individual to an order, becomes for Ionescu the freedom of a single individual, the exceptional individual to create the order. The affiliation is possible only to the extent that the individual is the creator, the source of values. The status of the exceptional individual declares him as being outside any canon, because, on one hand, he is the absolute source of all values, and, on the other hand, he is in an ongoing movement, he is permanently engaged in constructing meanings and forms, in legitimizing and testing them. From such a standpoint, Ionescu's Machiavellism means to transform politics into an end in itself. In a sense, there is present here the same structural game as in Cioran's play with utopias, with the Western temptations and dreams. If Cioran takes the Western culture and its realm of ideas as a world in itself, as the real challenge for constructing an identity, choosing at the same time his discourse as the best locus for achieving a perfection that history refuses to offer, Ionescu opts for the political game as the privileged place to achieve a perfection and an absolute dimension that history declined. For him to state politics as an end in itself means to impose the human standards as absolute. This means, following Aron's vision about the logic of Machiavellism, that, if all members of the city become instruments for the maintenance of political order, then the only

remaining source of human standards, as absolute principles, is the exceptional individual, the only one that can evade rules in the name of his unique task of establishing them.

One aspect that supports this interpretation is the way Ionescu gave his lectures. According to Vulcanescu's testimony, "His thought was constituting in an alive way, right in front of our eyes". The vivacity of his academic presence evades thus any academic standards. As a consequence, his academic presence cannot be judged by the academic standards. The best way to penetrate their significance would be by means of political standards. Interpreted like this, his academic conduct turns into a real challenge. This is due to the fact that Nae Ionescu does not appear any more only as a charismatic personality, as a thinker that rejects any systematic and scientific approach, that cannot he himself be approached in a critical way due to the fact that his discourse refuses to reveal its premises and its rational ground. He is more than that. He is the one who, insofar as he tends to dominate the audience, forces his audience to confront him. What is at stake in his academic discourse is more like a political value, the value of confrontation, of facing and resisting the other, of struggling against him. It is true that he dominates the others on the level of his actions, but it is also true that on the level of ideas and ideals his purpose is to create powerful and authentic characters, creative-heroes, like he sees himself. If Cioran and Zeletin choose a delayed and endlessly postponed confrontation, insofar as they encapsulate themselves on the level of their discourses, to the extent that they protect themselves through their discourses, Ionescu accepts the frontal confrontation.

What Ionescu trains his audience for is a global opposition, an opposition that lacks a concrete companion, an opposition cultivated almost for its own sake. Ionescu disquiets his companion without offering an alternative to what he destroys in him, letting him without a firm ground, floating between insecurity and the desire to create the missing foundation. Thrown into the grips of insecurity and doubt the audience of his lectures accumulates destructiveness and negative feelings, which are directed either towards nowhere, or towards eternity. These two ways of relating to his audience represent the main strategies Ionescu uses in order to create his authority and also to legitimize it. By troubling his audience he stores energy, a potential of destructive energy that he needs in order to stimulate the audience against the eternal background of the Romanian culture, the ballast that keeps the Romanian culture from entering history. He creates thus supplies of energy, he enrolls the audience, and creates out of it his political community, his kingdom. He tempts those that belong still to the realm of eternity towards the apparently asocial and solitary space of contemplating divinity, while in fact he aims at making available for the social and political realm the energies of his audience. The premise of his academic discourse is to create a political space.

From such a perspective, Ionescu is a realistic and pragmatic actor, insofar as he adapts his political and even academic intentions to the characteristic elements of a culture, in order to create and force beyond the specificity of that culture a political space where the individual can exist. The focus of his undertaking is thus the eternal character of the Romanian culture, the too lengthy dealing of Romanian culture with the trans-historical dimension. Once again, Ionescu's enterprise meets Zeletin and Cioran. Zeletin attempts to destroy a national mythology in order to bring the protagonists of the parodic society back into history. Cioran attempts to dismantle a set of traditions that impedes the access to the Eastern spirituality, the utopian ideas that the West transmuted into the East, where these have been used in order to define the Eastern identity on the level of Western fascination and seduction, on the level of something that the West gave up as its historical being. Ionescu attempts to forge a realm of history by directing his audience against the eternal immobility of a culture that refuses any destructive action, that refuses, as Vulcanescu pointed out,

exactly the Western meaning of negation, as the separation that destroys, as the splitting that eliminates in order to focus and thus define reality. The consequence of such a target is that in his academic discourses Ionescu does not use books and ideas, a philosophical system, in order to legitimatize the values he proposes, but he utilizes the shaped souls, the alive incarnation of the values he forged.

Nae Ionescu incarnates thus a type of authority based on discontinuity and destruction. This type of authority cannot but have as the source of values the exceptional individual, the creator of a new table of values. It is significant in this respect that both Machiavelli and Nietzsche, the main pillars of the framework for the analysis of Nae Ionescu's personality and thought, were active in moments of radical change of the European cultural paradigm. As such, Machiavelli substitutes, or adds, to the Christian values a new set of values considered as being the proper ones for the political realm. He marks thus the first radical attack on the metaphysical realm as the ground of the political realm, while Nietzsche turns the Platonic vision of the world upside down, rejecting once again any metaphysical ground of morality and politics. Both moments are characterized by the revolt against the deceiving immobility of the metaphysical realm. In the context of the Romanian culture, haunted, as Noica underlines it, by the urge to enter history, by the urge to leave eternity, the cyclical and recurring patterns, in order to begin, as the Western culture begun, not only on the level of the philosophical discourse, but also on the political and historical level, Ionescu embodies the attempt to break the strait-jacket of eternity and to begin in the order of the human realm. If the only defining structure of a culture is the eternal realm, the recurring and fixed patterns, then that culture has no relevant traditions to be used in order to ground the new historical and political dimension. What is required is either a philosophical ground, as happened in the case of the Greek beginning of the Western culture, or a legal ground as things seemed to have happened with the beginning of the American culture. There seems, nevertheless, to be a third alternative, the solution Ionescu (Machiavelli and Nietzsche) opts for. This is to begin by means of a radical break, the action of the exceptional individual. The exceptional individual is the only possible mediating factor between eternity and history, the only choice for a culture that is deeply embedded in the natural, eternal and mythical attitude towards the world. He is unquestionable like eternity, being at the same time mobile, finite and open like any human, historical or political, way of beginning.

Constrained to proceed in such a manner by the elements of his own culture, Ionescu acts, in an unavoidable way, on two levels. He has, on one side, to advance as if the whole philosophical, historical and political tradition of ideas and values has to be abridged, surveyed, accumulated and handled to the creator of the new table of values. On the other side, time has to be compressed in order to fill in the gaps of history. This parallel action, of bringing to the same rhythm the realm of ideas and values and the realm of historical, really happened, events, expresses itself as a contradiction on the level of Ionescu's personality. There is the conflict between his theoretical personality, the advises he addresses *ex cathedra*, the heroism he subscribes to, and his public and politic personality, the confusing, sometimes petty, other times compromising, even seducing, actions he undertakes on the level of daily life. The trouble he is confronted with is the parallel emergence of both an ideal and a real, and political existence. Nae Ionescu has the ambition to build at the same time an ideal and the means for achieving the ideal, a philosophy and a world which should be willing to accept and give real substance to these values. What in the Western culture has been achieved over the last two millennia, as a gradual attunement, either by dialogue or by quarrel, between philosopher and the world, Ionescu wants to achieve during the life of a single person, himself.

As such, his Machiavellism is accompanied by the requirements of a Platonic political idealism. The world of ideas has to be enhanced at the same time with the instruments of political action. At this point, Ionescu's Machiavellism takes a Nietzschean turn, insofar as the need for the source, and the preservation of the Platonic world of ideas, is moved onto the level of the exceptional individual. There has to be an absolute order of values, in the attempt to oppose this order to the unquestionable realm of eternal patterns, but this order, insofar as it wants to successfully oppose the eternal patterns, has to have its source in the creative power of the exceptional individual. Taking into account the difficulty of the task, the failure is unavoidable. This is due to the fact that the instruments have to embrace a double-faceted attitude towards reality. On one hand, they have to force reality in the name of the ideal. On the other hand, they have to come to terms with the same reality in the attempt to continuously reduce the gap between ideal and reality. This creates the Machiavellian motivation of the whole undertaking, insofar as in order to approximate the ideal any commitment, any real embodiment is ephemeral and can be sacrificed in the name of those to come, if they reduce the gap between ideal and reality. At the same time, insofar as the instruments themselves need a purpose and a legitimation, the ideal has to be brought into the world, and the world has to be radically changed, in order for the ideal to become concrete. This desperate attempt to force ideal and reality to come to terms can be defined as one of the fundamental failures of Romanian politics, or, even better, as the capital failure of politics in the Romanian culture.

The Nietzschean orientation of Ionescu's thought and political personality is also created by several other elements: the critique of a certain type of democracy and of its philosophical ground, the pleading for a meaning of liberty that goes together with elitism, and the pleading for a pluralism that allows for hierarchies, in order to avoid the democratic uniformity. As Nietzsche or Leo Strauss, the Romanian thinker rejects that type of democracy that enhances uniformity, the rule of masses, the herd mentality, the quantitative equalization of individuals. On the contrary, he speaks in favor of a democratical order that succeeds in preserving hierarchies and the qualitative differentiation. Nae Ionescu identifies as the philosophical ground of the type of democracy he rejects the Cartesian subject. In this respect, Nae Ionescu rallies himself to the Romantic tradition. According to this tradition, that has been later on developed by the hermeneutic trend, the subject is never completed all by itself and never entirely and rationally grounded on and by itself. Not only that the subject cannot entirely recover itself by means of a coherent biography, as the product of introspection, but what really counts is the capacity of the subject to open up a world and to participate to it. In the same spirit, Ionescu rejects what he calls the individualism of uprootedness, an individualism that implies the disembodment of the individual from any concrete setting, an individualism that defines freedom as the power the individual should have to free himself from any context. This uprootedness enhances the instrumental attitude of the individual. It represents the capacity the individual has to function in any context, in the way of the universal adaptation[12].

This type of universalism is rejected by the Romanian philosopher in the same manner the Romantics, like Schlegel or Novalis, rejected the idea of a universal ground, of a universal order. The type of universalism he declines is the universalism of spatial differentiation, of quantitative differentiation, while he opts for a qualitative differentiation. The way he understands the qualitative differentiation has to do with the way time is lived, with the way individuals in different communities confer a cultural and historical expression to time. While he chooses the qualitative differentiation Ionescu repels at the same time the mechanical image of world, insofar as he sees a historical and logical connection between mechanism and the quantitative conception of Descartes[13], between the egocentric idealism of Descartes, that deduces everything, the

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transcendental dimension included, from "the certitude of a self-enclosed ego", and the quantitative democracy. The option of the Romanian thinker is rather for the "old individuality of Renaissance", for the exceptional individual. This kind of individuality is capable to give expression to his own time in such a manner that the universal dimension comes out from the concrete temporality of history, from a certain pattern of experience, from what Rorty would call contingency, from the way an individual is, and not from a superimposed logical or transcendent pattern.

As a critic of Cartesianism, Ionescu considers that the cultural and political life of a community, its history are more important in understanding human life than the modern dimension of the social. That is why, Ionescu would have agreed with a conception like that of Arendt according to which the social is that modern invention that perverts the political, Greek, meaning of democracy, insofar as it forces the enclosure of the individual in his private sphere, and the criteria of utility as the absolute standard for judging human actions. As a consequence, the concepts used by Ionescu to judge politics are those of life, history and culture. To the concept of social, as the nucleus of democracy, Ionescu opposes the concept of life, as the key element to theorize about democracy and understand its meaning. The concept of life, a very influential concept in the philosophy of the end of the 19th century and beginning of the 20th, as well as in the German tradition as opposed to the Enlightenment's concept of science that found its climax in positivism, does not primarily have an irrational meaning for Ionescu. Its meaning rather engages the reference to a determinate way to make sense of the flow of time, to symbolize the flow of time by means of cultural tokens, to structure it, as Ricoeur would put it, through narrativity.

For him to focus on life means to express a high interest for the concrete and therefore for the local contexts14 , for all the elements that act in the direction of differentiation, in the way they combine, destroy and develop in their natural setting15 , previously to any attempt of reason and understanding to bestow a meaning on them, to put them into discourse. As a result, history has for Ionescu an organic character. To assert the organic character of history is in a sense, according to certain conceptions of history that aim at conferring it a scientific status, an enterprise doomed to failure. At the same time most of the attempts to think of history in organic terms gave birth to the nationalist ideologies. Nevertheless, approached from a hermeneutic perspective the organic conception of history has the merit to emphasize not the enclosed and self-sufficient character of the different forms of life, their purity, but their inexhaustible potential for receiving and generating new interpretations, for giving birth to countless combinations. At the same time, to stress the organic character of history means, from the same hermeneutic perspective, to consider the important role traditions come to play in the becoming of history. It means to reject the modern idea, that has its origin in the modern notion of revolution, that history is a man-made reality: it means, as Rorty would put it, to de-divinize16 the human subject as the absolute source of all values, to go against Cartesianism.

At the same time the paradox developed by considering together Ionescu's conception and his personality is that while he supports the organic conception of history as the de-divinization of the human subject, he cannot neglect his own ego, his sacerdotal status. He cannot but consider himself in a very serious way, as the true founder of a wholly new perspective. His faith is inflamed by the task he asserted for himself, to bring together ideal and history, the realm of values and the realm of historical events, philosophy and politics. By making the apology of communitarian life, Ionescu makes eventually the apology of the exceptional individual. This indicates that what he tries to do is to combine the belief in the organic life of community with the belief in the exceptional individual, the individual who is able to give universal expression to his own time, to

the pattern of experience that characterizes the form of life he belongs to. In this respect he contradicts his own theory, the conception of the organic character of the forms of life.

The point is that he cannot but contradict it, insofar as the only way to enter history is by a radical break with the recurrent pattern of eternity. Ionescu has to create a hierarchy where there no hierarchy is possible due to the indifference induced by the exclusive dealing with eternity. His way of proceeding situates, in relationship with the Western undertaking, at the other extreme. While the Western world revolts against a given, and made order and hierarchy of the world, Ionescu has to make an order, he has to impose a hierarchy. Where the West has to overcome the preeminence of a fixed structure of the world, and come to terms with history, in a way that eludes metaphysics without entirely sacrificing the idea of unity and truth, Ionescu has to burn all the stages the Western world went has experienced in order to come to terms with a problem that is common to all cultures that face the urge to begin, to enter history as a structure, as a hierarchy of values and priorities. His undertaking is in a sense metaphysical, as long as he has to fix the boundaries of the realm of values, the boundaries of the ideal. But his undertaking is also historical, or it has history as its scope, insofar as he wants to urge the entering of the Romanian culture into the realm of history. His enterprise is political as well insofar as his target is to create a community were the forged values can be embedded, and find a real and actual expression.

Combining all three features his enterprise reflects the paradox of beginning and the difficulties that impinge upon it in the modern world. At the same time, the three-fold character of the modern attempt to begin brings to the fore the issue of the individual. To project a culture into history and politics, to give it a universal expression cannot but be, in the modern times, an individual enterprise. Therefore, the modern paradox of beginning17 points, according to Nae Ionescu, in the direction of the relationship between community and individual. On one hand, the individual constitutes itself as a distinct individual only insofar as it transgresses the community, giving at the same time a universal dimension to the specific pattern of community. In this case, even if the individual becomes itself by transgressing community, to the extent that he brings to an expression the pattern of the community he is in the service of it. Emancipation cannot therefore ever be complete. Any attempt of the individual to go beyond community ends by opening up a new structure, a world. As a consequence, the only way to totally escape this regress, this ongoing return, is either the irrational ground of values which is situated in the personality of the exceptional individual, or the abstract universality of death. Thus, the individual can, *in extremis*, give up his individual existence, extinguish it, in order to enhance the life of community, to bring community to self-understanding.

Therefore, caught in the logic of a social life that swallows him into its mechanism, the individual cannot escape, except by living the game as a whole. The reason for such a deceiving surrender of the individual is given, in Ionescu's opinion, by the modern individualism of uprootedness, the parallel existence of the individuals in the modern societies, affected as they are by a high degree of revolutionary dissolution. This dissolution indicates that the only kind of relationships at work between individuals is quantitative. When quantity is the only social link between individuals, then violence comes to play an overwhelming role in the life of a community. This is due to the fact that individuals are not only all the same, by they can be anytime replaced, substituted with an indifference that shows that both community and individuals not only that they are meaningless, but also dispersed in relationship to each other, unfocused. Ionescu's analysis develops therefore on two levels. The first level is a critique of the Enlightenment's conception of the individual to the extent that this is based on the idea of total emancipation. The final expression of this conception is the quantitative type of relationships between individuals. This is the only

kind of relationships that can express the total emancipation Enlightenment aims at. The total emancipation is thus possible because individuals become all the same, and therefore they can entirely free themselves from the social bonds to the extent that they are uprooted, to the extent that there is nothing left to create a sense of belonging. The result is that the only way to emancipate in a meaningful way, in a personalized manner that pays the due respect to both community and individual is by protest and revolt, by the violent and spectacular rupture of the individual from community.

The second level of Ionescu's analysis is based on the critique of the abstract meaning of emancipation as conceived by Enlightenment, and is meant to offer a more complex meaning of emancipation by taking into account the problem of beginning, either for a culture, or for an individual. The issue of beginning is taken either in the sense of making sense of a culture by lifting it on the level of philosophical discourse, or by giving it political expression by means of a political space where values can get their real and actual substance, or by means of a historical memory that keeps community together and makes it visible for itself and for other communities. The point is that giving expression to all these realities that transgress the individual is possible only as an individual enterprise. As a consequence the individual enterprise carries with it meanings and values that emancipate the individual only because they highlight the context of the emancipation, demarcate it. An individual succeeds in emancipating himself only insofar as he frees his culture from repetition, only insofar as he entails his culture in novelty. This is exactly the problem Ionescu is confronted with. He has to begin in a sense that will bring his culture into history, and he has to do this in a way that will entail novelty on both sides, the side of his discourse and actions and the side of his culture, of the space he comes from. By contrast with Vulcanescu who is convinced that he found the bridge to bring his culture into history, to mark its beginning and its eruption into history, in the power language has to bring together by expressing, Ionescu embraces a more difficult and therefore more problematic perspective. For him expression by means of language is incomplete to the extent that there is no one to assume the expression, to make it his own expression, to personalize it.

Ionescu's individualism appears then as a very complex conception, as a conception that is built on several layers. The first, and the superficial, layer is his Machiavellism, that he shares with so many conceptions that were common for the time he lived, conceptions that all of them reflected a mistrust in democracy, in its capacity to rationally and publicly ground the embraced values. The second layer is given by the Nietzschean accent, the strong meaning of individualism that envisages the individual as the ultimate source of values. Through this second layer Ionescu already engages his conception on a level that has to do with a certain understanding and critique of modernity. He tries, eventually, to find a way out of modernity, an alternative to the path modernity took starting with Enlightenment, to find an alternative that would include himself and his own culture. This is the point where his conception raises the issue of beginning, meeting at the same time all those Western conceptions that revolted, in the name of the crisis of values and exhaustion of ideals and alternatives, against an over-rationalized project of modernity, like the Romantic revolt or the artistic and intellectual trends developed in Vienna at the end of the 19th century and beginning of the 20th. Like these movements Ionescu searches for a new center of modernity, as opposed to the abstract individualism and meaning of emancipation that have as their nucleus an abstract reason.

The inquiry he is engaged in leads to the core of the third layer of his individualism. According to this layer the individual exists as such only insofar as he fertilizes the life of the community, which means only to the extent that he is able to confer a universal, and therefore novel, expression

to his particular and concrete belonging to a culture and historical pattern. This means that the contingency of his life has to receive an universal scope. Thus, he is the doubtless author of the effort to bring together what culture, history and politics contributed to his contingent existence, being at the same time present on the universal level, that transgresses the mere local appartenance. This back and forth existence and effort to bring finitude and contingency to an universal expression explains the plea Ionescu makes for both hierarchy and decentralization, for a radical preservation of difference. All three ideas require a careful examination, considering that especially the last one has been so much used in the post-modern settings. Taking into account that what really matters for Ionescu is the issue of how the Romanian culture can begin to exist on a historical, political and cultural level, in a way that presupposes both self-understanding and visibility for the others, then the radical preservation of difference seems to be the most natural requirement to be met by a culture that is about to give a structure to what constitutes its saying on a universal level.

To preserve difference means therefore to create a perspective, what Nietzsche would call the pathos of distance, that allows the individual to express both himself and his culture. Otherwise, both individual and community collapse either into the random character of the dictatorship or into the 'uniformized' character of the democratic masses. Being aware that modernity is threatened by either of the two extremes, the excess of individuality or the loss of the individual in the undifferentiated society of Enlightenment, where emancipation becomes uprootedness, Ionescu mistrusts both dictatorship and the worshipping of the modern democratic masses. The reason to reject dictatorship is offered by the fact that dictatorship comes into being when "a void exists in the participation of masses to the public consciousness"18 . While the reason to reject the ruling of the democratic masses is given by the fact that the democratic masses represent the herd that destroys human beings, namely the exceptional and powerful individual, the creator of values. Difference represents, therefore, the possibility to combine both letting something to come into being and expressing that something in an original way, that does not annul the individual. It combines expression and construction.

As a consequence, Ionescu argues in favor of regionalism and decentralization. In doing this he is aware that without the preservation of local settings, a new form of eternity would invade the political and cultural space, the eternity of an always true project, the eternity of an abstract project of what really counts as being cultural and historical, as being the model for humanity. To reject such a uniform and repetitive project means basically to speak in favor of hierarchy. The hierarchy he supports is local, it reflects the power of local settings to gain expression and to reverberate beyond their finite boundaries. To support the local hierarchies means to speak in favor of an unity, or universality, constituted through plurality, which engages at the same time a meaning of actuality that does not exclude potentiality. Unity is, from such a perspective, the intermingling of plurality and potentiality, insofar as unity is both the expression of a local point of view and the construction of an actuality that is never completed, insofar as innumerable other perspectives can be incorporated into it. At the same time, Ionescu's plea for such a meaning of unity, that brings him close to Whitehead's constructivism, expresses a failure as well, the failure to overcome the unfinished interplay of his strong belief in the exceptional individual and his belief in the remaining of community as the fundamental backdrop for any individual undertaking.

The failure to overcome the clash of the two strong beliefs he shares is expressed by the fact that Ionescu ends by constructing an apology of the exceptional individual. The exceptional individual is, in fact, the same omnipresent character that wears only different costumes: the character of the dictator chosen by the masses, the character of the revolted individual that

sacrifices himself in order to fertilize the life of community, the character of the individual that succeeds to give shape to a determinate historical pattern..., the character of Nae Ionescu himself. The fundamental contradiction of his thought seems therefore to be besieged inbetween his strong belief in the exceptional individual and his belief in community. Although history has to be captured on its natural level and rhythm of becoming, it cannot eventually be expressed unless it becomes trans-historical. This is the cross-road where the Nietzschean character of his thought meets the Machiavellian accent. The belief in history as the natural locus of the human forms of life gets converted into the positivist belief that history can be evaded. Nevertheless, Ionescu's failure has the merit of formulating the tension that has to characterize any beginning according to the Western experience. This is the tension between history, politics and philosophy, between the unity philosophy strives for, the multiplicity that characterizes life in common, and the continuous becoming of history, between the indivisible existence and the detachment of the philosopher, and the visible and public character of the political existence, between the absolute beginning of philosophy and the relative and temporal beginning in the historical realm.

Ionescu has the merit of bringing to and formulating in the Romanian culture the tension between politics, history and philosophy, as the tension that is at work in any attempt to begin, namely, to give to a culture an expression that makes it to reverberate beyond any individual creator, beyond any historical moment, beyond any contingency, without sacrificing the uniqueness and the difference that exists in any contingency. Ionescu opens up, thus, for the Romanian culture the project of its beginning, the task to get beyond itself, the task to overcome itself in order to become itself. Ionescu cannot but end being a philosopher, he cannot but end being a man of action. He cannot but end being an educator, the builder of souls. He cannot but recognize his failure. The point is that his failure is more than a personal failure,—it is the task that a whole culture has to fulfil. Only through his failure Ionescu achieves his ideal, the accomplishment of the individual through the expression of a form of life and through the construction of a new level of reality. In his failure Ionescu consummates himself beyond his individuality, while he preserves it and makes it absolutely unique. In this respect, an interesting question to raise would be if there are cultures that enter history not in a minor way, not through the back door, but through their failures, through what they did not manage to achieve. Iorga could offer an answer to the question just hinted at, insofar as he builds an alternative scenario in order to describe the less victorious side of European history, an alternative meaning of liberty, that can, perhaps, unfetter paths for the defeated protagonists of history.

INDIVIDUAL AND COMMUNITY FOR IORGA

Nicolae Iorga can be placed among those thinkers who dare to attack the foundations itself of the myth of the modern, namely novel and progressive, able to cut itself from the whole of the past, revolutionary, and capable to start in a fundamentally unexpected and absolute way, character of modernity. The fundamental ideas that guide the analysis the Romanian historian makes of the evolution of the idea of liberty in the European history, and also the ideas that are relevant for the issue of identity, are the following:— a) his attempt to dismantle the myth, that dominated Renaissance, Enlightenment as well as Romanticism, of the supremacy of a certain, Greek, meaning of liberty; b) the displacement of the source of liberty from the abstract and too unified field of reason to the more dispersed, ramified and contextual field of the human and historical relationships; c) the critique and refusal of any center of authority, liberty and power; d) the attempt to sketch alternative meanings of individualism, according to which what matters in terms of

defining the individual is not the notion of sovereignty of the individual, but the capacity the individual has to define himself by finding out his place and role in a community.

In the logic of this essay the conceptual role played by Iorga is to try to work out the difficulty in which Ionescu gets entangled, the difficulty created by the unavoidable exit out of history as the only way to understand history, and also the difficulty of Noica who ends by metaphysically ruining history, due to the over-projection of the local way of understanding being that projects it into a ramified metaphysical realm that blocks the advancement of real history. The point is that Iorga's solution seems to be more successful insofar as he operates a fundamental change in the conceptual field where the problem at stake, the manner in which the relationship between metaphysics, history and politics influences the model for identity definition, is situated. Iorga builds an alternative to the European history, for the purpose of creating thus a place in the universal historical process for the local history he speaks in favor of.

The way he envisages the sense of liberty in the two rival Greek city-states, Athens and Sparta, in his book *The Evolution of the idea of liberty*, is meant to amaze any modern reader, accustomed as s/he is to identify the meaning of liberty in the ancient Greece with the sense of ancient liberty consecrated in modern times by B. Constant, as the liberty to participate in public affairs. Iorga aims at highlighting a meaning of ancient liberty that does not entirely identify with the liberal Athens. He opposes two "distinct forms of liberty", the Spartan and the Athenian. His choice is for the Spartan form of liberty. He defines it as a spontaneous form of liberty, unguided by a distinctly shaped ideal, by institutional structures. A liberty that has its source primarily in the human relationships, the liberty of appearing and existing for the others, the liberty to emerge into a public existence, the liberty of growing as an individual that exists for the others, the liberty of expression. This informal aspect of liberty represents what is of interest for Iorga.

The Non-Greek meaning of liberty is given by "the local traditional and popular liberty in the organic sense of the word".19 There is the danger of a superficial reading of such a statement. Such a superficial reading will immediately identify in this understanding of liberty a rejection of the Western democratic and liberal values, especially due to the fact that Iorga explicitly chooses in favor of the Macedonian rural meaning of liberty. Such a shallow interpretation would be just another version of a dominant way of self-understanding in the Romanian culture, a way of self-understanding that always considers that there are only two choices, only two extreme sides to choose from: the absolute autonomy of the Romanian culture or the total adoption of the Western values. As Michel Foucault pointed out this is a false dichotomy20 . Accordingly, the sharp distinction between an inside and an outside is not only too simplistic, but also misleading insofar as it ignores not only the crossing of cultures, but also the fact that the Western culture itself is not the becoming of only one structure, pattern of values, but it is, as Berlin underlines, the multiple and plural becoming of several patterns of values. In this context, Iorga's conception of liberty proves to be more complex than a superficial reading of it would be able to show.

First of all, Iorga's attempt to define a space and a meaning of liberty beyond the literally, philosophically and conceptually circumscribed space of Greece, which later on has been celebrated within the European culture and thought and transformed into a source of legitimating one route of the European history and philosophy, is meant to open up an alternative becoming of the European culture and history. Secondly, and this is maybe the most interesting aspect, the Non-Greek meaning of liberty, that is supported by Iorga, is mobile. Its mobility consists in the fact that it is a liberty of movement, and not a liberty to obey the form, to enter a form, a structure, a deceiving liberty, "a seeming and limited liberty only to one place and epoch, to the Greek city-states"21 . The mobile liberty is not the liberty to circumscribe and delineate, to found a city, as

Arendt would say referring to the Roman meaning of authority. What really counts for the Non-Greek meaning of liberty is not the institution, the act of circumscribing, but the act by means of which the individual constitutes himself in the plurality of his facets. In this respect the example of Alexander the Great, as seen by Iorga, is suggestive. The Macedonian ruler has a three-fold character. He incarnates the spirit of the Greek education that he was brought up in. He is able to play the role of the Oriental despot, being at the same time able to behave like a simple military chief, that shares the crude life of the warrior.

The type of character revealed by the Macedonian ruler is built on several layers and his individuality becomes deeper the more numerous are the relationships he is able to entertain with different types of individuals, cultural settings and traditions. As such, the mobile liberty far from obliterating individualism, institutes a meaning of individualism that reminds us of the distinction made by Simmel between the Latin and the Germanic meaning of individualism. While the Latin individualism defines the individual not so much by means of his isolation, but rather by means of the human archetype that reaches its climax through that individual, the Germanic individualism understands the individual as an expression and achievement of uniqueness. While the Latin individualism, with origins in the Greek antiquity, means subjection to law, to the whole, the need to compare with the others, the individual need for greatness and glory, in a way that brings to the fore the distinction between inferior and superior, the gap and the tension of a hierarchy of human beings, the Germanic individualism understands the individual as a becoming and a development that starts from a context, as grounding in a context, as an expression of the particular22 .

In a similar manner, Iorga stresses that meaning of individualism and liberty that takes into consideration precisely the capacity of the individual to build himself in a multiply-faceted way, as a reaction and response to the diversified and specific contexts of his life. At the same time there is a significant analogy that can be made between the meaning of liberty for Iorga, the fact that he uses as an example the figure of the Macedonian ruler and a trend in the beginning of the modern political thought according to which the way to maintain the freedom, peace and concord of a city is by means of a good ruler. As Q. Skinner points out and demonstrates in his book *Liberty Before Liberalism*, there was in the beginning of the modern political thought, before liberalism instituted its dominant meaning of liberty, a trend of thought, in the Italian states, that emphasized the strong connection between the freedom of the individual and the freedom of the state, of the community, and the need for a good ruler as the condition for preserving liberty, peace and concord in the communal life23 . This meaning of liberty presents analogies with the way Iorga understands liberty, insofar as both emphasize less the institutional aspect, highlighting at the same time the significance of the individual behaviour, the direct impact of his actions and character upon the others and community, as well as the tight link between individuals and community.

As a consequence, the alternative scenario of modernity starts for Iorga with a multiplication of the meanings of liberty. This multiplication attempts first of all to recover the lost or the marginalized in the historical becoming of Europe meanings of liberty, and secondly it attempts to reveal alternative meanings of individualism. Iorga aims at diversifying the field of the conceptual traditions in the European world, in a way that enters into a dialogue with both those thinkers that find themselves in search of alternative ways of becoming of the European history, culture or philosophy, and those thinkers that seek alternative interpretations of modernity, striving to dislocate the monolithical interpretation of modernity that focuses exclusively on the Enlightenment and its project of modernity.

In the attempt to define the meaning of liberty he opts for, Iorga uses several times the analogy with the poetical and literary creation, with the artistic creation in its most general sense. Such an

analogy has the role to make even clearer the meaning of liberty in his vision. Liberty does not mean to reproduce a form, but the capacity to generate forms in an ongoing, alive and non-centralized manner. Referring to the development of the medieval cities Iorga does not miss the opportunity to mention what he defines as "the complete and firmly grounded" liberty, that consists in the "force to create"24 . The most complete expression of the medieval liberty seems to be for him the Gothic cathedral, insofar as this is the result of a collective effort and also the public space to meet the others, that space that celebrates, symbolizes, and each time represents and composes anew in a concrete, actual and alive way the existence of the community. It seems, therefore, that for Iorga the paradigm to conceive liberty is creation.

As such, creation is possible only based on the direct, unmediated by an ideology, or a unitary conception about how the world should be, links between the individual and the immediate environment, understood either as the presence of the others or as the geographical setting of life. It looks like the desired form of creation is required to be as close as possible to life. To be as close as possible to life means that the result of this liberty is "an absolutely disordered world". The disorder at stake does not mean anarchy or the total lack of structure, but the absence of an unifying center, be it royalty or reason, and the absence of an unifying and enclosing *Weltanschauung*. Having as its core creation and creativity, liberty is not, thus, conceived as the expression of a single and solitary act of founding, the demarcation of a space that makes afterwards possible a coherent and secure, once and for all settled, space for the public expression of the individual, but it is rather conceived as a continuous venture to express a concrete form of life and thus to keep in touch with it, as the attempt to ongoingly give historical, cultural, and philosophical shape and expression to a specific way of existing. Liberty is, therefore, the capacity inscribed in the concrete itself, to give expression and existence to itself from its own interior. As a consequence, liberty as the liberty to create, and not to ground and thus to legitimatize by means of the act itself of grounding, is meant to consecrate an alive, and thus contradictory, space of human existence, a space where what is "trivial, idealistic, common, sublime, personal, and impersonal"25 co-exist.

Iorga builds this meaning of liberty based on a critique of abstract rationalism. For the Romanian historian the guillotine of rationalism26 splits apart the ideas and severs them in an analytical way from their natural ground. This natural ground can be described at least by two aspects: the individual conceives and defines himself as a whole and the core of this way of defining himself as a whole is a type of sensibility and not a rational concept. This type of sensibility is structured by what Iorga designates as the practices, the traditions and the recognized and practiced criteria that are at work in a community. These criteria define the communitarian life, the organizations of a society not as abstract creations, as instruments that fulfil abstract rational purposes, not as bodies of a "theoretical republic"27 , but as organizations that "incarnated a long historical development, that represented an adjustment to circumstances"28 .

The genesis of modernity signifies for the Romanian historian the process that covered the authentic meaning of liberty, rather than the progressive generation of it. From such a standpoint, Iorga situates himself to the other extreme in comparison with the Weberian analysis of modernity. For the Weberian analysis the main axis of modernity is the disenchantment and the growing rationalization of world, the augmentation of the formal character of world, namely the disembedding of meanings from the local contexts of their genesis. The comparison between the two thinkers reveals its relevance at its utmost when it comes about their conceptions about the role religion played in the birth of the modern world and consequently in the genesis of the modern idea of liberty. For Weber protestantism makes possible the birth of the modern capitalism, as that space that consecrates both the economic liberty of the individual and his moral autonomy. At the

same time it is true that, according to Weber, the emergence of the capitalist world is inevitably accompanied by negative side-effects, like the coming into being of a strong bureaucracy and of the experts without a heart, of a world which is excessively rationalized in the direction of the methodical, efficient and laic *askesis*. For Iorga protestantism means to lay the ground of the modern society on the artificial foundations of a universal, and abstract reason, that dislodges and destroys the continuity of traditions, which means basically the loss of the authentic meaning of liberty. In a similar manner, Arendt, in the analysis she makes of the French Revolution, pinpoints the fact that the too ambitious and unrealistic project of the French Revolution to completely liberate and emancipate the modern world from the spell of traditions, instead of building a space of freedom, opened up the door towards the idea of historical necessity that reached its climax in the Marxist understanding of history and revolution.

Furthermore, Weber analyzes the religions of salvation, the exemplary and respectively the missionary prophecies, establishing thus the type of rationality that is at work in the case of each. He starts from the premise that each type of prophecy is searching for the meaning of the world. This search has as its result the need to control the world, to put the world into a structure that makes it comprehensible and thus manageable. The Weberian premise, and at the same time the fundamental feature of the genesis of modernity, is the way the world is rationalized, the way a certain type of society makes sense of the world. Therefore, Weber concentrates his analysis on the way prophets, more generally the sacerdotal caste, which can also include the philosophers, interpreted and thus rationalized the world. On the contrary, the premise of the Romanian historian, and at the same time the fundamental feature of a society, is its capacity to keep itself as close as possible to the sources of its creative force, to the alive concocting of the human relationships, those that make up the alive ground, sometimes contradictory, other times constructive or destructive, that gives birth to the social, cultural and historical patterns of experience.29

For Iorga, Luther is nothing but a medieval character. He is not, and with him Reformation, the incarnation of the modern seeds of liberty, but a belated scholastic, a philologist, that acts only on the level of abstract thought. On the contrary, for Weber the Lutheran concept of "calling" is the origin of the modern laic mentality, which emphasizes the importance of the daily activities, a concept that highlights the importance of daily life for acquiring a meaning for the individual life. For Iorga "The reformation given to the theologians and the philologists could not but end with very strict limitations."30 The result of Reformation was not the modern liberty but the destruction of the medieval liberty. By restoring the initial spirit, the true and authentic interpretation against any abuse and deviation, Luther imposes an even more severe subordination to authority. According to this interpretation of Reformation, for Iorga insofar as liberty belongs to the modern world, it is not the creation of Lutheranism and Calvinism, but the survival of the medieval meaning of liberty. This is the non-philological liberty, namely the liberty of the non-critical and non-analytical separation of classes and species. The medieval liberty is possible only to the extent that the connection with the multiple and concrete contexts of life is maintained.31 According to Iorga the core of liberty is what he calls "the synthetic link", a pre-theoretical and pre-formal connection. This is a flexible link, which exists only as long as there is a movement through the literary genres and classes, through the different types of human experience, a movement which should not be hampered by any sacerdotal architecture, be it rational or ideological. Therefore, the real history of liberty flows for Iorga on the level of those social strata that are not yet affected by any *Weltanschauung*, by any codified interpretation of human existence and world, while for Weber the genesis of the modern idea of rationality and liberty can be read only on the level of the

sacerdotal class of those that rationalize what otherwise moves freely on the level of pre-theoretical life.

The liberty that has as its core the "synthetical link" is the only form of liberty that can preserve a large space of traditions, as the ground of the social and political institutions. The narrowing of the space of traditions, as that space that makes the connection with the "soul of masses"32 comes from the fact that reason arrests the act of legitimatizing the political institutions. Due to this, the act of legitimatizing comes to belong entirely to the sacerdotal class of the prophets or, in the modern times, of the philosophers. As a consequence, and by contrast with Weber, for Iorga the genesis of modernity means the reduction of the free, historical and cultural communities to the lack of reality of the abstract world of reason and philosophy. This could also explain why Iorga prefers to start his analysis of the genesis of modernity with the non-literate and non-philosophical space of the Non-Greek world, insofar as this space comes to represent an alternative to the reduction operated by modernity through its becoming. Therefore, the purpose seems to be to unfetter the meaning of liberty from the closure where philosophy brought it, recovering thus a larger and more authentic meaning of liberty, as the contradictory, alive, plural, and informal life of human communities. From such a perspective, Rennaissance and Reformation are just another decisive step in the process of narrowing and distorting the real meaning of liberty, a process that reaches its climax in the artificial and monolithic world of the French Revolution.

One of the most important conclusions that can be drawn from the way Iorga understands liberty has to do with the strong connection established by the Romanian historian between history, culture and politics. This means that the historical becoming of modernity has to be understood as plural and simultaneous, namely non-reductive, where one new model does not substitute another, but adds itself to other several cultural patterns. Political action, values and institutions are, therefore, expressions of this plural historical becoming of so many different cultural patterns. As a consequence, politics is above all a matter of cultural and historical identity, of expression and recognition of difference, and not the achievement of a philosophical project. Politics has to do thus with the consecration of the history and culture of a community, and insofar as it degenerates into the consecration of an elite it slips into the unreality of the French Revolution, and later on into the nightmare of the totalitarian ideology. Iorga seems thus to reach the contours of a perennial problem of political philosophy, the inescapable tension between the one (some) and the many. Or, to put it differently, how can an elite take over and express the values of the many, without destroying the wholeness of a community's life, in such a way that the link of ideas with the organic life of community is preserved, and the multistratified becoming of liberty is not annulled?

It seems therefore that the attempt of Iorga to remake the genesis of modernity, and to follow the becoming of the European traditions on a different level than that of the religious and philosophical *Weltanschauungen*, is, perhaps, not so much a way to dethrone elites, as it is to demystify them by showing the context where they were born, the context where a certain model gained supremacy over the others, arresting in the name of its sovereignty the wholeness of the context. This intention focuses especially on the supremacy of philosophy in the Western culture. The center of his analysis brings Iorga close to the post-modernist attacks on philosophy and on the preeminence of reason. To interpret Iorga in such a manner means to liberate him from the spell of so many cliches and internal fights in the Romanian culture, offering instead a European relevance for his thought.

Notes

1 C. Schmitt, *Political Romanticism*, The MIT Press, Cambridge, 1986, p. 71-2.

2 Raymond Aron, *Machiavel et les tyrannies modernes*, Editions du Fallois, 1993, p. 68.

3 In Nae Ionescu's words "...politics is first of all an art of possibilities..." (my translation) in Nae Ionescu, *Intre ziaristica si filosofie*, Timpul, 1996, p. 182.

4 *Idem*, pp. 62-67.

5 *Idem*, p 64.

6 *Idem*, p. 167.

7 *Ibidem*.

8 *Idem*, p. 166.

9 Aron, *Machiavel et les tyrannies modernes*, p. 78.

10 Mircea Vulcanescu*, Nae Ionescu. Asa cum l-am cunoscut*, Humanitas, Bucuresti, 1992, p.44.

11 *Idem*, p. 45.

12 Nae Ionescu writes about Descartes: "He intends to write 'Regulae' as a guide to reason on any circumstance of life..."(*Suferinta rasei albe*, "Descartes, parinte al democratismului modern", p. 72).

13 In his interpretation Descartes expresses "all the spiritual problems of the epoch that was meant to produce the Modern Man", *Suferinta rasei albe,* p.72.

14 Nae Ionescu, *Intre ziaristica si filosofie*, Timpul, Iasi, p. 37.

15 *Idem*, p. 69.

16 Richard Rorty, *Contingency, Irony and Solidarity*, Cambridge University Press, 1989, p. 40.

17 There seems to be in the modern world a link between the diagnosis of crisis, as the crisis of values, of culture, of democracy, and the attempt to think anew the beginning of the Western culture and more generally the philosophical notion of beginning or ground. Crisis seems to indicate the presence of a fundamental diremption, either of the theoretical and practical, or of the theoretical realm from the level of the daily life, or of the public and the private spheres. Insofar as it indicates such a diremption the notion of crisis has to do with the meaning of unity, of how unity can still be understood in the (post) modern world. To raise the problem of unity means to question the notion of beginning and the meaning of grounding.

18 *Idem*, p. 180.

19 Nicolae Iorga, *Evolutia ideii de libertate*, Bucuresti, 1928, p.17.

20 Foucault referred to the choice between rational and irrational, to the clear cut distinction between what represents the real nature of human reason and what is accordingly irrational, as being a false option insofar as it presupposes the existence of a true essence of human reason that has to be discovered and then used to order what does not fit within its boundaries.

21 *Idem*, p.29.

22 Georg Simmel, *Philosophie de la modernite*, Payot, Paris, 1989, pp. 281-286.

23 See Q. Skinner, *Liberty Before Liberalism*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1998, and *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought*, Cambridge University Press, 1978.

24 Idem, *Evolutia ideii de libertate*, p. 129.

25 *Idem*, p. 183.

26 It is relevant in this context to mention that for Schiller and Hegel (again the German Romanticism!) modernity means, among others, the diremption of the individual and of the world, the impossibility for both of them to define as wholes. In a manner that presents similarities with both German thinkers, Iorga interprets the consequences of the modern abstract rationalism in a

phrase of an unexpected philosophical depth: "...to consider the human things independently from the human being is the greatest monstrosity. Outside the whole of human being, and not set into pieces, because if you cut him into pieces, his categories can enter into whatever play with abstractions [that you want]."(Iorga, *Evolutia ideii de libertate*, p. 240). Two ideas depict in this fragment the undesirable consequences of the abstract rationalism and the extreme centralization of the modern authority with consequences for the liberty of the individual. There is, on one hand, the incapacity of modern rationalism to conceptualize the individual in its wholeness, due to the neglect, in the name of an universal reason, of the life of local communities, of the historical and cultural concreteness of a specific pattern of experience. There is, on the other hand, the artificial effect of the modern rationalism, which—disembedded from their context of genesis— the categories that make up the discourse about the modern existence allow for their arbitrary re-configuring. These re-configurations do not express and do not meet the human sensibility, the way the human sensibility is socially and historically shaped, the specific human practices that mould the sensibility in so many different ways, as more recently Foucault tried to demonstrate through his discontinuous and bifurcated conception of history.

27 *Idem*, p. 206.

28 *Idem*, p. 206.

29 As Iorga points out: "To enclose into a formula means to condemn yourself to sterility: you forbid to yourself the affinity with life and everything that comes from this precious link together with the countless revelations of life" (Iorga, *Evolutia ideii de libertate*, 1928, p. 65).

30 *Idem*, p. 178.

31 *Idem*, p. 184.

32 *Idem*, p. 185.

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Spirituality and Social Problems: Universalism and Nationalism

Marin Aiftinca

At this transition of centuries and millennia the image of the world on the whole is not encouraging at all for the mankind. Inconceivable difficulties daily assail the human being, increasing feelings of fear and insecurity, and arousing dramatic questions. The continuous deepening and expansion of economic crisis, famine, interethnic wars, religious conflicts and terrible diseases, ecological crises and the destruction of the ozon stratum make more and more acute need to discover new ways for the survival for the human race. The legitimate hopes of a better life often are moderated by sombre predictions generating incertitude and fear. These grave phenomena take place against the background of the amazing development of contemporary technological civilization1 that facilitated the appearance of a specific behavioural type called homo móndialis modernicus and of a world nomenclature. The new and spatial technologies transform incidents into drastic morals; they granted ideological value to the emergency, and impose speed as the highest standard of the level of the performance.2 They interrupt the scale of spatial and temporal perceptions, and overturn the image of relationship between the local and global. As a matter of fact the superworld that Lyotard is speaking of expresses just the tendency of the abolition of the perception of that which is local and unique in favour of the overall and worldwide. One can affirm in agreement with Nietzsche, that we are experiencing the devaluation of the whole system of values and to the appearance of the need for a radical reconstruction, starting from the principles of today's world and especially of the tomorrow's world.

These few defining elements, that sketch a picture of the contemporary world require imperatively that we turn our attention to universal human foundations and aspirations, that we re-examine mankind as a source of these, with the aim of reorganizing the social system to their satisfaction. Still, at the beginning of the '80s one who was concerned about human destiny predicated that the 21st century would have to be an age of deep respect for life.3

Universalism

As a direct reaction to these social challenges Universalism, which arose at the end of the '80s when the collapse of the socialist political system in its totalitarian form had begun, expresses the emergence of a new philosophical consciousness as a foundation of a rational and systematic reflection of nature and of the world in general, particularly of human civilization. Unlike other universalistical religious or secular projects, already formulated in the ancient times, such as that of Philo of Alexandria (about 25 B.C.) up to those from the first half of our century, who proposed the creation of a universal state, the project we are referring to is much wider in extent. It doesn't float in the sphere of Utopias, of illusions detached from the specific nature of man and social conditions. On the contrary, its philosophical essence expresses an attempt to approach the whole of the world and to underline the unity which comprises every existent thing. Conceived from such a perspective, universalism draws on the meanings that the ancient Greeks gave to philosophy. Responding in a comprehensive way to the phenomena and processes of the contemporary world, with the most recent advances of scientific research, the authors of the universalistic project from Warsaw tackle a synthetically nature and society in the unity, as Heidegger would say, of Being

as a whole. They do so by assuming Hegel's thesis, according which the truth is the whole. They make of this a principle of thinking and of practical action and thinking that Universalism "can become the Truth of the reality".4

This vision starts from the correct observation that at present philosophical research is focused on narrow unrelated, independent ideas, themes, domains, which induce a fragmentary knowledge and remove philosophy from its true purposes, driving it into a state of general crisis. The essence of the philosophical approach consists in the reflection on man and reality as a whole, where the philosophy assumes its role as guide of the individual and of society. But these functions are abandoned in favour of a specialization of domains, so that the philosophers themselves do not understand each other, often becoming illiberal. This is the harm that universalism proposes to surpass, by defining itself, on the notional level, as "a metatheory, an *a priori* synthesis and co-creation of the divergence, co-dependencies and unity of the components of an ontical-ontological and ethical order of the world, including, above all, the meaning of history and the meaning of life.5

This is not to be intolerant of other philosophical ideas and orientations; on the contrary, it eases the dialogue between philosophies with the obvious intention of taking over the essence of past valuable theoretical conceptions. Universalism endevours to offer the richest and most complete vision of man and the universe in their unity and diversity, on the world as a whole. In other words, by keeping the continuous tradition of the critical spirit, universalism strives to open a vision that takes into account the universal nature of man and the world. In this respect, the promotion of Universalism as a metaphilosophy means a maximum opening to the whole of the existence, it defines itself as an attempt at exploring ideas, interests and aspirations of the human being, as an individual or as a collectivity, in the context of the real historical process. Aiming at such a purpose, universalism proclaims truth as its highest Court of Appeal.

As we have affirmed, Universalism does not limit itself to a contemplative and therefore theoretical level. It does not want to be a gratuitous theory in the boundaries of the difficulties that are shaking the contemporary world; it is not an intellectual exercise. Universalism also has an operational character, which entails another essential function, that is, being an instrument for the investigation of the society and the creation of values in a world looking feverishly for its own meaning and its self-salvation.

Involved to its outmost degree in the reconstruction of the social reality, universalism starts from the integral processes and moments which characterize the world in which we live. The tendencies toward comprehensive attention to human society at a planetary level, the growth of the economic interdependencies and the international co-operation at all levels for the optimal capitalization of the Earth's resources, the improvement of the human condition and the guarantee of world peace. Repudiating any form of dogmatism and authoritarianism and raising dialogue to the position of a method for transcending the clash of opinions, by inculcating a democratic course of social transformation of the creation of value, Universalism promises to be a viable alternative to the devolving spiral of individualism and selfishness. At the same time it is opposed to any type of totalitarism and fundamentalism, which it is still being faced in the new millennium. Universalism can be considered as an appropriate answer to the rapid changes which are taking place in the contemporary world due to the lifting of "the Iron Curtain", the disappearance of the Berlin Wall, the collapse of the socialist system in its totalitarian form and the transformation of some statal organizations into confederations, the appearance of an ideological vacuum from East to West and from North to South, the end of some deadly conflicts and the appearance of new ones, etc.

Nationalism

With such a noble ideal, Universalism has to face numerous and difficult problems which the social reality raises before it. Nationalism undoubtedly is one of them. Hidden for a long time after the Second World or, to be more exact, kept under control, nationalism shows signs of recurring, generating new victims and as many reasons for anxiety. This social phenomenon with tragic results raises the question of how universalism relates to nationalism; what is the fate for nationalism in the framework of universalism?

This calls for some conceptual explanations. First, we have to bear in mind that Universalism, in its present sense, is not a mere prediction, but an overwhelming reality. It is not a form of supernationalism, imposed by an external force, meant to weaken and destroy the nations. Such a vision would be at least Utopian and irrelevant here. Universalism constitutes only the general framework within which nationalism is articulating itself, which concentrates in itself the creative energies of the individuals, preserves and enables them, contributing to the growth of the cultural patrimony of humanity. By having more vast horizons, it represents only a superior step in an integrative system, the support of which is the human society in its ensemble. Universalism must include nationalism as a constituent part with its own functions and its leading role lest it be reduced to a simple abstraction. Adopting Mircea Florian's idea we can say that universalism integrates the "nationalisms" as a recessive, subordinate principle, but possessing a superior value.6 Thus, universalism can be considered as the correlation of the most important and comprehensive contemporary processes: "the transition from mankind in itself, as a collection of nations and states, to mankind for itself, as a free and self-creating global community".7

With the national as a constituent factor universalism constitutes a reservoir of spiritual energies, which give birth to and leads nationalism. To be more clear we shall try, as a first step, to decipher the meanings of nationalism.

By now, at least two distinct meanings of this term have been delineated. The first meaning identifies nationalism with the deep feeling of love for the nation, of solidarity with all the members of the same community. However fluid in respect of the definition, the nation is a "proteus" as Herder said and concentrates in itself a plurality of meanings, that generate a large register of life experiences and feelings, sublimated in what was called nationalism.

In its second meaning, nationalism is identified with an exacerbated ethnic or national identity, with jingoism and intolerance of other ethnics. In analogy with religious fanatism and it has been called an "imperialism", a "will of power", a manifestation of violence8 which, in some cases, has lead to dictatorship.

The two explanations given to nationalism are, of course, the result of a rich historical evolution, prepared for long time and unleashed, mainly, by the French Revolution. This was done in the name of liberty and equality, of humanitarianism, which aimed to set free all peoples under the cloak of the former empires and the assertion of a modem democratic movement, the result of which has been the setting-up of new nations. This won the name, "the century of nationalities," for the 19th century. We shall insist neither on the appearance, evolution and conditions of manifestation, nor on the consequences of nationalism which exceed the intention of the present work, but shall limit ourselves to the issues formulated above.

Nationalism and Universalism

If we take the first meaning of nationalism mentioned above, and put it in connection with Universalism, we find a full compatibility between the two ways of relating to the world. Any lucid analysis of social reality will reveal that nationalism brings to light the deep motivation of the efforts of the nation as a whole. The nation as a permeable to communication and cooperation with other national communities points towards Universalism, not only as a vocation but as a telos. For Universalism is a Utopia beyond the nation which is not possible as an indistinct and chaotic world community. There have been projects of that kind which were forgotten before coming to life.

Human life affirms itself and progresses into a structured framework, as proved by the whole history of society. For the moment the optimal framework of evolution is offered by the nation, which in relationship to Universalism remains the leading factor. Although it possesses an immense capacity of self the nation covers a large and complex process of regional, continental and international processes of integration. This process confirms the fact that Universalism is a solution and a practical ideal for the realisation of community. The fulfillment of this ideal does not take place by weakening and neutralizing the nations, for universalism implies the nation as a constitutive element. It comes from outside to organize and lead genuine nationalisms, being endowed with a superior value.

Nationalism is a potential factor in the valid creation of each nation. Consciousness of belonging to a national community enables one to understand the nation to which one belongs, properly to relate oneself to universality and to understand oneself.9 Once acquired, this understanding has a spiritual orientation and one feels oneself engaged in the growth of spirituality, of the national civilization and thereby in the increase of the human patrimony. The orientation of one's energies in the above sense is stimulated by the deep connection which places one together with other members of the same people, united in a feeling of solidarity demonstrated in the tradition of values, and in striving according to commune ideals. The pride of great deeds in the past and respect for these, feeds the will to do what is needed in the future.

Buoyed up by such spiritual and moral energies, nationalism amplifies the creative potential of the nation and contributes to the affirmation of its identity, to the growth of effective willingness to participate in the development of the cultural patrimony and civilisation of humanity. From this perspective, nationalism is the correlate of Universalism. For Universalism, in its present day vision, has nothing to do with cosmopolitism or vulgar internationalism. It constitutes itself as a synthetic expression of all authentic values created by the mankind. This means that every nation has a contribution to make to this patrimony to the measure of its spiritual strength. By promoting and sheltering the creations that represent the genius of the humanity, by strengthening the solidarity of the people everywhere through the knowledge and the respect of these creations, Universalism stimulates a pluralism of values and preserves the differences specific to every culture.

Of course, the conservation of the specificity of a culture is not equivalent to isolation or to cultural autarchy. Any culture affirms its specific character, by remaining, at the same time, distinct from other cultural patterns, by preserving its value identity, and its capacity for communication with the Universe. No one can invoke the universalist spirit to repress the peculiarities of a culture, built by the spirit of a people during successive epochs of history, in order to impose prefabricated models. Such attempts are contrary to the genuine democracy and have disastrous effects. Universalism keeps the specific elements that the nations have printed upon their own cultures in order to assume them into the rhythmic of the universal culture and civilisation and in order to

consolidate the unity of the worldwide community. Unity in diversity is the leading principle of the new Universalism.

The main element that helps the action of nationalism as well as of universalism is the human individual. One possesses the consciousness of belonging to the people, to the homeland and, at the same time, he considers oneself, rightly, a citizen of the world. There is a disproportion of intensity and value between the two levels of consciousness in favour of the first. The national feeling possesses the energy and depth of an instinct; the universal idea and feeling is determined by empirical rules, by painful human experiences, by imperative calls for the evolution of a worldwide community. This can be noted also in the fact that public law requires that everyone have a nation and belong to a homeland. Therefore even if today, the "homo mundialis" comes into usage and homeless persons are exceptions and become social errors, universalism does not encourage the abandonment of one's homeland and the migration of the individuals to countries with prosperous economies, although the free circulation of the ideas and of the persons is an inner thesis of its spirit.

The degenerate forms of nationalism expressed in the second meaning of the term presented above have nothing in common with Universalism. The human individual nourishes legitimate universalist aspirations based on a series of intimate motivations. The liberties intrinsic to one's person and assured on a national level call for being rounded off on the international level, for solidarity with the other people in respect to universal values, and a desire for fulfillment in humanity. Thus the nation possesses itself numerous and intimate political, economic, cultural and moral reasons to integrate into the worldwide community, without losing its identity and its sovereignty. These natural desires join with the multiple preoccupations of the society at a global level to ensure the conditions of progress and even its own survival. The viable solution is the one proposed by Universalism, not only as a metatheory, but especially as a philosophically oriented praxis. Before these private and communitarian realities, hatred, violence, jingoism, and intolerance as attributes of a degenerate nationalism are contrary not only to the spirit of the times, but also to the human being himself. Universalism, animated by a series of fundamental values, such as dialogue, co-operation, tolerance, help of those in pain, mutual respect and world peace, cannot but discourage nationalisms based on jingoism, hatred and violence no matter where they may be.

Unfortunately, we are watching a new wave of barbarian nationalism that is becoming manifest today in the world. No matter what causes have brought this about, the deep and complex crisis determined by the collapse of the socialist system and of some frail state organizations, the appearance and the proliferation of irredentism, the incitement from outside of some ethnics against each other, the temptation of some ethnical groups to deny the values proper to the nations with which they co-habitate, etc.—such extremist nationalism is a blameworthy manifestation which the universalist movement rejects in full. But the rejection of this phenomenon does not mean its negation. It exists and, therefore, must be extirpated from society in order to facilitate the process of worldwide integration. What is the best solutions? It is very difficult, if not impossible, to suggest something viable in this respect. But it is such that Universalism has assumed dialogue as a method of work since it believes rightly in the virtues and authenticity of its values. To appeal to dialogue and to promote it insistently, now when the extremism is causes numerous victims everyday, is not only a duty of the universalist movement, but also a moral-and practical imperative.

Notes

1 Category of the modernity which expresses the autonomy of the artificial environment, created by the man, in opposition to the natural environment.

2 Cf. Jean Chesneaux, *Brave Modern World. The prospects for Survival*, Thames and Hudson translated from French by Diana Johnstone. Kare Bowie and Francisca Garvie. 1992; Rev. roum de philos, 38, 3-4, pp. 337-394. Bucarest, 1994.

3 *Global Unity of Mankind in a Lasting Peace*, Collected Addresses of Daisaku, "Ikeda" New York, Weather Hill, Tokyo, 1981.

4 Concerning the defining elements of the universalism see: Jan Szczepanski, Janusz Kuczynski. *Dialogue and Humanism—Dialogue and Universalism*; Michael H. Miticas, "Challenges of Universalism," in *Dialogue and Humanism*, The Universalist Quarterly, No. 1/1991.

5 Jan Szczepànski, Januzs Kuczynski, *op. cit.*, p. VI.

6 Cf. Mircea Florian, *The Recessivity as a Structure of the World*. Vol II. Eminescu Publishing House, Bucharest, 1987, p. 75.

7 Cf. Jan Szczepanski, Janus Kuczynski, *op. cit.*, p. V1.

8 Mircea Florian, *op. cit.*, p. 80.

9 Cf. C. Radulescu-Motru, *The Romanism, the Catechism of a new Spirituality*. The Foundations of Literature and Art, Bucharest, 1939, pp. 50-52.

Chapter VII

Romanian Pedagogy between the Two World Wars and the Problem of Freedom in Education: Contemporary Issues

Gabriel Albu

Various ideals have accompanied and animated people thoughout the centuries. One of them seems to have been and to be their root: the free man. This fundamental ideal was not and could not have remained unknown to the pedagogy between the Two World Wars.

Education and Freedom

Besides the problem of the educational ideal, that of social harmony, that of individuality and localism, the problem of personality, and of national education, the Romanian pedagogic thinking between the Two World Wars made from this very problematic of individual freedom in education a serious, constant problem (1).

Our pedagogues between Two World Wars do not take E. Durkheim's conception uncritically, even if they often refer to it. Although most of them have an authentic social open-mindedness without actually achieving it (one couldn't speak about 'education'), still they keep a certain distance from the ideas of the well-known French sociologist. Constantin Narly, among other things, does not share the idea of direct, automatic subordination of the individual to the requests and ideals of society, even if the French thinker's demonstration has a highly scientific form. Constantin Narly does not agree, for exemple, with the idea that the happiness of the society will automatically lead to the happiness of the individual. He notices that the way Durkheim conceives of education makes the individual the tool of the society.

But the Romanian pedagogue does not stop at the French sociologist's critics,— he also has his own point of view; anyone who studies the problem, as Narly says, will realize that there is:

. . . a certain degree of independence from the society the individual is entitled to, and that there is a certain pure individual happiness which has nothing to do with the society and which must be shared by everyone or we even, have to help everybody get it, obviously without touching the right to happiness of the other members of the society, yet independently of them (2).

From this appreciation stated by Constantin Narly we may conclude the following:

a. The freedom of society isn't and can't be taken for the freedom of its individuals: as a result, the social and historic *fatum* is disputed;
b. Every individual is entitled to manifest his or her own freedom;
c. Moreover, every individual—due to his own right—ust be helped, stimulated, engaged in getting his or her freedom;
d. The manifestation of every individual's freedom should not affect his fellow's happiness, but only in the sense of its growth;
e. Our pedagogue must trust the individual's reserve to conquer and show freedom and also to take into account the other people's aspiration to freedom;

f. The freedom of every individual can be shown only in society when taking part in the life of his community, i.e., among his fellows.

Such a concept is shared, with insignificant differences, by I. Gavanescul, G.G. Antonescu, I.C. Petrescu, and I.I. Gabrea (the greatest Romanian pedagogues between the Two World Wars). The professor of Cernautzi deals, in great detail in his work, with the question of freedom and its meaning in education.

If education does not have in view a pure 'training' and the transformation of people into animals, then education as a "purposeful influence" cannot deprive the individual of his or her freedom. As, Narly says, education means "the introduction of the individuals into culture and civilization," culture and civilization, being quite the product of people's freedom, cannot be against its essence, the very producer of culture,— the individual freedom (3). Requiring spontaneity in actions and initiative, freedom "contrasts with mechanic and slave responsiveness", with apathy (4); it requires action according to the direction given by the individual's inner force (5).

We cannot talk, however, about absolute freedom, i.e., the disclosed manifestation of the individual's inner force. This is because -Narly thinks- everybody carries in him or herself "a certain predestination", which belongs to the personal psychic structure (6), to what the individual was given by birth and which limits his or her personality. Under the threatening of failure or of a humdrum life, such limit can't be broken or ignored. The result is, by the same token, that our manifestation "in the purest sense of our personal law", according to our specific originality becomes, in Narly's opinion, the only rational possibility to achieve our mission (7). We can also draw the conclusion that education will take into consideration and will firstly favour one's own resources (8).

We can't talk about absolute freedom because people live in community. Each individual freedom limits and delimits the other one. The meaning of education can't be only that of providing the maximum achievement of the individual's specific originality, but also that of providing the harmonization of the individual liberties. Education would play the role of a traffic agent, i.e., that of guiding everybody for the sense of the individual's achievement according to his or her hereditary endowment on the one hand, and that of supervising the harmonization of the extant individual liberties, on the other hand. According to the opinion of the professor from Cernautzi there is no freedom where there is no harmony. When harmony vanishes, freedom vanishes as well. To conclude, only by keeping or retrieving harmony can the individual freedom be kept or retrieved. That's why "for this harmonization which coincides with the manifestation of real freedom, education has the right to active intervention, supporting and smothering certain impulses and manifestations"(9), Narly adds.

The individual freedom can be ensured and defended not by ensuring and defending the individual freedom itself, but by watching that the social harmony is not broken. To impose certain limits in the name of harmony does not mean to diminish it because any manifestation of freedom which harms another freedom deletes the condition of manifestation itself. So these unavoidable restrictions imposed on freedom protect the individual and prevent him from the danger of losing his own freedom. "Education, Narly says, by its intervention, by smothering some impulses and by supporting others, succeeds in doing nothing but fitting man in freedom, in giving back the freedom he was about to lose"(10).

We may conclude that the individual freedom can be expressed only in the limits accepted by the social harmony,— harmony subordinated to the achievement of necessity and to its respect.

This way the individual can ensure/provide for himself a possibility of being. The attempt of the individual freedom to break the requests of social harmony is a kind of suicide. Education will prevent such evolution. From the very beginning, the individual will get accustomed to respect the sovereignity of harmony, that feeling of the frustrations imposed by it later on. "Education, Narly concludes, by respecting each individual's freedom, must respect the freedom of the whole at the same time, and it also must get the individual acquainted with this respect"(11). As a result we may say that education can offer and respect the individual freedom only if it is simultaneously preoccupied by the ensurance and maintainance of social harmony.

We cannot talk about absolute freedom because the individual freedom doesn't mean the absence of any determination. On the contrary, it requires an inner hierarchy of values, some determination according to everyone's skill. Making out his or her own skill and vocation is not an easy task at all. This needs "meticulous apprenticeship in conformist values", Narly writes, and we may understand that this apprenticeship is close to the values acknowledged and accepted by society, validated and assimilated by the national and world's culture. Therefore, "in order to get to freedom, we need a constant effort among these values, that a good conduct occasions. Then, Narly goes on, as soon as we have started our creative manifestation, discipline means constant effort in the inner hierarchy, and consequently freedom"(12). We cannot talk about individual freedom without discipline. It requires two moments: the first one refers to the meticulous and consistent apprenticeship inside the world of the values already existent in the culture and life of a certain society; the second one refers to the creative effort, co-ordinated and controlled by the inner (worthy) hierarchy: the creative effort on the edge of the assimilated values and of the accepted moral principles. Briefly, the individual freedom requires the inner order, the determinism of the spirit (13).

There is also a forth limit in achieving absolute freedom. Each people, Narly believes, is endowed with "the instinct of perfectibility"; this requires self-fulfillment. Consequently, any individual will want his self-fulfillment. The limit lies in the request for "respecting and helping the other in the process of achievement, of self-fulfillment"(15), the same as in the case of providing social harmony.

In everyone's tendency towards perfection and self-fulfillment, the other's right to follow the same instinct can't be trespassed. Our self-fulfillment would be compromised and immoral if it were achieved by discouraging or stopping some other wishes of self-fulfillment and self-perfection. That's why everybody's freedom seems to depend on the other's freedom, that the chance to our own perfection depends on the extent to which we give the others the chance to perfection; moreover, the extent in which we take part in the others' perfection. The support and encouragement for an individual's self-fulfillment implies as well the perfection of those who support and encourage. "Freedom and self-fulfillment are correlated notions", for Constantin Narly (16). More perfection means more freedom and more freedom means a deeper possibility of (self-)perfection, either by oneself or by helping the other/others or the other's/others' help.

In the Romanian pedagogy between the Two World Wars the individual freedom requires, at least, the two components:

a. Living and acting freely means living and acting according to the individual will. The question of freedom is the question of self-determination/self-government.

b. But living and working freely still means living and working "according to some reasons coming from our mind and reason, from combining representations or ideas, but not sensational and perceptual impulses", as I. Gavunescul says. Thus, the individual freedom consists precisely

in ruling the natural being by the spiritual being; i. e., individual freedom means life according to reason and not under the empire of "the changing impulses of the moment"(17). After all, our great pedagogues between the Two World Wars (Gavanescul, Narly and Antonescu among them) emphasize that "in this power to elude suggestions and influences of present-day stimuli, does man's superiority over the other animals lie, the superiority of maturity over childhood and youth. But it doesn't exclude but implies determination through reasons/motifs"(18). By the fact that man "can postpone his decision and action till he will weigh the circumstances of his movements better, the efficiency of means and the importance of the target, he becomes free comparative to the other animals, who are the toys and the slaves of the moment, of the unmediated impressions". Yet by that man himself doesn't elude the general law of will, i.e. "to avoid pain and find the maximum of a state of satisfaction" as I. Gavanescul says (19).

Therefore, to conclude: The second component (the spiritual being) represents the most important one in the analysis and the manifestation of freedom, as such.

Its freedom and authentic manifestation require, as an essential element, prudence, self-control, the power "to shirk the influences of the present in order to work (and live) according to an ideal in life, to a future calculus"(20). In this way and now, we can see that the free will is equal to the rational will, as long as it requires "not taking decisions on the spot, according to passing impulses of sensations or according to a superficial consideration"(21).

The Freedom of the Individual

In the Romanian pedagogy between the Two World Wars, the individual freedom cannot be separated from the moral freedom; the individual freedom is understood as moral freedom. Freedom requires necessarily a certain orientation, a sense. Freedom does not exist without sense; there is only its illusion as a pile of chaotic gestures and deeds aroused accidentally. And those people who let themselves be seduced by such illusion, they close themselves in the limits of a pale presence in the world. The orientation of freedom can be given, either by the immediate context of life, or by "the sovereign standard of moral law", which ushers in the chance of achieving personality (22). For our pedagogues moral law is co-substantial to the individual freedom. Without it, freedom has no chance to fulfill the individual: "it (the moral law) is an arbitrary order, the expansion of some being's will; there isn't a conventional edict, a product of one's reflexion or of more people's consultation; but is, as the natural law is, the finding of a fact, of some relations between man and society, relations to preserve society and to achieve its own good state"(23). As a fundamental reference point of human freedom, the moral law can be expressed as follows: "Work in such a way that the principle of your activity should become a rule of activity for all people, for general wealth"(24). It can also be read and understood as follows: Your actions should be done in such a way that if any man did under the same circumstances as you, some progress in your wealth and happiness would result. Behave yourself in such a way that you may contribute to diminishing pain in the world and to the progress of a generally good state. Find your happiness in producing the others' happiness (25).

To conclude, emphasizing that the manifestation of one individual's freedom can't be done to the prejudice of the freedom of the other individuals in the group or community, we can say that:

At the individual level, freedom cannot be taken for or crossed with willingness and life put at appearance's beck and call.

At the social level, the anarchy cannot be taken for the silent and unscrupulous climbing of the struggle for power. After all, the fight for power is fought in the field of illusion, because real power resides in work and creativity; as a result, the real fight is nothing but the struggle with yourself (with your comfort, imperfection and vanity, etc.).

Briefly, freedom means self direction, knowing how to behave "in the presence of pain and in the presence of the temptation of lust". Because, there are pains "which being faced can take you to the target of the life ideal. And there is pleasure which is taken into account and can take you directly to ruin", I. Gavanescul writes (26).

- Gavanescul in his *Manual de instructie si educatie morala* /Handbook of Instruction and Moral Education/ warned against the danger of losing our freedom, and suggested that it was our duty to defend it. "Everything that tends to destroy our freedom must be done away with. Our duty regarding our will confines itself to the care of preserving its freedom. The will is free only when we make our mind act or work according to our long-lasting interests of our life, after a through consultation (27). Referring to the same problem, C. Narly registered in *Ideal si educatie*(Ideal and Education), in 1927, that we have been deprived of many liberties. That's why the author's opinion was that "our duty is to watch that at least our inner freedom in its largely general character should remain untouched, irrespective of place or time"(28). Hence we should understand that:
- Our most intimate and resistant centre is our inner freedom. That's why it requires some (external) force, the more powerful, the more inhuman to be snatched away from us;
- Its loss means a total cancellation of itself, a fatal collapse;
- However, even the inner freedom can be lost if we do not defend it, and, thus, if we do not conquer it whenever it is threatened;
- Being the most intimate form of manifestation of freedom, we can give it up, being more or less aware of it;
- The other forms of freedom may depend or not on the individual, to own and use them; it is certain that it should depend on himself if he owns the inner freedom or not.

Freedom is lost, essentially when it has no moral support or, more bluntly, when it has not moral law as a reference point.

In the labyrinth of life, there are many traps in the way of canceling real freedom and of encouraging the false freedom. Here are some of them:

- The fancies, passions and bad habits (the vices). In such moment, according to the stoic ethics, I. Gavanescul recommends the resistance to these fancies. This resistance refers to the rejection of the chain "that is presented as a specious enemy. To lessen our needs means to become emancipated, to the same extent, from slavery, it also means we win or keep our freedom". That is why "it is cautious to forbid ourselves from the very beginning any fancy or action which could tend to become passion or vice later"(29).
- Quick decisions, undeliberated or in a larger context, the hasty passing from one decision to another under the passion of impressions and momentary worry or panic (30).
- The delay of the act: "a will loses freedom if it doesn't win strength as well". Without showing his freedom, the individual can detach himself slowly from the trammel of the immediate moment, living in potentiality but thinking of possibility". This happens with "the difficulty of the chain imposed by actuality" (31).

If education does not want to transform itself into mere training (or does not want to be confused with training) and to transform people into slaves, it can't be fulfilled without taking into account and encouraging individual freedom (32). A very good connoisseur of the history of pedagogy, G.G. Antonescu shows that in the question of the relationship between education and freedom, two trends were in permanent confrontation: the optimistic and the pessimistic trend.

a. The Optimistic Trend (or "The New Education").

In schools, in a context in which there is a tendency to stifle personality by formal, mechanic, uniform education and instruction, this trend is praiseworthy to have formulated and mentioned the problem. Its main representatives are J.J. Rousseau and E. Key. This trend states that man is good from his very birth (33), his natural development would be enough, without putting up any stumbling block to the free evolution of personality (34), that develops itself towards goodness. The mature generation can't impose its laws on the child: the child is the supreme authority, the star of the day. School is a real destroyer of personalities: collective laws, collective feelings, collective duties oppress the personal conscience. "To treat children -from the age of 2-3 in kindergartens- as a flock, that do the same work, after the same plan, doesn't mean to educate people, but numbers". E. Key recommends the strengthening of the personal moral consciousness in order to sanction our actions.

In the view of the "new education", the present-day school, whose result is a worn out brain, weak nerves, lack of originality, the diminishing of the sense of observation, the exploitation of idealist tendencies, should be destroyed. From all those mentioned above the only product is man lacking self-confidence, the slave of the environment he lives in, taking into account the people around him more than his own consciousness; viz, a man lacking personality. Only an organic education, i.e., from the inner world towards the outer world, having as standard the individual characterisitics of the child, can create a superior generation. We should not anymore impose on children our own ideal, but look for it in their souls and cultivate it. The ultimate consequence: the free development of individuality in order to form the personal character (35).

b. The Pessimistic (or Rigorist) Trend (the theoretical focus of this trend is in German culture).

The assumption this trend starts from is that evil is inborn to human nature; as a result, the most justifiable option would be a harsh education. Real characters can be shaped only by a strict education based on obedience and self-control. The rigorists state that only those whose "reason prevails on senses, subordinating their activity to the moral principles and who were used to work and hardships of life can be considered as men of character. Only he who has learnt to be obedient and to be self-controlled can become free"(36).

The rigorist trend is under Kant's thinking. He states that moral freedom is characterized by the fact that "our will is subordinated to some standards dictated by our own consciousness and struggle against the tendencies that come from outside". As far as we can see, another premise, closely linked to the first one, is that "the superior element of human nature is judgement and not the senses that make us curious, dissolute, slaves to momentary vocation and to instinct. The child is not free. He will be when the moral law becomes his second nature". Till then, the child must be forced. "Only by order, respect and discipline we can get to moral freedom"(37).

A consistent enemy of "free education", Paulsen thinks that this type of education cannot form a robust, resistant, tough, active generation. On the contrary, it will be a discontent, weak and lazy one. That is why he proposes a coming-back to the old education based on three principles:

Learn how to surrender (to the social and natural necessity);

Teach yourself to make efforts, because a superior culture requires the strain of both physical and spiritual forces to achieve a certain aim, it is based on "endless activity independent of the vocation of the moment". Paulsen urged that we shouldn't spare the pupils, but encourage them to work: "you can what you will";

Learn how to control yourself, because "the more we meet our wishes and lust, the stronger they become". We should make the children get used to be moderate, self-possessed and to improve their self-denial/abnegation (38).

Another represenative of the rigoristic trend, frequently quoted by our pedagogues is Fr.W. Förster. He considers that thus far there has been a confusion between the moral personality and the natural individuality. They have wrongly thought that the stimulation of the natural individuality means freedom of showing human personality; that the human personality is the automatic product of the individual's manifestation. They also thought that the access to personality is made directly through the non-intervention in the free manifestation of the child.

The real moral personality is to be found in the depth of the spiritual life and can be developed according to how we help the spirit get the sovereignty over the senses. Only by disciplining individuality can we become a moral personality. As a result, the moral personality is characterized, according to Förster, by the concentration of volunteer energy to achieve some standards dictated by our own consciousness. Thus, it requires independence. We can't speak about personality without moral freedom.

Unlike the moral personality, the natural individuality "is characterized by the spread of volunteer energy towards different impressions coming from outside. Therefore, it requires heteronomy. To give individuality absolute freedom means to open the way to all freakish behavior, wishes, and passions and to make thus the outside world rule over man; such freedom would take us to slavery". If the moral personality is supported by the central will, the natural individuality is asserted by the peripherical will. The struggle against "the peripherical will" is required in order to strengthen "the central will".

Thus, the necessity of discipline in circumstances under which the individuality wants to do away with any limitation of its passion, instincts, whims; namely, to make the animal in man triumph. Even if he gets to the necessity of discipline in order to achieve freedom, Förster forsees the inherence of freedom to achieve an authentic, profound discipline; therefore, to achieve a deliberate, self-imposed discipline required by the rigour/logic of self-creation. He also forsees the danger of a blind, ruining obedience (39).

Therefore, in the outlook of the rigorist trend, the individual freedom requires, as compulsory elements, the instance of reason, the central will and the willing, freely consented discipline, required by the fulfillment of the people's own life project (whose necessity we are convinced of).

However, beyond the simple characterization, what draws our attention is the way in which the dispute between the two pedagogical trends was received in Romania between the Two World Wars and what course our pedagogues tried to impose, at the time, on the schools.

Undoubtedly the criticism brought by the "new education" couldn't be rejected,— criticism concentrated essentially on not knowing and thus not respecting, children's individuality. That's why G.G. Antonescu (with his formative-organicist pedagogy) and Iosif I. Gabrea mostly, but the

other representatives of the pedagogic thinking between the two world wars as well, will have the individual as a starting point of their analysis in drawing up their theory.

G.G. Antonescu writes in his *Pedagogia generala* /General Pedagogy/: "suppressing the free manifestation of the child, subduing his individual will, we can make slaves and not free people". But if "without discipline man becomes the slave of his own whims—reason being subordinated to sensitivity—without freedom, he will become other people's slave, the slave of the environment", G.G. Antonescu adds (40). That's why when they speak about moral education in school, G.G. Antonescu constantly condemns the usage of repression by educators in their current practice. In other words, our pedagogue considers as inadequate the method by which they consider removing the evil a more important fact for the children's/pupils' behaviour than encouraging the good (41). Certainly, the discipline understood in the sense of not commenting on it and therefore the elimination of any personal gesture is more comfortable for the educator. But, looking carefully, we find out that the direct effect of repression is not the change of the pupil's stuff; it only subjugates his spirit, "it subdues without convincing him", G.G. Antonescu shows. So, repression "does not change the individual's nature at all and it doesn't suggest to him any belief". In fact "it lets individuality as a victim of the influence of social environment, which works by suggestion and not by compulsion and of temptation coming from our own animal nature, which shows itself the more peremptorily, the weaker the censor of consciousness is. Or, it is just this consciousness that represents the moral brake in an individual's life that the educator doesn't take into account" (42). Because compulsion without conviction can lead to an apparent obedience, G.G. Antonescu asks for "self-determination through conviction instead of hetero-determination through compulsion"(43). Influenced by Förster's ideas, the leader and founder of the Pedagogic School of Bucharest insists on the idea of disciplined freedom or free (deliberate) discipline (44). That's why "the deliberate obedience, consented by pupils according to a deep moral conviction" (45), is the real freedom the educator will refer to and will encourage.

Therefore, it comes out that, for G.G. Antonescu, freedom without discipline and self-control was non-sense, an illusion, a failure of education. Things weren't taken to an end if the pupil was not sure that he could become free if he only assumed a certain discipline of his life and work. The ideal, the professor of Bucharest proposes, is heroic life, the life of that person who dares to win himself, "in order to make the values dictated by our own consciousness, triumph". This way, the hero opposes the savage because it is he who wouldn't let himself be ruled by instincts (46). I.Gavanescul has the same ideas (47).

Iosif I. Gabrea in turn, from a similar view, does not share the principles of "the school of pleasure", where the immediate even whimsical interests, prevail. Such a school is not capable, in his opinion, to ensure a favourable atmosphere to assimilate knowledge steadily or to keep attention on an ideal on. He pleads rather for a "school of compulsion", as he calls it, that a school life itself requires and has validated; it is this school which is capable of stimulating the activity of profound and long-lasting knowledge; it is also capable of invigorating the pupil in order to follow a further ideal and to concentrate his energy to fulfill it. "The school of compulsion" shapes vigorous people, having the consciousness of duty and resposibility (48). It does not mean that "the school of compulsion" encroaches upon the students' individuality; on the contrary, it gives a meaning to its development, it strengthens their personality.

These would be, as a whole, the theoretical openings. From a practical point of view they put to advantage the following educational means:

a. The positive way, that of encouraging the good; the early stimulation of the child's good elements, being known that "the preventive measures are preferable to the repressive ones"(49). Freedom would have, from the very beginning, a substantial moral orientation.

b. The method of free discipline, which means:

- to the individual level, the self-conduct, without affecting the others' freedom, to fulfill the maximum spiritual accomplishment (see C. Narly);

- to the community level, the self-government of the group of pupils which is accomplished in the free school community (50).

The concept of free school community, often recurring in our pedagogy between the two world wars, designates a small "social body", in which the pupils' skills (and not only their conviction) and the democratic civic virtues are to be improved. This micro-social body takes as a guide its own rules and establishes its own spirit. It (the body) can have the following forms:

- the community of all pupils, educators and parents together;

- the small educational social unions that bring its members together because of their attraction to the leader educators of the groups (51).

The task of the school communities is to develop and encourage the pupils' resourceful and creative capacity; they have in view the development of the feeling of responsibility. "In our present day society, I.C. Petrescu wrote in 1929, in which freedom is not only a threatening word, but it also tends to become reality; in today's society in which each citizen is asked to give his or her contribution directly to promote the state's life. In such society, the citizens should realize and be familiar with this responsibility sentiment"(52). The social task of these communities and of the democratic school is generally, that of "improving in the pupils' soul not only the conviction of the necessity of discipline through freedom, but also their habit to be well-disciplined by self-determination", being known the fact that "the discipline through freedom is more difficult to be obtained than the discipline through conviction", that it requires some other time and relations than the discipline imposed from the outside (53). In a free school community, "the pupils themselves, through their own activity supply most of the teaching aids, and the classrooms and the appended rooms in the school are adorned with their own work (54). A free school community can still remain an artificial reality if there cannot be accomplished "a permanent vivid circuit from soul to soul, a circuit to pass through all the souls the school community is made of and is animated by"(55).

c. The method recommended in such communities, as well as for the whole educational activity, is the active method, "the only one which stimulates and develops (in Ion C. Petrescu's opinion), the pupil's public functions"(56). This active method is also recommended by Iosif I. Gabrea, mainly for primary school, but not only there. When the educator finds a certain activity in which the pupil is implied and mustered entirely then, he or she "must rejoice at it as if it were a treasure" and "he/she should shun killing it by his/her interference or by the tendency of standardizing it. The spontaneous activity chosen by the pupil, and not the one imposed from the outside, should be mostly prized by the teacher", Iosif I. Gabrea recommends (57). In such a situation, the passage from playing to working becomes very important in every child's moulding. And this is what the teacher should supervise and guide very carefully, because as I.I. Gabrea says "it depends on the way of its fulfillment,— what everyone will become later as an adult"(58).

Therefore, the pupil's tendency towards independence/autonomy should be encouraged, setting up the circumstances to show it and, consequently, to gradually get his or her self-confidence.

Contemporary Issues

In the age of pluralism and differences, of discord and confrontations, the problem of social scission cannot concern so much as to actually discourage the initiative of freedom in education.

On the one hand, because, as much individual freedom the people may show, one of their deepest needs, C.R.Rogers says, is just the appreciation and the communication with the others, a need which, sooner or later, tends to be fulfilled; the aggressive impulses (in the case of a normal, well-balanced person) give up in favour of "the need to be loved by someone else and the aim of sharing affection"(59). According to how the experience is stored, the subject realizes that "the safest and most economical means to insure affection and respect lies in his/her behaving reasonably and socially", C.R. Rogers writes (60).

This results first of all in obsessive preoccupation for the non-affection and preservation of the social balance, which depends mainly on the aspects of interdiction, limitation, penalty and threat, all of which are not characteristic of a pedagogy of freedom. It is not the fear towards a possibile anti-social behaviour of the individual, his/her suspicion about the endowment of the people with the reserve and wish to respect his fellows, that governs his/her approach, but especially the optimism and trust in the need of assertion of each individual, the expression of the human dimension he/she has got.

A pedagogy of freedom is based on the fact that the individual cannot express himself/herself, but in a world of the people he/she respects. It is also based on the fact that the authentic, original and free spirit has always troubled its time, relations and the established cultural values and that, willy-nilly it disturbs and troubles.

It does not mean that all that disturbs and troubles is the product of a real spirit. This is the confusion into whose trap a lot of pedagogues and educators have fallen: being afraid of social and cultural disorders made by some alienated, mean, superficial spirits, pedagogy sacrificed the child's need and wish to be free; thus it neglected the opening of the perspective of the free assertion of the spirit. Its ideal was restricted to the formation of an "integrated" man, in agreement with his/her environment, without bringing about earthquakes and whose voice may finally be lost in the endless social choir. The pedagogy encouraged the idea of social integration, irrespective of the moral status of society (61).

The pedagogy of freedom is a pedagogy of change, of bringing up everyone's own way of being, being sure that thus the people will know better who they are, will think more of themselves, of their own victories, and also of their own precariousness. A pedagogy of freedom is a pedagogy of sincerity. On the other hand, the risk of (social) scission comes out where there is mediocrity, too little vividness, strength and spirit; i.e., inner emptiness, vanity and inferior marginal interests. The scission is the fruit of pseudo-personalities. Therefore the mediocre (micro) social tensions appear where there is frustration and helplessness, where the unfulfilled desires are severely hidden, and the false dialogue is substituted for the dialogue. The tension appears where there is no mutual understanding. The ideas, the appreciation and the convictions of the real personalities, even if they are different, do not split but incite (challenge); they do not destroy but stimulate growth.

Briefly, scission appears only when nobody takes into account the principle of freedom in education, it appears when autonomy and maturity couldn't be achieved. The pedagogy of freedom

is a pedagogy of communication and rational dialogue (which opposes the passionate discussion and pseudo-dialogue).

Conclusion

In the Romanian pedagogy between the Two World Wars the analysis of the relationship between the individual freedom and education represented a steady concern. Because the individual may anytime become either the others' slave or the slave of his own freakish behavior, in the concept of the Romanian pedagogy we can talk neither about education without freedom, nor about freedom without discipline. The education, the freedom, and the discipline are organically conditioned.

Everything would be compromised and ruined if a certain outer discipline were imposed on the child. In such outer discipline the child "cannot see anything but an indirect means invented by the grown-ups to compel him to achieve their will. He/she will tend to find a way to escape, to feign or to lie"(62). The real discipline in education cannot be reduced to the obedience owed to the compulsions and threats, but, on the contrary, to the possession of the available resources to take to an end his/her action. The disciplined individual is self-controlled, capable of organizing his/her life and following his/her own life project.

Therefore, there is freedom only if, by education, we finally succeed in achieving the self-imposed individual discipline. In Romanian pedagogy the freedom does not mean the cancellation or the elimination of effort. Everything valuable that people and life have, is obtained with a prolonged effort under the circumstances of freedom. The whole chance of personality fulfillment lies in the effort, and in the awareness that prolonged effort, when animated by an ideal, is the only way to self-fulfillment. We cannot presume any moment that we speak about the slave's effort, but about the free effort assumed, which is kept alive by itself.

Freedom, identical to life, means pulse, movement, relativity; it is just fortified in the confrontation with hardships. In a certain meaning, we can say that it can be measured exactly by the resistance that can be won, by the effort it requires, and if in its way there is no obstacle, it tends to become the prey of a process of disintegration (63).

Freedom is not comfort. Comfort sacrifices freedom, as freedom eliminates comfort. "The freedom of spirit, A. Camus writes, does not comfort, but achieves a stateliness you long for and which you get gradually by an exhausting struggle"(64). It is a struggle with stillness, with shallowness, with smugness and with ourselves. Briefly put,— freedom and comfort exclude each other. The effort gives depth and consistency to life. If life, as Seneca says, is evaluated through (and by) its intensity and not through (and by) the number of years, then the real education has no other rule than to encourage the individual freedom. The success of each of us depends on the way we know how to assume and fulfill our freedom.

Notes

1. When it didn't avoid such a problem, the concern of the postwar pedagogy gave it some importance/space (less than our pedagogues between the Two World Wars); it was treated within the limits of the ideology by the political system.
2. Constantin Narly, *Educatie si ideal* /Education and Ideal/ (Bucuresti: Ed. Casei Scoalelor, 1927), pp. 29-30.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 167.

4. Narly, *Pedagogie generala* /General Pedagogy/ (Bucureati: Ed. Cultura Româneasca S.A.R., 1938), p.407.

5. Narly, (1927), p.164.

6. *Ibid*., p.76.

7. By his way of realizing freedom, C. Narly is situated near Fichte's idea that "the strength of manifesting according to the very own rules of individualty" would mean freedom itself (see Narly, 1938, p. 138).

8. Narly, *Pedagogia sociala si personalitatea* /The Social Pedagogy and Personality/ (Bucuresti: Ed. Casei Scoalelor, 1928), p. 29.

9. Narly, (1938), p. 147.

10. *Ibid*., pp. 147-48.

11. *Ibid*., p. 148.

12. *Ibid*., p. 407.

13. Narly joined and cultivated Kant's ideas (including those regarding freedom), as did most of our great thinkers between the Two World Wars. At the same time, he appreciated N. Hartmann's ideas about freedom in his work *Ethik* /Ethics/ (Berlinund Leibzig: 1926) (see Narly, 1938, pp. 133-40).

14. *Ibid*., pp. 237-38.

15. *Ibid*., p. 236.

16. *Ibid*., p. 238.

17. Ion Gavanescul, *Manual de instructie si educatie morala -pentru scolile secundare* /The Instruction and Moral Education Textbook for Secondary Schools/ (Ed. Libr?riei "Universala" Alcalay & Co., the 3th edition, 1929-1939), p. 147.

18. *Idem*

19. *Ibid*., p. 149.

20. *Ibid*., p. 14.

21. *Ibid*., p. 42.

22. *Ibid*., p. 129.

23. *Ibid*., p. 180.

24. *Ibid*., p. 125.

25. see *ibid*., p. 178.

26. see *ibid*., pp. 13-4.

27. *Ibid*., p. 39.

28. Narly, (1927), p. 160.

29. Gavanescul, p. 40.

30. see *ibid*., p. 39.

31. see *ibid*., pp. 42-3.

32. "Education is made with the tendency of not hindering individual freedom, a fact that training doesn't take into account", Narly writes (see *Educatie si ideal*, p. 30 and p. 36, as well).

33. The two aspects are presented in the same way they appear in G.G. Antonescu's view (see *Pedagogia generala* /General Pedagogy/, (Bucuresti: Institutul Pedagogic Român, 1930).

34. Antonescu, p. 493.

35. *Ibid*., pp. 497-99.

36. *Ibid*., pp. 493.

37. *Ibid*., pp. 503-4.

38. *Ibid*., pp. 506-7.

39. *Ibid*., p. 509.

40. *Ibid*., p. 508.

41. *Ibid*., p. 512.

42. *Ibid*., p. 513.

43. The self-determination by conviction requires: a. from the rational point of view: "the absolute understanding of some principles and standards of guidance in life"; b. from the emotional point of view: the acceptance of the "educator's requests, because of the feelings of confidence and sympathy he/she knew how to arouse in the pupils' souls"; c. from the volitional point of view: the adaptation "by exercises of will accepted by the pupils, of the deliberate/voluntary mechanism to the exigency of the standards and moral feelings" (see *ibid*., p. 518).

44. Antonescu, *op. cit*., the 4th edition (1943), p. 534.

45. Antonescu, *op. cit*., the 3th edition (1941), p. 509.

46. Antonescu, (1930), pp. 526-27.

47. "It is a blamable evil, I. Gavanescul writes, when the respect of individual freedom is reduced to leaving children in ignorance for the fact that they like playing more than studying" (Gavanescul, p. 123).

48. Iosif I. Gabrea, *Din problemele pedagogiei românesti* /Some of the Problems of the Romanian Pedagogy/ (Bucuresti: Ed. Cultura Româneasca, 1937), pp. 67-8.

49. Antonescu, (1930), pp.531-32.

50. see Antonescu, (1930), p.530; Antonescu, *Educatie si cultura* /Education and Culture/ (the 3rd edition, republished at E.D.P., Bucuresti: 1972),p. 25; Gabrea, pp. 224-27; Ion C. Petrescu, *Scoala si viata* /School and Life/ (Bucuresti: Ed. Casei Scoalelor, 1929), p. 58; Narly, *Metodede educati*e /Educational Methods/ (Bucuresti: Ed. Casei Scoalelor, 1943).

51. Petrescu, pp. 59-60.

52. *Ibid*., p. 61.

53. Antonescu, (1972), p. 24.

54. Petrescu, pp. 62-3.

55. *Ibid*., pp. 66-7.

56. *Ibid*., p. 62.

57. Gabrea, p. 162.

58. *Ibid*., p. 163.

59. Carl R. Rogers, *Libertatea de a învata* /Freedom to learn/ p. 291 apud G. Snyders, *Încotro merg pedagogiile nondirective*? /Whereto the Non-directive Pedagogies? Teacher's Authority and Students' Liberty/ (Bucuresti: E.D.P., 1978), pp. 115-16

60. Carl R. Rogers, *Psihoterapie si relatii umane* /Psychotherapy and Human Relation/,vol. 1, p. 40, apud G. Snyders, (1978), p. 116.

61. How can the function of social integration of education be supported under the conditions of a sick corrupted society, in which means have become targets (in themselves) and people have reached the state of an acute spiritual poverty?

62. John and Evelyn Dewey, *Scoala de mâine* /The School of Tomorrow/ (Ed. Librariei "Principele Mircea"), p. 22.

63. Nicolai Berdiaev, *Adevar si revelatie, Prolegomene la critica revelatiei* /Truth and Revelation. Prolegomenae to the Criticism of Revelation/ (Timisoara: Ed. de Vest, 1993), p. 82.

64. Albert Camus, *Omul revoltat* /Revolted Man/ (Bucuresti:RAO International Publishing Company, 1994), p. 271.

<h1 style="text-align:center">Chapter VIII</h1>
<h1 style="text-align:center">The Promethean Man Eastward or Westward?</h1>

Mihaela Pop

It is already known that the problems which mankind is now facing, at the end of a century and of a millennium, hardly could be considered simple. Europe is trying to find solutions to the consequences of the fall of communism, and especially to the difficult problems of reintegration of the ex-communist countries into the free-market economic system and into the Western-type civilization.

The enthusiasm and satisfaction generated by the destruction of one of the most oppressive totalitarian systems were amazing and strongly motivated. However, the changes the civic way of thinking, the mentalities especially the economic system as well as their evolution towards requirements of the Western system have proven to be more difficult and complicated than they were initially thought to be. Moreover, certain countries, such as Romania, have not yet succeeded in harnessing the initial enthusiasm and energy. Economic reform, as well as administrative and social reforms, are encountering difficulties with long periods of stagnation and various obstacles.

There is also a significant reactionary, conservative force that persists not only on economic levels but also among the intellectuals and thinkers. This conservative attitude is supplied, unfortunately, by significant errors made by political leaders unable to make important decisions and to assume the risks. One could ask oneself why this conservative attitude exists and how it could be diminished in the near future? A possible answer could be given by the modern and contemporary history of Romania.

Historical Conspectus

Looking attentively in historical studies I found that crises and the problem of connecting to the Western civilization existed during the 19th century and at the beginning of the 20th century. The 19th century was marked by the revolutionary movement in 1848 which had a significant consequence for Romanians: the union of two Romanian provinces in 1859 and the foundation of a national State based on the European model. Economic consequences as well as cultural and social changes marked the end of that century.

In the 20th century, after World War I, the necessity of a more accentuated capitalist development became obvious. Then as now most intellectuals were oriented in two important directions of thinking on the national problems:

(1) those who desired a rapid integration of the new national state into the community of the Western nations; and

(2) those who were interested in maintaining national identity and in promoting the rural way of life that was considered the only one capable of preserving the ancient Romanian traditions. The sympathizers with the latter cause considered that the Romanian State could be manifestly present in the European context only by its national specificity, an idea inherited from the romantic period of the 18th and 19th centuries and initiated by the German thinking about *Der Volksgeist*.

As a consequence, the 1920s and 1930s were marked by the publication of numerous studies trying to define this national specificity. The studies were written by important thinkers who became, at the end of the 30s, spiritual leaders of a social movement that gained a political status and much sympathy among the people. It was an extremist movement of the political right, Legionarism. In the beginning, it was a cultural movement, understood as an extension of Romanian traditionalism.

One of its spiritual leaders was Nichifor Crainic (1889-1972) who elaborated the theses of orthodoxy and published them in the cultural journal, *The Thinking (Gandirea)*. Another spiritual leader was Nae Ionescu (1888-1940), philosopher and professor at the University of Bucharest. He was one of the leaders of the anti-rationalist movement and had a great influence on the generation of young intellectuals who started their carrier at the end of the 20s. Ionescu proclaimed the destruction of positivism and asserted firmly that the world must be led by forces that should reject man's cognitive capacities. Reality was, for him, action. It is religion or a mystic attitude that realize the purpose of all humankind; through them, one can understand the world. Orthodoxy was, in Ionescu's thinking, the real religion and the only one adapted to the way of life of the Romanian peasant. He considered that anybody could become Catholic or Protestant; but he had no doubt that, if somebody is really a Romanian, he was born Eastern Orthodox. Orthodoxy is "a natural way of being in the world" that cannot be acquired by various types of religious practices. The real Romanian citizen lives in a village which is the center of the orthodox spirituality; he should avoid town life because it denaturalized the spontaneous, natural way of living.

Nae Ionescu succeeded in gathering around his personality a group of outstanding young people who afterwards became famous as cultural personalities: Emil Cioran (1911-1995), the philosopher of man's tragic destiny, M. Eliade(1907-1986), the famous historian of religions and Mircea Vulcanescu (1904-1952), philosopher and sociologist. Many of them collaborated on the cultural journal, *Criterion.*

They had no doubt that they were the missionaries of a new spirituality. They cited Swedenborg, Kierkegaard, Sestov, Heidegger, Unamuno, Berdiaev; they were interested in orphism, theosophy, Oriental mysticism and ancient religions; they talked about the providential mission of their generation; and they criticized capitalist mediocrity and materialism with all its forms. Their mission was to realize the unity of the Romanian soul and to determine the spiritual reconstruction of Romania even as their forerunners had achieved the political union. Their desire to push Romania away from its lethargic state of inactivity was obvious. E. Cioran1 wrote that he felt humiliated by the fact that he was a citizen of a country living like a plant, in a vegetal manner. Romania had nothing to say to Europe for a thousand years. Like Ionescu and Crainic, they were attracted to the Romanian village, the place of the Romanian spirituality; they, too, appreciated the role of Orthodoxy in the modelling of the national experience.

During the 30s, Crainic and Ionescu changed the emphasis of their movement from a religious and cultural attitude to a political one. They expressed their admiration for Fascist politics, especially in the Italian form, and made "autochthonism", defined as a combination of ethnicity and religion, the spiritual product of their personal version of a corporatist state, named "ethnocracy".

The accent on ethnicity and the admiration of the Fascist movement made Carainic change his focus from the venerated East to Rome. In Mussolini's Italy he found the model of an active state based on Christian spirituality that could efficiently combine historical tradition and political experience without the exaggerations of capitalist liberalism. Byzantium was replaced by Rome. This new type of orthodoxy attracted the younger generation, who "became activists by

desperation", as Vulcanescu named them. Ideologically they opposed the main group who were looking for interior harmony in an almost idyllic atmosphere. An interesting aspect of this cultural and political movement is the fact that they wanted, in the same measure as their antagonists, to connect Romania to the coordinates of Western civilization. Its solution was based on emphasizing national specificity and posturing as if afraid of losing the national identity while integrating into the European realm through a process that seems quite similar to our contemporary false problems concerning globalization. The problem discussed so much at this turn of the millennia is that of the danger of losing national identity during the process of globalization; this problem also concerned our forerunners. They did desperate things not because they believed in what they did but because they wanted to believe in them, says Vulcanescu.2

The opposition, having liberal conceptions and sympathies, promoted and supported the idea that all sorts of traditionalisms should be abandoned because they were considered the main obstacle against modernization. To maintain at any cost a rural culture, to eulogize the peasant life, to idealize it as well as the Orthodox religion, which was declared to be the unique preserver of Romanian specificity, were not aspects not appreciated by the non-traditaionalists.

Among the representatives of interwar cultural life, who joined together in order to attack the extremist position led by Crainic and his Orthodoxist colleagues, we can mention: Eugen Lovinescu (1881-1943), the main literary critics of that period, and Mihai Ralea (1896-1964), who was the leader of an influential cultural journal, *Viata Romaneasca (Romanian Life)*, one of the spiritual leaders of the moment and a supporter of the pro-European movement. They denounced Orthodoxy as a serious obstacle to express the national specificity just because of its fundamental Byzantine-Slavic characteristic. Another liberal personality of the period was Stefan Zeletin (1882-1934), a philosopher and sociologist.

Lovinescu and Zeletin, as well as Ralea, believed that Orthodox Church did not serve the national interests because it would have denied its proper Romanian substance. Lovinescu named it "the most active ferment of the orientalization of Romania" and considered it an "obscurantist religion stuck in dogmas and formalism"3 which had imposed on the Romanian people a foreign language, (Slavon) and had thrown the people into the "Slavic sea" which had almost swallowed them. Into this situation came the first Romanian thinker on the European level: Dimitrie Cantemir (1673-1723).

Enclosed in our dogmas, nothing that was happening in Europe could reach our territory. While the world was rebuilding its bases, nothing was growing in our country; we kept staying hidden in our small pit-houses of wood and reed.4

The author discovered the positive influence on our culture and civilization caused by foreign representatives of the Catholic and Protestant Churches. The first religious translations were published in Transylvania, at Brasov (1482) by Protestants.

In Moldavia, the eastern province of Romania, the political, economic and cultural relations with Poland from the 15th to 19th centuries allowed a more profound penetration of the Catholic way of thinking. The Moldavian historiographers visited the old and famous Polish universities such as the Jagellonian University in Cracow and learned the Latin language. By doing so, these intellectuals were able to understand and to interest themselves in proving the Roman origin of the Romanian people. At the same time, they promoted the colloquial written Romanian language among the Moldavian *boyars*.

During the 18th century, the Romanian people in Transylvania united with the Roman Catholic Church and, under the influence of the European Enlightenment, they proved and increased their interest in knowledge and the scientific proof of the Latin origin of our language.

Taking into consideration these aspects, as well as others, E. Lovinescu considered that Romanian society has the obligation to re-direct the political, economic and cultural axis from the East towards the West which is a radical change from *ex oriente lux* to *ex occidente lux*.5

In order to make this significant change, Lovinescu considered that a modification of the mindset should be performed before making any economic changes. His main idea was that the ideological revolution precedes the economic one. However, today, our actual situation seems to tend the other way. A group of people from political associations and civil society consider that first a changed mentality is necessary, but under the pressure of time the first step should be economic, followed or accompanied by a cultural one.

Lovinescu considered that the only chance to achieve this purpose was to synchronize Romanian society to the West through a process of imitation. The process should take place first at a psychological level. The author used Gabriel Tardes's conception of imitation.6 The end of the 19th century demonstrated that imitation was useful and successful. It was implemented from the higher to lower levels. It is based on the main sociological idea: imitation of a superior civilization followed by an assimilation process. In this situation, the economic and political forces that effected the change and synchronized the Romanian society to the West, were the liberal forces and the liberal bourgeoisie.

Another pro-Occidental thinker was S. Zeletin.7 In *The Romanian Bourgeoisie*8 Zeletin offered an applied, rational and well-argumented study of the imperative of developing the Romanian capitalist society. Zeletin was an advocate of modernization with his vision of corresponding to the facts. He observed that even inside the peasantry changes had been made which were seen as natural and irreversible. The only solution for Romania is to increase and stimulate development of life in all domains.

Zeletin also noticed the existence of a paradox at the psychological level: if the liberal economy promotes a renewed Western spirit within the economic domain, the cultural one is significantly anti-bourgeois. Thus, during the interwar period, a relationship could be achieved between the progressive economic and the conservative cultural processes. Zeletin was referring to the forms of nationalism and xenophobia which he considered real and dangerous obstacles to the effort of "building a modern capitalist nation".

These suggestions point out the Romanian situation during the interwar period which seem similar, *mutatis mutandis*, to the situation at the move into the next century. There is, of course, a significant distinction: the current economic situation is disastrous, causing serious cultural and ideological consequences. The great similarity between these two periods is based on the wish of the majority that Romania be reintegrated into the European civilization in order to be able to participate in the process of globalization.

Universalism or Individualism

In analyzing the cultural ideas and their evolution, I consider Romania to be passing through a period of crises where major political phenomena make it necessary to rethink certain ideological and cultural aspects.

What roles should Romania play? What attitude should it adopt? These are actual political problems. But how does the Romanian citizen respond to the need of adapting to the Western

mentality? How much is he or she prepared for this harsh impact of a significantly different civilization and mentality? These are questions which the cultured man should answer if interested in the formative aspect of cultural interaction.

A possible answer can be found, once again, by studying our forerunners. In the following pages, I will refer to the cultural thought of Tudor Vianu, namely, on the cultural condition and its civilizing role in our century.9

Vianu was interested not only in the philosophy of culture, but also in its sociological dimension, teaching the first courses of the sociology of culture in Romania at the University of Bucharest in 1933. Culture is a dynamic force which he recognized as a force that activates the spirit and has a teleologic role. Culture promotes man in "his role of self-creator of his destiny".10 Therefore, culture is an act of human freedom; the man of culture does not accept passively the society in which he lives, but he tries to change it; thus, culture becomes a social phenomenon. It is necessary to assimilate, transmit and change culturally. As these phenomena take place only inside society, it is obviously necessary to know the situation of culture at a certain moment: its characteristics, the basic ideas which govern it and the direction of its progress.

It is necessary to know and analyze the cultural values, how they act, and evolve their rank in a hierarchy. Approaching culture from a philosophical point of view, one can also understand certain past phenomena as well as predict the future.

At 32 years of age, Vianu wrote *About Rationalism and Historism*,11 in which he described the entire evolution of philosophical and cultural ideas between the 17th and the 19th centuries. He remarked that the passage from the 17th to the 18th century brought Europe a significant change of philosophical perspective from the general and universal to the particular and individual. This passage is not sudden and is specific to all the domains of spiritual life.

From Rousseau to Hegel, European thinking traverses several peaks. The author, Vianu, critically analyzed the role of reason. Starting with Kant and Rousseau, the supremacy of reason established by 17th century Cartesian classicism is strongly eroded. This type of thinking, structured on the universal, which is static, narrows during the following century. Rousseau and Condorcet change the focus towards a certain dynamism which points up the role played by the particular individual.

Herder and Humboldt preached a new cultural ideal—*the individual soul*. Until that time, humankind had been the only bearer of culture, the Romantics considered that man as an individual to be the cultural agent. Kant considered humanity to be a bearer of culture. For Kant humanity encompassed a quality had by every man; the purpose of humanity was continual progress. On the contrary, Herder considered the individualizing process to be very varied and to cause various individual cultures. Humanity was, for him, a harmonious fulfillment of all possibilities; the purpose of the whole of humankind should be what each man is and can become. Herder stressed that the human purpose is not only the progress of rational thinking, but also a harmonious development of all human qualities and values. If at a political level the state was for Kant the framework where the individual could live according to the rational imperatives. Herder rejects the universalism in nature that demands that life should be harmoniously developed under local, individual conditions.

Humbold deepens the meaning of these ideas. He agrees with the liberal attitude on an almost negative influence of the state which is supposed to assure the protection and safety of its citizens, but he rejects any interference to the privacy of each person. "The highest ideal of men's co-existence is the one which would assure each man the possibility to fulfil himself from himself and only for himself."12

The new idea that dominated in the early 19th century was that mankind divided into particular cultures without obvious connections among them. This new historicist concept of culture was Herder's most important innovation.

But Hegel is the one who achieves the accord between the two conceptions which had been on opposite sides until then: the universalist rationalism and the individualizing historicism. Reason (Spirit) is, for Hegel, a principle immanent not only to general reality, but also to history. Considering that Reason should be autonomous and its substance is freedom, Hegel obtains the interiorization of the idea of freedom which is not a social but interior and metaphysical. When the Spirit, passing through a step-by-step self-awareness, realizes itself in the form of the State, this social form is the embodiment of spirit or freedom.

The individual becomes free when the reasons of his will coincide with the reasons of the Spirit as it is manifested in the form of the State. Thus, Hegel succeeds in combining rationalism (which gives a unique and progressive sense to history) with historicism (individual appreciation of originality at certain moments). The rationalist philosophy of culture supposes a unique progress of humankind towards a universal ideal of domination. Historicism distinguishes among various cultures due to their originality; the ideal is not the progress of humanity, but a harmonious development of individuality.

Nietzsche criticized the historicist and etatist Hegelian vision as it appeared at the end of the 19th century in the studies of certain thinkers, like David Strauss. The basic idea was that reason completely develops itself throughout history, thereby clarifying in this way the sense of culture. The result was an agreement on the status of facts, a satisfaction that could cause non-activism and the consent for the idea of sure and continuous progress. Strauss becomes, in Nietzsche's opinion, the model of the cultural Philistine (*Bildungs Philister*). The only solution for Nietzsche is the super-historical attitude after having taken an ahistorical position.

The super-historical man does not accept his fulfillment as a continuous becoming, but considers that the world ends and reaches its purpose in each particular moment. As a consequence, life is considered from an absolute point of view. An historicism assures us of the universe in which the super-history is possible; it gives us the belief in the absolute value of creation. This super-historical attitude can be achieved only in art and religion, for science can study only processes of becoming. Hence, Nietzsche established an artistic and religious ideal for culture.

Nietzsche definitely exceeded the progressist rationalism of the 18th century. He also opened the modern cultural crisis which had long been evolving. The sense and purpose of culture would no longer depend, for Nietzsche, on the fulfillment of reason, but on the intensification of the creative forces oriented towards the absolute and eternal being. Each people and period have their ideal generated by the specificity of their metaphysical conscience. Each culture is an individual totality.

By the end of the 19th century the conclusion was that modern culture as a whole could be systematized in a plurality of types, but it did not tend towards an accomplished unity from the historical point of view. In Nietzsche's view real cultural creation aims at the absolute through an ahistoricism; only when reaching the immobility of the eternity, can we discover the mystery of absolute creation. A logical consequence, remarks Vianu, would be that the human creation should belong to an ontological vision and not to a vision submitted to the process of becoming. But Nietzsche had another view: he considered that we could not feel the creative impulse in the position of eternity because human creation loses its sense in comparison to the Absolute Being. The self-knowledge, diving into the depth of our particularity, should represent the basis of culture when desiring to achieve such creativity; self-knowledge should be a premise as well as a result.13

The transition from Rousseau's thinking to Nietzsche's is a dialectical process. Where Rousseau doubts the existence of a value of civilization and requires the rules of human nature, Herder considers that natural laws do not operate in human society, but only at the level of individual cultural existence, marking thus the rise of historicism. Nietzsche has another conception of culture which is based on the philosophical category of action. Cultural action (deed) is a creative human supplement by which thereby reality completes its meaning. Culture completes nature, which receives human qualities. Nietzsche stimulated cultural originality by stressing an activist conception in which culture is the completion of nature.

Autonomy of Values or Crisis of Modern Culture?

Nietzsche's vision of human society is based on the idea of a large crisis. In fact, a series of thinkers (Nietzsche, Kierkegaard, Marx) thought that human thinking confronted a period of crisis.14

Vianu finds an explanation even at an axiological level which receives and develops the fundamental idea analyzed in the above-mentioned article. He discovers15 that an obvious differentiation of values takes place in modern culture, generating a real autonomy of values. In fact, this is the great conquest of modern culture. If certain values had been potentia hierarchy during the Medieval Age, with Classicism and Enlightenment imposing a subordination of the other values, then during the modern period the consciousness of the irreducibility of values caused can increase of their individual freedom and autonomy. The consequences of this autonomy were:

1. the impossibility for the values-bearer to cover the totality of life: Each individual has the liberty to live under his proper value;
2. the suppression of the center of culture: The modern man has always a peripheral position as he subordinates to an autonomous value. He seems to live in an inner vacuum as he is not oriented towards a significant center.

Analyzing the trials to get back to a centered culture (the theories proposed by Comte, Berdiaev, Maritain), Vianu draws the conclusion that this return is no longer possible because "irreversibility is a fundamental characteristic of the historical evolution". If processes are reversible in nature, they are not in history. Any summing up of values makes impossible any return (which supposes the elimination of those values summed up afterwords).

This idea should be taken into account even now. There are thinkers who propose a reorganization of civil society, a moral behavior based on the ideas prevalent before World War II. This process would suppose the elimination from the psychological data of the post-communist society of all the aspects accumulated during the fifty years of communism. It is really an illusion to think that somebody could wipe out such an accumulation, nor am I convinced that it would be a good idea! This experience of a part of the world did affect the psychic structure in a certain manner; it is an experience that should not be forgotten. Besides its tragedies and bad influences, it offered new visions on human existence, namely, special psychological attitudes that have to be recorded. They belong to the history of mankind for certain geographical regions.

Coming back to Vianu's conception, he wonders if the cultivated man subordinated to a unique value can or cannot express and reflect the entire unity of life. The Romanian thinker believes that distinction and differentiation can contribute to regaining the totality.

The creative act, Kant considered, does not come from outside; it is an inner, spiritual, creative excess; it is a psychic synthesis. In addition, the soul is a teleological structure in Dilthey's vision. Thus, the unity of purpose assures the form of the life of the soul. That purpose is a value. The teleological structure of the soul, in the gestalt vision, is in a hierarchy and is led by a super value but is capable of cooperating with other values. Taking into account all these aspects, Vianu proposes a new activist attitude towards culture. Cultural activism proposes as many aims as it can assume; it understands culture as a deed of human freedom; the creative act is an expression of freedom.

Having in mind Max Scheler's conception of human types specific for various cultural periods, Vianu considers that the type of man who thinks responsibly should be the model for this new activist moment of culture. The Promethean myth and type of man would be, in Vianu's vision, the embodiment of this active and creative attitude.16

Vianu discovers the presence of the Promethean motive in Romantic poetry and modern philosophy and makes an analysis from the perspective of this motive. He thus discovers that Prometheus himself, as a mythological god, appears in works of some of the romantic poets: Shaftesbury who compared the artist to Prometheus, Goethe who did not finish his *Prometheus* , Rousseau, Shelley and Byron or Goethe again with his *Faust*, because even the pact with evil contains obvious Promethean elements. There are also Promethean aspects in Kant's and Fichte's philosophy. The latter insisted on the Promethean dimension of the theory of culture. This is the practice of all our spiritual abilities in order to reach a complete freedom. To make the world conform to man, to change things according to human conception—this is a Promethean vision.

In this way, Vianu's activism is not limited to an ethical value, but is governed by the religious value of love for others, by the Promethean aspiration towards the fulfillment of human destiny. That is why, in his opinion, the Romanian culture has been in a continuous process of adaptation. Revolutionary and democratic rationalism proposed the ideal of national freedom for the Romanian Provinces; the process of occidentalization took place as a result of this cultural rationalism, doubled through the process of becoming conscious of creative freedom. Vianu considers that the need to find and maintain national identity is not solved by a continuous theoretical redefinition—"We are what our deeds are". It is not the historicism which offers us definitions about our own national identity, but the facts which the cultural deeds can represent.17

I consider this conception as a plausible answer even for our current situations. The model of Promethean humanity has been actualized for two centuries especially at a global level. The problem of cultural and national identity in the context of globalization takes us back to a historicist and individualist vision that Vianu suggested we overcome even in 1944. We must consider that the interwar period was a kind of negative, catastrophic example of violence and brutal individualist definitions that dominated Europe, encouraging political extremist actions and imposing totalitarian governments.

The individualist definitions of separation and opposition are dangerous any time and anywhere as they generate extremist movements. An opposite attitude, based on collaboration and mutual understanding, could be supported by the activist model and the Promethean man.

Notes

1. E. Cioran, *Schimbarea la fata a Romaniei* (*The transformation of Romania)* (Bucharest: Publishing House Vremea, 1936), pp. 7-58.

2. M. Vulcaescu, *Tendintele tinerei generatii (Tendencies of the young generation), Lumea noua (New world)*, nr. 14 (Bucharest, 1934).

3. E. Lovinescu, *Istoria civilizatiei romane moderne (History of Romanian modern civilization),* vol. I (Bucharest: Publishing House Ancora, 1924-1926), pp. 5-10.

4. *Ibid*., p. 10.

5. This problem is also our contemporary problem after the political events of December 1989.

6. G. Tardes, *Les lois de l'imitation (The laws of imitation)* (Paris, 1890).

7. He received a Ph.D. in philosophy at Erlangen, Germany; specializing in English philosophy and also in economics; he wrote a great many articles on the economics.

8. Stefan Zeletin, *Burghezia romana (The Romanian Bourgeoisie)* (Bucharest: Publishing House Cultura National, 1925).

9. Tudor Vianu (1897-1964) is one of the most valuable personalities of our culture during very different political periods of our history. He was an aesthetician, a philosopher of culture and values; he worked as a professor at the department of Aesthetics at the University of Bucharest. After World War II and especially during the first period of the communist government, he was Director of the Library of the Academy and an official representative in various international structures. Having received a Ph.D. from Germany, Vianu was one of the important cultural voices in the Romanian culture for a large period of the 20th century.

10. T. Vianu, *Sociologia culturii (Sociology of Culture),* in *Opere (Complete Works)*, vol. 8 (Bucharest: Publishing House Minerva, 1979), p. 351.

11. T. Vianu, *Conceptia rationalista si istorica a culturii (The Rationalist and Historicist Conception of Culture)*, in *Arhiva pentru stiinte si reforma sociala* (*Archive for Sciences and Social Reform*) (Bucharest, 1929).

12. Apud. T. Vianu, *op. cit.* in *Opere (Complete Works)* vol. 8 (Bucharest: Publishing House Minerva, 1979), p. 35.

13. *Ibid.,* p. 42.

14. H. Arendt, *Between Past and Future,* (*La crise de la culture)* (Paris: Gallimard, 1972), pp. 58-121.

15. T. Vianu, *Introducere in teoria valorilor (Introduction in the Theory of Values)*, lin *Opere (Complete Works)*, vol. 8 (Bucharest: Minerva, 1979), pp. 60-130.

16. T. Vianu, *Sociologia culturii (Sociology of Culture),* in *Opere (Complete Works)*, vol. 8 (Bucharest: Minerva, 1979), pp. 410-427.

17. T. Vianu, *Filosofia culturii (Philosophy of Culture)*, in *Opere, (Complete Works)*, vol. 8, p. 311.

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Chapter IX

Paradigms of "Junimea" in Education for a Civil Society

Carmen-Maria Mecu & Nicolae Mecu

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Preliminary Remarks

We live at a time of reorganization of the Romanian society. We try to find out the aims and course for economic and cultural progress. We are still recovering from communism but wish to rebuild the civil society and to open towards other cultures. Today's world is reconsidering its values and wishes to revitalize commmunity life by bridging the gap between post-modernism and tradition. (1)

Civil society—for whose description George F. McLean appeals to Aristotle—implies governing as an exercise of the human freedom. Thus, inside of such governing, all initiatives come from individuals belonging to its groups and sub-groups. It also implies communication and solidarity of an individual with other members of his group and participation or subsidiary of those groups within the whole.

Therefore, communication is one of the mechanisms to form the civil society. The damaging of communication during communism has made relations among individuals become precarious and uncertain and the society becomes permeable to power. (2)

According to Françoise Thom, the "langue de bois" (3) blocks the way to communicate ideas as central planning blocks the way for the goods.

Why Junimea?

We have looked for those paradigms of authentic communication within the activity of the Junimea literary association. One of the reasons why we have chosen this association is the following one: all totalitarian regimes (or authoritarian ones) in the modern history of Romania definitely rejected this cultural model (tried to restrict its influence respectively), for fear of the destabilization of that dictatorship and authority respectively.

The Junimea cultural association (its name comes from the Latin "iuvenis"—young) was set up in 1863-1864 during Romania's transition from a patriarchal/agrarian society to the modern/European society of market economy and democracy. The aim of this association was to adjust the Romanian society to the newly established Western-type institutions set up in a great number and in a very short time. In other words the imported "patterns" had to be adjusted to the local "background". Junimea relied on this foundation to forge a type of culture able to stand up to the European standards and remain nonetheless Romanian as well as European, specific and universal. (4)

Whenever there has been encountered in Romania a crisis of values, the humanist intellectuals appealed to the spirit of Junimea. It would be worth reviewing the most relevant moments of such crises. Between 1930-1940 the Romanian political life witnesses the coming to power of the Extreme Right promoting a fanatic and intolerant fascist-like nationalism. In this context, the greatest literary critic of the time, E. Lovinescu, makes a personal stand: he writes several books on Junimea and its founder, Titu Maiorescu. (5) These books are not only research works in the field of literature but also a memento meant to remind us of a model able to bring all extremes to

a balance. We quote hereunder from his monography entitled T. Maiorescu (1940): "At the criss-cross, Romanian culture keeps vigil now as ever his illuminating finger: this is the way". (6)

During the military regime of marshal Ion Antonescu (1941-1944), the literary critics educated in the tradition of Junimea and of Titu Maiorescu always made a stand against the danger of misjudgement of values and subordination of the esthetic criterion in the study and promotion of literature. "Back to Maiorescu!" or "Go forward from Maiorescu!" became slogans of the time in Romanian culture.

The most relevant period for the importance of the Junimea association in the Romanian cultural history is highlighted by the first two decades of the communist regime forced on the country after World War II, especially during 1948-1960. Junimea literature and theoretical thinking, as well as their posterity, were either totally denied, banned from libraries, from all curricula—i.e. Maiorescu's works—or selectively published and dogmatically interpreted, quite restrictively and falsified (e.g. Mihai Eminescu, the greatest Romanian poet). The regime imposes labels as: "reactionary", "instruments of the exploiting classes", "idealists", "cosmopolitans", "bourgeois" (all having a negative connotation at the time). After 1960 takes place the so-called "ideological defrost". Actually this marks the insidious passage from a Bolshevik regime to a national-communist one. Under the circumstances the Power advances the idea of "turning to good account our literary heritage". This syntagm used by the communist officials of the time betrays the endeavour of the regime to strengthen its position and become popular through tradition. Despite the permanent "critical" and incomplete "turning to good account" during communism, the intellectuals took some profit by waging the "battle" during the first half of the '60s to re-establish the values Junimea had promoted. Once having recognized such values they proceeded in order to lift the ban over the others or to publish "uncensored" works.

Therefore Junimea and Maiorescu are the exponents of this process of revival of tradition. Moreover, for the writers of the '60s (the most brilliant post-war Romanian generation of artists), to relate to such traditional values—starting with those of Junimea—meant to start again their dialogue with Europe. To choose Junimea (i.e. its spirit) and to choose its posterity—for instance the kind of literary and esthetic criticism as that of E. Lovinescu and other literary critics between the World Wars—actually was viewed as an act of a dissident and a conspirator.

We can claim the aforesaid since such an act implied to dissociate literature from ideology and it is widely known the regime demanded that only "partisan" and "militant" literary works should be created. To cut a long story short: all literature had to praise the Power. For the Romanian intellectuals oppressed by the communist regime, Junimea values became a 'lucky charm' and an antidote against such slavery and mystification of the status of arts and literature. First and foremost, through Maiorescu, Junimea succeeded in 1870 to dissociate values and succcessfully claimed the autonomy of the esthetic value as compared with others (i.e. scientific, ethical, political, etc). Moreover, Junimea had imposed the concept of literature independent from political power.

After 1970, the Romanian national communism faked the so-called "protochronism". As Bolsheviks before them, who had proclaimed Russian and Soviet priorities in all fields of activity, the "protochronists" searched in the past of national culture for all sorts of signs anticipating the world discoveries and inventions. Under the circumstances the Romanian humanist intellectuals would relate again to the Junimea model. This time they would use—either openly or implicitely—the criterion of Junimea: "patriotism within the limits of truth". (This syntagm summarizes the fundamental requirement of Junimea: evaluate the Romanian works according to criteria applicable for European and world culture.)

The regime encouraged the group of "protochronist" writers. This group accused the Writers' Union—that was itself a feeble model of a hypothetical civil society, promoting esthetic evaluation criteria of literary works—of being "cosmopolitan", having "relations with the Western world" and especially of "high treason" and having relations with "the spies" from the "Free Europe" broadcasting.

The opening to the world and the respect of values to be traced back to Junimea would again face intolerance and confusing values and criteria. We think that the above brief historical outlook is sufficient to define the value of identity word (7) used by Junimea's representatives, as well as its impact in forging personalities and groups of intellectuals. Would it be possible to do or repeat today Junimea's experience entirely? Definitely not. Nevertheless one can experiment hic et nunc with models of communication introduced in the Romanian tradition or perfected by this association of intellectuals.

Authority and "Critical Spirit"

Junimea establishes a model of freedom of association and of non-bureaucratic efficiency. During its weekly meetings attendance was unrestricted. No matter who could attend them or submit a literary work; everybody could take the floor dealing with literary, philosophical or scientific topics. The slogan of the association was: "Entre qui veut, reste qui peut". This slogan is a label for freedom and value. Only those who did not get bored and/or those who could face the unwavering arrows of the then-famous Junimea critical spirit would "remain". Junimea representatives were acknowledged as such not based on a written pledge but in view of their participation in the activities of the association. The "banquets" (annual festivals celebrating the setting up of Junimea association) were as informal, as vivid and as ludicrous as its meetings. Still, the guests were selected: only those who had regularly attended the weekly meetings were invited since only those had proved to be a member of Junimea. No reserved places. It ran in the tradition of the association that each participant should create a humourous work about another or other members of the association. No exception was allowed: even the mentor, Titu Maiorescu, who was called "the fools' father". Somehow these banquets were for the association as the satire and carnival were for the Greeks and Romans as well as for the Western mediaeval world: a "world upside-down", where hierarchies were reversed and one could mock at everything. Actually, even ordinary meetings were contaminated by the virus of the carnival that had been a purifying and self-adjusting element for the association.

During the weekly meetings poetry, prose, literary critical works, dissertations were read. Especially the last three gave way to discussions on principles:

Since for prose we could not use the principle of the author said—the poet was not to explain his poems by "translating" them into prose —(our note): his opinions should be considered in the view of general principles. Maiorescu used to set forth—as he was reading one of his works—theories that called for counter-theories. Ardent debates of principles would follow, very instructive for the young participants, who were very interested in them, as Iacob Negruzzi,—one of the "pillars" of the association, remembers in his mémoires. (8)

Junimea counted among its members some authorities but always rational authorities (according to E. Fromm). (9) Among them, there were T. Maiorescu, the literary critic, and Vasile Alecsandri, the poet. Though respected, they were also criticized whenever necessary. The critics, when younger, had to be worthy members of the association. V. Alecsandri—a famous and respected poet of the time—benefited from this critical climate of Junimea. I. Slavici—talented

prose writer and objective recaller of the association—mentions that Alecsandri's poetry readings during Junimea meetings had been "decisive". The same can be said about Eminescu and Caragiale—who were to become the greatest Romanian poet and the greatest Romanian playwright respectively —when they started to attend the weekly meetings:

While reading, Alecsandri would occasionally stare at one of us, often at Eminescu, as if he was asking:" What do you think?".

"Well!", would say either Eminescu or Caragiale, "It is too good! It would be a shame not to brush a stroke here and there to make it just perfect!" (10)

Practical Discourse

Apart from the weekly meetings (debates of the works read by the authors and also debates about philosophical, esthetical, ethical, historic, ethnological, political economy, etc topics), Junimea also had a practical discourse manifested in: 1. public conferences to promote national and universal culture; 2. alternative handbooks and other books needed at school (e.g. *Logica* / Logics by T. Maiorescu) printed in their own printing house; 3. hard criticism of the orthography advanced by the Academy to be replaced by an alternative one to be later on validated by practice and finally approved by the Academy itself; 4. the need for an anthology of Romanian modern poetry to be selected on esthetic value; 5. Junimea welfare members sponsored the poor members to study abroad; 6. since 1867, the association published a monthly review of culture: "*Convorbiri Literare*" ("Literary Conversations"), soon to become the most important publication in the field of culture.

Call for Tolerance

Junimea literary criticism is basically a polemical one (but respecting the rules of the polemic, i.e. debate, but not *ad hominem* attack). Moreover it is a tolerant spirit, that is understanding in diversity:

Junimea of Jassy was (...) a private association whose members loved sincerely the literature and the science. By sheer chance its first members had quite versatile knowledge according to their tastes so that they could complete one another and still understand one another. Still the most vivid debates—free from personal interests—drove them together and they became friends. Gradually their number increased and their diversty made them open to such abstract studies (...). This openness enabled that most diverse opinions came to life... (11)

Maiorescu goes on and exemplifies with pairs of opposite and still complementary personalities. Eminescu, in his turn, defines Jinimea as an orchestra where each instrument plays its tune, so different and yet part of the whole.

Diversity also implied different religious beliefs and races, and different social status of its members—some were rich landlords, others were employees of the state, some were just literate peasants as was the case of Ion Creanga who was a primary school teacher and a writer of genius.

Tolerance is based on non-superimposition of criteria: 'national' does not automatically means 'valuable'. The guilt and the merit do not polarize in a Manichaean way into the dichotomy 'we' and 'they', the "new speak" of the totalitarian regimes (12). Junimea members had strong patriotic feelings and that is why among them we find fierce supporters of nationality (for instance

the group named "Those Three Romanians" but also great writers as Eminescu and Creanga). Nevertheless there is also a non-Manichaean understanding in viewing the relations with national minorities. Stress should be laid on the fact that, in Parliament, the law for naturalization of foreigners, Jews in particular (quite numerous in Moldavia) is strongly supported by the leading members of Junimea such as P. P. Carp and T. Maiorescu. The latter makes subtle differences in the line of individual and collective rights and liberties as follows:

The great number of foreigners in our country, Jews in particular, is a symptom of a serious evil, and no one can deny this. But nothing is more ruthless than to attack the symptom and forget the evil! Our evil is economic under-development and the ignorance of the Romanian people.(...). The Jews have facilitated here the commercial activity, and the schools of France and Germany shared with us the idea of culture. We could do without these foreign ancillaries only when we ourselves could put in their place our own national fund.(...) Until then, to persecute the foreigners would mean to set free the barbarian spirit to fight against the intelligent one. (...) "Nationality"— in its worthy and valid meaning—cannot be a pretext for laziness and barbarism... (12)

For Junimea, the aim of any government would be "the progress of human civilization by means of tolerance and science". Intolerance is blamed whenever and wherever it arises. The stand taken by political representatives and Orthodox priests (versus Catholics) against tolerance was significant, and Maiorescu opposed their intolerance:

There were—writes Maiorescu in 1868—teachers in our public system and men of the so-called liberal party to become agents (promoters) of persecution, there were priests boasting in public assemblies their hatred against their neighbour who had other religious or political beliefs. Both had forgotten that science and liberty focus on humanitarian tolerance, they had forgotten that the Christian religion is based on unconditional love of everybody. (13)

Tolerance is moreover a premise for solidarity and subsidiarity. Here Junimea tradition focused on the major issues of post-modern society: confrontations between "outsiders" and "supporters", between "minority" and "majority", among various religious beliefs, among age groups, between sexes, etc. To learn the rules of tolerance by living according to Junimea's experience may become an educational aim for the civil society in Romania today.

Dissociation of Values: Enlightened Patriotism

As above mentioned, Junimea's critical spirit dissociates values and criteria of evaluation. This dissociation is significantly expressed by the syntagm "nationality (patriotism) within the limits of truth". Eminescu synthetized this principle in an article published in 1870 to defend the "cosmopolitan spirit" of Junimea against the attacks of "nationalists":

Something false does not become true just because it is national; something 'unjust' does not become 'just' because it is national; something 'ugly' does not become 'beautiful' because it is national; something 'evil' does not become 'good' because it is national (...) Our language, as objective as it is, would be beautiful and sweet for everybody (J. Scherr, *Allg. Literaturgeschichte*) The Law acknowledges well-known truths and therefore it is valid for everybody; finally, that objective, 'good-side' in ourselves would acknowledge it as such, and every good-willed individual would do the same. (14)

We can read here the major desideratum of great writers and theorists of Junimea: search for truth. Eminescu himself would write these verses: "Truth, this is my real calling", and would cry for the just word: "Where on earth could I discover the most truthful word of all?" Thus, between the individual and collective truth or between the national and universal one, there is no gap but compatibility and inclusion: unity within difference and multiplicity within unity.

Individual and Community Interests: "Impersonal Enthusiasm"

The civil society of our times cannot be closed, lacking the dialogue with other countries and cultures, and far from exchanges based on compatible values and currencies. This idea can be traced back to "dissociation of values" promoted by Junimea. Moreover, we can acknowledge here a model of openness towards the values of other cultures and experimenting them during the developing Romanian democracy duriingt Junimea's time (i.e. the second half of the 19th century). It is worth mentioning now one of the greatest and most complex Junimea personalities, Ioan Slavici (1848-1925) who spread the ideals of the association in Transylvania. In 1881 he founded in Sibiu a prestigious cultural magazine, "*Tribuna*" ("The Tribune"). This would be, beyond the mountains, for the Romanians who lived then within the borders of the Austro-Hungarian empire, the 'front gate' open for Junimea's spirit. Slavici is an interesting and efficient example of a personality facilitating the influence/speading of a cultural doctrine on/into the public spirit. A writer by vocation, he also was interested in ethics and pedagogy, or rather he was born for ethics and pedagogy and a writer at the same time. To teach people how to live happily, this was his ideal. His literary works (short stories, novels, plays) would serve the same ultimate aim. In other words we could say that his aim was social pedagogy.

It is worth laying due stress on the fact that being a association of élite, Junimea's audience belonged to the educated layer of the Romanian society. Its discourse was mainly to be held in an auditorium of a university or academiy. Many members of Junimea were professors. Thus, Slavici—as well as Ion Creanga, the folk story-teller of genius—would bring a complementary element since his audience—both as a writer and pedagogue—was a large one. That is why we may state that his activity lay within the frame of social pedagogy. However, we may say that he also vulgarized many of Junimea's ideas.

When perusing Slavici's pedagogical and literary works we are surprised to discover that they are based on Confucius. Confucius was a familiar topic at Junimea: for instance, Eminescu urged young Slavici to read this ancient Chinese philosopher. Soon, Slavici considered Confucius as "the wisest of all people who have ever lived on the earth". What are the communitarian values taken over from Confucius and spread by Slavici? First, total moderation and self-control, essential qualities in anything a man does. These values are closely related to the balance between the personal interests and the community ones. According to Slavici:

Confucius is brighter than Socrates [the latter claims that the laws and the customs should be seen to by the indivudual—our note] establishes the relation between ordinary debts [natural—our note] and the conventional ones [community—our note], stipulating the principle that everybody is to comply with laws and customs as appropriate, but should never take advantage of the concessions the same make in respect to individual faults. (15)

Moreover:

First and foremost, to be wise is to possess self-control. On the other hand, annihilation of one's individuality would be painful and strange. Therefore, being wise means to keep the right balance, "neither too much nor less"; the wise keep the balance and do not wage battles either with the world or with themselves. Being aware of such right balance is the most serene satisfaction in life and who can reach it, is happy. (16)

Slavici stated and studied the aforesaid in a book of some hundred pages namely: *Sfaturi pentru buna crestere a copiilor* / Good Advice for Good Upbringing of Children, which was meant to spread ethics and pedagogy in most diverse social strata. Though the work of a scholar it is written in simple words. All his other works of the kind were its antipodes. Among the latter *Educatia morala* / Moral Education, whose chapters bear self-evident titles: "Personal Education" (Subchapters: 'Ordinary Sentiments', 'Family-related Sentiments', 'Class-related Sentiments', 'National Sentiments', 'Body Spirit', 'Patriotism', 'Love for People'), 'Charity', `Impersonal Education'. As can be seen, the values are positioned on ever larger circumscribed circles, circumscribing the previous values. In another work, having a significant title: *Fapta omeneasca.Scrisori catre un prieten tînar prieten* / On Human Act. Letters to a Young Friend, we find the following paragraph highlighting the fact that at the basis of community values is love:

Confucius (...) says that all that suits the human nature is humanly good, and evil is all that is against human nature; and love for people is the basis of morality just because it is in the human nature, that one fails who loves only his own self and not the others. Needless to say that: all acts springing from true love for people, no matter how abusing the same may be for any or others, cannot be evil. (17)

It is interesting to note that Slavici advances the same desiderata of Junimea in his own way. Junimea advocated from the first days of its existence the *disinterested* act caused by love for the others. Junimea used a characteristic and specific syntagm: "impersonal enthusiasm". This syntagm precisely defines the altruist spirit of Junimea, open to the community: be it nation or humanity. "Impersonal enthusiasm" is posited by T. Maiorescu as the conditioning creativity in any field. We quote hereunder Maiorescu's words before his students before leaving the University (his retirement was in 1910):

I believe that the only criterion of true vocation is the following: a warm interest for that part of the humanity you are to work for. No thought for your individual situation should guide you—since vanity or any other selfish wish may deceive you—but the thought to serve the others, for which benefit you have been named by the association. (18)

The same words he had addressed to his younger colleagues at Junimea when he urged them to forget their selfish interests:

Which is the reason, the foundation of our existence? The ideal sacrifice, nothing else. (...) To work for nothing and sometimes even to lose money, this is something meant to elevate your spirit and the people feel that. The loss is only in money but the gain is moral. The greatness of each of us is given by the sacrifices we made and are ready to make again. (19)

To go back to Slavici, we said that his fiction is nourished by the same background as his ethical and pedagogical works. Proof is given by his best short story claimed by all literary critics as being a masterpiece: *Moara cu noroc* / The Lucky Mill. Ironically, the title is a warning: there is not the money (fortune) but the understanding and harmony in the family and in the community that bring calm and happiness; exaggeration of individual interests (exclusively for material goods and for money in particular) results in inevitable and irreversible moral and spiritual decay and eventually in death itself. Even his best novel proves such an axiological underlayer although it carries a new message: the society cannot survive without the community values of subsidiarity.

The novel takes place in the Western part of Romania, in a multi-ethnical community (Romanians, Germans, Serbs, Czechs, etc.) and multi-confessional community (Orthodox, Catholic, Greek-Catholic, Reformed). It was for the first time in the Romanian literature that a great writer approached and studied such complex issues. The Romanian has been viewed from this sociological point as well. Slavici is praised for his thorough knowledge of this type of society as well as for his democratic "thesis" of inter-ethnic tolerance that is the core of the novel.

Conclusion

Put into right relationship, the issues related to integration of our traditional values into the modern values of the Western world do not differ too much from Junimea's historical era. Education in Romania should become education for communication with the following principles:

1. Respect for our own values and openness towards universal values;
2. Encouraging a lucid and tolerant patriotism;
3. Encouraging love and altruism as basis of community values by means of practical discourse of intellectuals in general and of educators in particular;
4. Training for harmonizing the individual interests with the community ones through team projects;
5. Promoting the polemic spirit based on rational authority with the view to efficient communication in a team.

Notes

1. George F. McLean, Seminar on Civil Society and Social Reconstruction, Sept. 15-Nov. 10, 1995, Washington.
2. Françoise Thom, *Limba de lemn*, Bucuresti, Humanitas, 1993.
3. This French syntagm is used to designate a fixed phrase, a stereotyped formal language. We shall use in our paper the syntagm «new speak» from Orwell's novel *Nineteen Eighty-four*.
4. Junimea, a cultural association, was established by five young Romanian intellectuals who studied in the Western universities (in Germany and France). They had studied Law, most of them being doctors in Law. The leader of the group, Titu Maiorescu, had studied Law and Philosophy, and he was awarded with a doctorate in Germany. Upon return to Romania, he was appointed professor, and latter, the rector of the University in Jassy. Junimea grew bigger, adding new members: writers, historians, philosophers, etc. The prestige of this association was increased when Vasile Alecsandri, the most important Romanian writer till 1870, became a member of Junimea. We can speak not only of two decades of glory (1870-1890), but of more lasting influence

exercised by this cultural association. The spirit of Junimea is, in fact, a permanent value of the Romanian culture.

5. T. Maiorescu (a monograph), T. *Maiorescu si posteritatea lui critica, T. Maiorescu si contemporanii sai.*

6. E. Lovinescu, T. Maiorescu, Bucuresti, Minerva, 1978, p. 625.

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Chapter X
The Stages of Moral And Religious Thinking in Overgifted Teenagers

Mihaela Roco

The contemporary society is passing through a crisis of moral and religious values, that, on the one hand, is responsible for the people's destructive and negative orientation and, on the other hand, is greatly due to the way in which moral and religious education is realized.

Since the beginning of mankind religion and morality have played a dominant role in society. To the most ancient civilisations, ethics and law were inextricably tied to religion; with time they evolved into autonomous fields: religion, ethics and law. As A. Vergote (1987)1 also underscores, religion has been the matrix of morality. One of the approaches of man's relationship with God resides precisely in the ethical responsability towards God's faith in mankind to only do what is right. The Orthodox Church considers virtue as unique and denoting the inner aspiration for the good. Compared with the needs of human life and with the relationships between people, it is natural that also the virtues which guide them should be of various kinds.

The religious virtues are directly pointed towards God and they are fortified in the believer's soul only with the help of God's grace (p. 371). The virtues are: faith, hope and love. The moral virtues are the ones that guide the Christian's life towards himself and towards his fellow beings. They are also called cardinal virtues and stand as a foundation for the other virtues of honest life. They have been given to man when he was created, but the natural moral power of man became weaker through the sins of his ancestors. The most important moral virtues are: wisdom, justice, temperance and manliness [fortitude]. (Firmilian)2

In some inquiries made—in Western Europe—of parents regarding the importance of religious education in school they consider religion a means to inculcate morality in the young people. In the USA a survey of parents emphasized that they use religious references to impose on children a moral discipline. (cf. A. Vergote, 1987). Still, as the research conducted by Allport shows, only religion founded on an intrinsic motivation contributes also to the structuring of moral values. When religious education is primarily realized formally and doesn't taking into account the age particularities and the configuration of personal values, there exists the risk that some persons shall valorize only the instrumental and utilitarian dimensions of religion,— that their religious motivation would be mainly extrinsic and this situation cannot lead to the formation of an authentic moral behaviour. On the contrary, it happens that on the grounds of a religious faith supported mainly by an extrinsic motivation this kind of faith becomes a motive of a false superiority in relation to others,— taking the place of the real criteria of a competition in which the person would lose because of a lack of the necessary qualities. In conclusion, by invoking a faith, which is motivated mainly by extrinsic considerations, a person may in fact indulge amoral or immoral behaviour.

I have supplied the previous discussion because in daily experience we are confronted with situations in which a person displays a religious behaviour more because of the worldly benefits they might obtain from it. This type of individual leads opponents to rightly say that some people although they are believers are not always also moral.

One of the guarantees of authentic religious faith, guided by *intrinsic* reasons, is represented by the formation of mature religious judgements or, in other words, by the structuring of religious

thought at superior levels. F. Oser and P. Gmünder (1991)3 have set the bases of the structuralist-genetic interpretation of religious thinking, reaching the conclusion that religious judgement is built on an ontogenetic field along five stages. Their model has been built on the foundation of Piaget's theoretico-methodological contributions regarding Fowler's stages of the development of logical thinking, which refer to the phases of the development of faith as well as on that of Kohlberg centered on the phases of moral thinking.

During the inquiries made on subjects of different ages and religions they established that the subjects' relationship with God implies different qualities (which work as a function of their age-level). Starting from these data they formulated the hypothesis that the structures of religious thinking build themselves progressively, during several phases that have a universal character.

In order to investigate the existence of the phases of religious thinking, Oser and Gmünder used *dilemmas* with religious connotations. In the following we present one dilemma in order to demonstrate the development of the cognitive-religious stages. It is the so-called 'dilemma of Paul': Paul, a young medical doctor, has just successfully passed his exams. He is very happy. He has a girl friend, whom he promised to marry. Before this his parents reward him by paying for a visit to England. Paul sets out. No sooner has the plane lifted off, than the captain announces that one engine is damaged and the other engine does not function reliably. The plane loses height. All safety measures are immediately taken: oxygen masks, safety vests. First the passengers cry out; now it is deathly still. The plane dives rapidly. Paul's whole life races through his head. Now he knows, it's all over.

In this situation he thinks of God and starts praying. He pledges that he will dedicate the whole of his life for the poor in the Third World if he is saved; that he will give up his girl friend, whom he dearly loves; and he will renounce a high income and prestige in our society.

The plane is smashed in an emergency landing in a field, but Paul is saved miraculously! On his return home, a lucrative position is offered to him in a private clinic. He was selected from ninety candidates on the basis of his abilities. Paul recalls his promise to God. Now he does not know what to do.

In order to put into evidence the phases of religious thought, Oser and Gmünder4 have formulated eight standard questions which we present in the following paragraph:

1a. Should Paul keep his promise to God? Why or why not?

1b. Must one really keep a promise to God ? Why or why not?

1c. Do you believe that one has duties to God at all ? Why or why not ?

2. What do you say to this statement: " It is God's will that Paul go to the Third World (that is, that he keep his promise)? In the foregoing story two demands oppose each other: first, Paul's girl friend and the job offered to him; second, God and his promise to God.

3a. Which of these two demands do you feel to be more significant, or how do you experience the relation between the two demands?

3b. What is more significant in this world: man or God?

Let us suppose Paul tells his (religious) parents of his experiences and of the difficult situation in which he finds himself. They implore him to obey God and keep his promise.

4. Should Paul follow the advice of his parents ? Why or why not ?

Paul feels duty bound to a religious community (church, sect, etc.) and is strongly committed to it. The spiritual attitude and the precepts of this community require that the call and the will of God must be accepted by man, that Paul should keep his promise unconditionally.

5a. What does this demand mean for Paul ? Must he, as a believing person, be led in his decision by the dicta of this community? Why or why not?

5b. Must one be led in one's fundamental decisions by the principles / demands of a religious community? Why or why not?

5c. What duties does one have vis-à-vis a religious community at all? Why?

5d. May a person oppose the demands of a religious community by his personal freedom? Why or why not?

Let us assume that Paul does not keep his promise, after many sleepless nights and a time of uncertainty and despair as to how he should act, and that he accepts the promising position in the private clinic.

6. Do you believe that this choice will have any consequences for Paul's future life? Why or why not?

Shortly afterward Paul has a frontal collision in his car with another automobile. This accident was disastrous, for it was his fault.

7a. Did this accident have any connection with the fact that Paul did not keep his promise to God? Why or why not?

7b. Do you believe that God punishes Paul for not keeping his promise? Why or why not?

7c. If this is so, will God intervene in this world without fail? If not, does God manifest Himself in this world ? In which way?

Suppose Paul performs as a career-making doctor and decides to donate a tenth of his income every month to charitable organizations.

8. Do you believe that Paul can in this way keep his promise after all? Why or why not?

Each group of questions refers to seven fundamental religious dimensions. The answers to these questions emphasize the structures of the person's religious judgements by means of the subjective and specific connections that they establish between the fundamental religious dimensions and the importance they attribute to them. The seven bipolar dimensions are:

sacred versus profane
transcendence versus immanence
freedom versus dependence
hope versus absurdity
faith versus fear
eternity versus ephemerity
opacity versus transparency

The authors consider that the number of the bipolar elements isn't limitative, but only these have been heard systematically during empirical research. Each phase of the religious thinking is characterized by a formal structure of its own, that is not directly determined either by the general level of knowledge or by the level of religious knowledge. It also does not depend on the level of familiarity with the given task, but it represents a fundamental organisation of the religious thinking for the respective moment.

Oser and Gmünder established a reference frame with four main aspects in order to characterize the religious judgements. The four aspects are:

1) The religious judgement refers to the subjective realities which cannot be caught and described adequately by the functional means and by the strategies used by logical thinking in order to rule the objective reality;

2) The religious judgement takes into consideration subjective realities which concern the significance, the search for the meaning and the ruling over hazard;

3) In the religious judgement the relationship man-God is expressed in situations in which the plausibility doesn't start from the individual;

4) The religious judgement is the uninterrupted effort to give hope in a world where all the assurances, all "securities" are of subjective nature and seen objectively are condemned to failure.

The differences between the stages of religious judgement reside in the different manner of balancing the seven bipolar dimensions. In the superior stages the bipolar dimensions find themselves in a perfect balance. The dilemmas bring the individual in the situation of establishing a balance between the two poles of the seven values.

In the following we are presenting the characteristics of the five stages of religious judgement, and examples. We note the subjects' answers to the question: Do you believe that God punished Paul because he didn't keep his promise? Why or why not?

Stage 1: Orientation on complete determination (*deus ex machina*) where the relationship God—individual is univocal. Man in his actions is at the mercy of God, who is seen as an ultimate power. Man cannot grasp God's reasons ("God knows what He does"). Man acts because God forces him to act. Man's reactions to God's acts are one-dimensional and blindly responsive. God's interventions in the world are usually comprehended as reward or punishment. God cannot intervene everywhere at the same time. Conclusion: everyone has his turn. God exerts a direct influence on man.

Example: The answer of a ten year old boy: " Yes, God punished Paul because he didn't go to the poor in Africa; He wanted to show him what he had to do; maybe Paul will still go to Africa; God punished him in order to make him keep his promise."

Stage 2: Orientation on reciprocity

The relationship God (Ultimate)—man is seen instrumantally as an exchange. Man becomes active in his own interest toward God. Preventive function of reward and punishment. Scrutinizing attitude with regard to reciprocal loyalty. Historical causal naiveté. Division into two domains: God and the world, whereby God intervenes in the world only under certain circumstances ("if it is too much for Him," one has to be careful that these circumstances do not occur). God wants the best for man; for this reason man tries to win God's favour. God's will may be influenced through prayers, sacrifices and obeying of the religious norms.

Example: The answer of a twenty years old man:

"Yes, God punishes in order to bring man on the right path again; a punishment does always have a significance; God wants that Paul improve; God punishes because He acts like an educator, because He wants that man behave such as He expects him to; this way God gives people the certainty that He is still present."

Stage 3: Orientation on voluntarism

The relationship God-man shifts in the direction of a growing autonomy of man, but stays ambivalent. Everything that exists is seen as contingent ("keep a promise because it is important for me, not because of God"). But in the case in which fate rules, man cannot be the cause of his

own experience (coincidence). God is in fact here (e.g., as a far-reaching horizon), but human authority is not conveyed in him. God examines whether man fulfills His "Will " ("one can, but one need not").

The God-man relationship is constituted in the unquestioned deed of faith ("God may help, if one believes"). Man is only able to solve the conflict between God's acts and his free will if he understands this will as being dependent upon God . Man cannot perform any act of which he is not convinced. Free will and conformity with God remain independent *desiderata* (tension).

Example: The answer of a twenty-three years old woman:

"I never believed that God Almighty punishes. If there is a power directing our life, it has many other possibilities of ruling our life without having to punish us. Paul punished himself because he didn't keep his promise. God cannot punish."

Stage 4: Orientation on autonomy and "Divine Plan"

The relationship God-man is characterized by a still limited but mediated conscientiousness. Life is based on man's own capability for taking decisions. He is responsible for his actions, which he has to judge and to answer for. The God-man relationship is discussed reflexively in the sense of a mutual mediation. It gains a normative-educational accent ("God gives Paul a sign in order to bring him to reflect"). God is seen as love, goodness, because man shares with Him the idea of what is right, of goodness ("what one considers as right, one can obey, if not, one should not obey"). The God-man relationship comes to pass for the sake of the good of an entirety (plan, system). Human free will unfolds within God's Divine Plan. God wills only man's best, but He only creates the appropriate conditions

For this reason man must become active towards his fellowmen. This commitment is the means to bring God and man together ("Thou shall examine whether one stands the test of faith"). On the one hand God intrinsically and directly imparts strength, spirituality, mercy; on the other hand He manifests Himself indirectly in the events, in the encounters between human beings. Distinction between a personal and an obligational level. On the personal level man can create only himself. On the relational level God is rather seen Platonically as external and unchangeable. For He is the pure truth, the pure spirit.

Example: The answer of a 44 years old man:

"I would explain it this way: God does not punish men, but men punish themselves because they do not fulfill God's will. The disobeying of a law already implies inside the man something like a punishment. But it is not in this way that God distributes the punishments. He does not say: 'If you don't obey, you will get seriously ill.'"

In other words God is much greater than man. Man can freely decide what to do, but this is not indifferent to God. I'd like to illustrate this with an example. In school, when a teacher gives one of his pupils who has not done his work a bad mark, this is not indifferent to the teacher. The teacher is not indifferent not because of the bad mark, but he is preoccupied that the pupil does not learn and thus is destroying himself.

Stage 5: Orientation on self-fulfillment in intersubjectivity

The human subject in his autonomous disposition (*Verfaßtheit*) is the focus of this stage. The relationship God-man (transcendence-immanence) is seen in such a way that God is experienced as that reality which makes possible and vouches for man's autonomy in a meaningful way (God as liberation to freedom). Intersubjectivity is here the significant location of God's manifestation and articulation. The true reference to God is conveyed by human deeds, i.e., by the unconditional

acknowledgement of others in their freedom (creating the possibility to act and to fulfill actions). The relation God-man then is restricted to interpersonality.

In the book *L'homme, son dévelopment religieux,* Oser and Gmünder present a series of specifications about stage 5. They show that during the interviews persons whose religious judgement was structured at level 5 were hard to find. At this level the persons, instead of talking about their communication with God (the ultimate reality), realize this communication in which God becomes immanent and man appears transcendent. In a biblical language such persons come to announce to the imprisoned their liberation, to the blind the regaining of their eyesight, to the oppressed their freedom. At this level the mediation of sacred and profane, of transcendence and immanence, of hope and absurdity, of freedom and dependence, of trust and fear, of eternity and ephemerity, reaches an optimal balance.

The presentation of an example for this level must be made with maximal caution. Oser and Gmünder included in their book the answers to the two questions given by a man of 40, a theologian and a philosopher: "Is it God's will that Paul goes to the Third World (i.e., that he keeps his promise)?" His answer was: "most of the times the expression God's will is interpreted as the will of the power of the group that interprets God's will in history. See the crusades. God's will must be mediated and interpreted in the spirit of the Bible and of the great theology in the same way as in a particular situation of each of us; the determining criterion for me would be the need of the others; God's will is there where the others need me; the legal formulation of God's will is absolutely insufficient."

Oser (1980) refers also to stage 6 of the religious judgement: Orientation on universal communication and solidarity. The crucial point of this stage is a communicative practice with a comprehensive demand applied to universal solidarity. The God-man relationship is now seen not only as the reason and aim of both my own and other's existence, but as that of the whole history and reality.

Kant showed that man is motivated by two kinds of tendencies: selfish (the satisfaction of one's own interests) and selfless (the care for the next one). Between the two tendencies there is a conflict which can only be solved through reason. Being moral means acting in conformity with the rational principles of justice, correctness and respect for the others.

From a psychological perspective Douglas Graham (1972)[5] emphasized the next meanings of the term "moral": 1) cognitive (moral judgement); 2) affective (moral feelings); 3) behaviorist (actions) and 4) value-attitudinal.

The tackling of morality out of a cognitive perspective ranges in the direction of the studies realized by Piaget, Kohlberg, Gibbs and others, who were concerned with emphasizing some phases of the moral development.

J. Piaget and L. Kohlberg

Piaget[6] considered that morality is made up in two phases. The first phase, that of heteronomous morality—common with preschool and small school children—is characterized by coercion and domination of authority. The second phase, that of autonomous morality is found in adolescence. The specific features for this phase are: flexibility, rationality, democratic character supported by mutual respect and cooperation between people; the moral rules are accepted based on their understanding, since they are not imposed through external or internal coercion.

Lawrence Kohlberg considers that the moral development is function of the phase of the cognitive development: "Because moral thinking is thinking, the process of moral thinking depends on the progress of logical thinking."

Lawrence Kohlberg7 determined the existence of six stages in the development of moral judgements, along which moral values (norms) and moral principles (elements) are constituted in organized and unitarian structures, much like Piaget's structures of logical thinking.

The norms are the moral values themselves, and the elements represent a principle or a motive to which norms serve as an object. Kohlberg identified twelve norms and seventeen elements.

The norms are:

life—norm divided into: 1) preservation; 2) quality-quantity
property
truth
affiliation
erotic love and sex
authority
law
contract
civil rights
religion
conscience
punishment

The seventeen moral elements are:

to obey / to consult
to blame / to approve
to reward / to exculpate
to have a right
to have a duty
good reputation
to search reward
good consequences for the individual
good consequences for the group
approval of the character
maintainance of self-respect
to serve social ideals
to serve human dignity
to balance the perspective
reciprocity
to maintain equity
to maintain the social contract

The structures of moral thinking transform during the development but they maintain a certain continuity from one phase to the other. Each phase is not made up of a number of coherent organized structures but represent only one structure.

Kohlberg emphasizes the stages of moral thinking through an analysis of the reasonings used by the subjects when formulating the decisions to the moral dilemmas.

Kohlberg grouped the six stages of the moral thinking in 3 major levels:

I. The pre-conventional level includes stages 1 and 2. This level is characteristic to most of the children under 9 years, to some of the teenagers and to most of the offenders. At this level the rules have the attribute of exteriority in relation to the individual.

II. The conventional level includes stages 3 and 4. It is characteristic of most of the teenagers and adults. At this level the person interiorizes the rules and prescriptions in society.

III. The post-conventional level contains stages 5 and 6. It is reached only by a minority of the adults and only after the age of 20. At this level the individuals define their own moral values by reporting to principles which are realized and selected rationally. The author assumes that at this level, by comparison with the preceding ones it better integrates thoughts with actions.

The theory of stages elaborated by Kohlberg surpasses those of his predecessors Freud and Piaget. Thus, Freud's theory aims especially at the formation of the superego, which is completely realized at the age of 6. Piaget's reaserches showed that moral development reaches the ultimate phase around the age of 12, when the child receives moral autonomy. Kohlberg's opinion is that the superior phases of the moral development, implicitly the moral maturity, are realized after the age of 20, but no later than 25.

Since in the processing and analysing of the answers, in the method we used to determine the stages of moral thinking we used also the elements of Kohlberg's theory; in the following we are presenting the characterization of the moral stages established by the American philosopher.

I. The Preconventional Level

At this level the child is responsive to the cultural rules and to the labels good / bad, which he interprets either in the terms of the hedonist or physical consequences of the action (punishment, reward, exchange of services), or in the terms of the physical power of the one who says the rules and labels. This level has two stages:

Stage 1: Orientation of punishment and obedience

The physical consequences of the action determine its evaluation in terms of good or bad beyond the human meaning or the value of these consequences. The avoidance of the punishment and the unconditional respect towards power is valued in itself and not in terms of respect for a fundamental moral order supported by punishment and authority (this appears in stage 4).

Stage 2: Instrumental-relativist orientation

The right action is that which satisfies instrumentally one's own needs and occasionally the needs of the others. The human relations are looked upon in terms of the market. Elements of justice , reciprocity and equal sharing are present, but they are not always interpreted in a pragmatic, physical way. The reciprocity is a problem of "you do me a service, I'll do you one, too," not of loyalty, gratitude or justice.

II. The Conventional Level

At this level, in the matter of maintaining the expectations of the family, group or nation, the individual is the part perceived as having value in itself, beyond immediate or obvious consequences. The attitude is not just one of conformity with the personal expectations or with the social order but it is one of loyalty towards these, of active maintaining, of supporting and justifying order, and of identifying with the involved persons or groups. This level has two stages:

Stage 3: Interpersonal accord: "good boy / good girl." The right behaviour is that which pleases the others or which helps the others or which is approved by these. There is much conformity with regard to the stereotypical images of the "normal" behavoiur. Behaviour is often judged by intentions—"his intentions are good" becomes important for the first time. The individual gains approval by being "nice".

Stage 4: Law and order Orientation
These are orientations involving authority, established rules and the maintainance of the social order. The right behaviour consists of doing your duty, of showing respect for authority and of maintaining the given social order for its sake.

III. The Autonomous Post-Conventional Level or the Level of Principles

At this level there is a clear effort for the defining of the moral values and principles, whose validity and application are not bound either to the authority of the group or of the persons who hold these principles, or to the identification of the individual with these groups. This level also has two stages:

Stage 5: Social contract, legalist orientation (generally utilitarian)
The right action tends to be defined in terms of the general rights of the individual and in terms of the standards that were critically examined and that the entire society approves of. There is a clear conscience of the relativism of the personal opinions and values as well as an accentuation on the procedural rules needed in order to obtain a consensus. Beyond all that which is constitutionally and democratically accepted, law is a matter of personal "values" and "opinions". The result is an accentuation on "the legal point of view," but with the stress on the possibility of changing the law in terms of national considerations regarding social utility (rather than freezing the law in the terms of the anterior stage). Besides the legal field, free agreement and contract are the essential elements of the obligation.

Stage 6: Orientation by universal ethics principles
Justice is defined through the decision of conscience, in agreement with the ethical principles chosen by the individual by appealing to the logical comprehension, universality and coexistence. These principles are abstract and ethical (in the form of categorical imperatives); they are not concrete moral rules such as the Ten Commandments. These are essentially the universal principles of justice, reciprocity and equality of the humans' rights and of respect for the dignity of human beings as individual persons.

John E. Gibbs

John C. Gibbs (1992)8 elaborated a new stadial model of the development of moral judgement leaving off from Kohlberg's theory.

The model realized by Gibbs is structured on two levels: the immature level and the mature level, each of them containing two stages. These stages are based on defining the moral development in terms of progress from a superficial moral judgement to a profound moral judgement; "the extrinsic-intrinsic tendency is clear in the cognitive development in general and in the moral judgement in particular." (Gibbs, 1992, page 19)

The superficiality of the immature level is the essential characteristic of the first two stages. Stage 1 is characterized through a "physicist" comprehension of authority and moral values and is based on a motivation described in terms of physical consequences, while in stage 2 a psychological perspective on morality takes contour. The instrumental reciprocity characterizes stage 2 and its stressed pragmatic character determines that the observance of the rules and moral indications is done in terms of equal changes, advantages and benefits.

The passage towards stage 3 of development marks the progress towards the level of maturity in the moral thinking. The instrumental reciprocity is replaced by a reciprocity of expectations, of feelings and of obligations. In Piaget's terms, the passage from stage 2 to stage 3 represents a transition from "the reciprocity as a fact" to "the reciprocity as an ideal."

In "the reciprocity as a fact" (stage 2) the behaviour of the person is conditioned by the anticipation of a mutual action from the part of the other person.

In "the reciprocity as an ideal" (stage 3) the person evaluates his behaviour as if it had been a mutual action.

As the individual diversifies his life experiences and is involved in a more and more complex net of interpersonal relations, he judges the relations of interdependence between the individuals and as a consequence the necessity of some rules and standards accepted and respected by the entire community. These standards function as mechanisms for regulation at the level of the society. The passage from the moral values considered at the level of the interpersonal relations or of small groups to those considered at the level of the society represents the transition from stage 3 to stage 4 of moral development. Each stage is described as a function of a number of aspects which represent the essence of the respective stage. These aspects are presented with more details in tables no. 2, 3, 4, and 5.

Gibbs's model9, although less cited in the.speciality literature (maybe due to its novelty), presents a series of advantages in comparison to those of Piaget and Kohlberg. This model seems to appreciate in a more sensitive manner the reality of moral development. This fact is due to the introduction between the four major stages of three transitional stages: 1/2, 2/3, and 3/4 divided each in its turn into two substages as they find themselves closer to one stage or the other. Thus, stage 1/2 is subdivided into the substages 1(2) and 2(1), stage 2/3 in 2(3) and 3(2) and stage 3/4 into 3(2) and 4(3). These stages of transition, which can be considered the note of 'originality' in this model, have the merit of catching what is going on during the passage from an inferior stage to a superior one.

In the following we are presenting the justification criteria Gibbs used in the characterization of the stages of the development of moral judgement since we have oriented matters according to them in the evaluation of the answers.

John C. Gibbs considers that the fundamental cognitive process involved in the development of moral judgement is *descentration*, defined by Flavell10 (cited by Gibbs, 1992) as the ability of the child to take into consideration and to interrelate the multiple features of a situation. The child who hasn't yet developed this ability will have the tendency to center on the external and

superficial but more obvious features of the moral situation, as well as in the physical field the preschool child tends to concentrate his attention on a single feature of the stimulus such as the difference between the heights of the two columns of liquid from the conservation example described by Piaget.

Thus, the superficiality of stage 1's moral judgement is more probably due to the neglect of the actor's intentions in favour of the more obvious consequences than to the absence of intentionality from the child's thinking, as Kohlberg had pleaded. The child can recognize at different moments in time different features of the situation, but he cannot interrelate them to reach in this way a more profound understanding in making moral decisions. 'Descentration' can be characterized in terms of equality and reciprocity.

Equality is a consequence of a more comprehensive and more balanced analysis of the situation whereby also the less obvious features of this are taken into consideration. The child's attention becomes less centered on himself, thus marking the gradual decline of egocentrism and the appearance of impartiality.

Reciprocity represents "a compensatory act which resides in a reaction similar to an initial action" (Damon, 1977)[11]. Feffer[12] even defines descentration as "a coordination and reciprocal correction between physical (or social) complementary dimensions" (Gibbs, 1992).

Equality and reciprocity are tightly correlated; they manifest in non-social as well as in social or socio-moral contexts. As the situational attention of the child becomes more comprehensive the equalities between the various features are perceived and the relationship between them is understood.

Gibbs, in his reference manual, proposes models of answers valid for each of the 4 stages and 3 phases of transition of the moral development.

As previously showed, Gibbs considers that the conventional level (stage 3 and 4) already marks moral maturity. The identification of stages 5 and 6 of Kohlberg's scale is possible through reference to the moral type of the individual (A or B). The moral type refers to the extent to which the prescriptive ideals are emphasized. Type B expresses the ethical ideals; type A presupposes the inclusion of the ideality of the ethical standards in the social conventions. Thus, stage 3 type A refers to the same ideals but in a universalized, fundamental form. Stage 4 refers to the social ideals with the same differences between type A and B. So, we can consider that a person evaluated at stage 3 type B on the Gibbs scale will be evaluated at stage 5 on the Kohlberg scale; by analogy, stage 4 type A corresponds to stage 6. The establishing of the affiliation to one type or another depends on the number of justifications of the type B present in the subject's answers (minimum 3).

The Moral and the Religious

F. Power and L. Kohlberg (1980)[13] wanted to study the relationships between the moral and religious judgement leaving off from the question: "Does religion depend on morality?" During the empirical researches they found out that a small number of subjects make appeal to religion in order to justify their religious behaviour. The subjects, who were at stage 5 of the moral judgement, give more explanations of a religious kind by comparison to those whose moral judgement is at inferior levels. The arguments of a religious kind to moral problems are not the cause but the effect. The transcendent is known not as an object of experience but as a principle of understanding. At the same time the two authors have reached the conclusion that the moral judgement is necessary but not enough for the constitution of moral judgement at the superior levels.

We set as a general objective the comparative analysis of the stages of the development of moral and respectively religious judgement. To this purpose we have to accomplish the following objectives:

1. The determination of the stages of the development of moral judgement and of religious judgement at different ages (10 to 55 years). With this occasion our intention is to contribute to the checking of the hypothesis of the universality of the stages of religious thinking, formulated by Oser and Gmünder. The two authors did not investigate subjects of orthodox religion.

2. The emphasis on the particularities of moral and religious judgements among overgifted teenagers.

3. The establishing of the degree of concordance between the two types of judgements.

The methods of investigation are:

1) Questionnaire of social reflection , translation and adjustment after J.C. Gibbs, organised by Ch. Vandenplas-Holper, J. D. Moerman, M Naedts, et al.; 1994.

The evaluation of the answers was realized after the Codifying manual elaborated by J. Gibbs for the socio-moral questionnaire, French version by M. Naedts and J. Day; 1994.

2) Questionnaire on religious judgement, elaborated by J. Day, M. Naedts, V. Saroglon, et al.; 1994.

The items of the questionnaire refer to the seven bipolar dimensions of religious judgement.

Item 1—expresses the report between hope and absurdity. Absurdity is understood as absence of a meaning through rapport with an absolute, with an ultimate purpose of the actions. Hope designates the expectation of a future reality supported by a more or less powerful intensity.

Item 2—expresses the mysterious (opacity) and functional (transparency) dimension. The mysterious represents in a magic sense the inexplicable, a mysterious action influenced by nature, by rites, by objects or by certain beings. The animism is a particular way of administrating this magic. Myth puts in men's hands a way of acting on the Universe and of bringing it closer.

Item 3—expresses the dimension of freedom and dependency. The balance between the absolute freedom and the absolute dependency is realized either through a reducing to the minimum in the frame of a total fatality, or through the understanding of the possibilities that these meanings open. Freedom has two aspects: social and natural. From a social point of view freedom appears as a limitation of the other's exigencies, settled by law. From a natural point of view freedom is limited by the possibilities offered by the filogenetic development. The dimension is important for the individual's autonomy and it also has an ethical connotation.

Item 4—expresses the dimension of transcendence and immanence. Immanence represents the present, concrete reality, while transcendence designates what is beyond this; they express the difference between "up" and "down". The process of transcendence is realized in a double sense: as an outrunning and as a comeback to the present reality with the purpose of an explaining, transforming and bettering of its fundament.

Item 5—refers to the dimension trust-fear. Fear is not a part of people's common life; it is a "psychological syndrome" which the individual is aware of or not. It is important because religious judgement may contribute to the "structuring" or domination of fear.

Item 6—regards the dimension sacred-profane. The sacred applies to actions by means of which human behaviour reports to God. It realizes a mediation between God and the profane. The

attitude towards the sacred differentiates itself from the one towards the profane through its absolute, intangible and normative character. The sacred allows man to report to a fixed point, while the profane is uniform and continuous.

Item 7—takes into consideration the dimension eternity-ephemerity. Children and adults have different visions of this aspect. To children things are eternal, with no beginning and no end. To adults the matter relates to one's own life faced with death. Duration appears in time especially as a dimension which exists "outside time"—the meditative reconstruction of reality, of the creation of cultural forms, the representation of life after death, are durative aspects. The universality of the principle of justice and the creation of the art masterpieces correspond to a representation which integrates into the life's precariousness the values needed for its substitution.

The analysis and evaluation of the answers to the questionnaire were made in conformity with the instructions given by Oser (1980)14 and by Oser and Gmünder (1991)15. An important place is occupied by the standard questions applying to Paul's dilemma, which have been registered in the beginning of our work. The analysis of the answers must emphasize the religious cognitive structures of the persons investigated. For this purpose one must underline that the analyst needs a thorough theoretical and practical study in the psychology of religious thinking and also enough experience to be able to tell the difference between the content and the structure of the statement.

The analysis of the answers is practically made in three stages:

I. In the first stage a global and temporary analysis of all the concrete statements is realized in the following three substages:

1) The analysis of the answers rejects those which do not come from the person's direct experience, which are only meta-theoretical assertions, which represent an enumeration of the various possibilities of decision without personal implications, which are digressions. Stereotypies are eliminated.

2) The analyst must emphasize the essential phrases and the key-statements that point out the structure of the religious judgement behind the actual statement.

3) The analyst, through rapport with the theory of the stages gives an intuitive estimate of the level at which the subject is.

II. In this phase the various statements are actually analyzed.

1) The analysis is made of precise questions or groups of questions, each of them receiving a mark. It is noticeable that only seldom can the answers be assigned to a pure stage; parts of the answers can be included in stages superior or inferior to the one that receives, let's say, 75% of the answer. For example: 75% of an answer is found in stage 2, while 25% in stage 3. The result will be in stage 2(3) or 2.33. In another case, 50% goes to stage 2 and 50% to stage 3. The result will be stage 2/3 or 2.5.

2) If the analyst does not have the certainty of the concordance between the concrete statement and its corresponding structure, then he reports it by + or—to the neighbouring stages.

It is important to specify that the analysis of the answers is made by at least two experienced analysts. In the situation when they cannot agree about marking, another analyst will be consulted.

At the end of the answers' analysis, similar to the questionnaire of social reflection, a global value of the stages (at the level of all the questions) is calculated and the two final scores are: score of moral maturity (SMM) and score of religious maturity (SRM). We use the occasion of

presenting the results of our research to thank the authors of the questionnaires used and to also thank professor J.-M. Jaspard from U.C.L. Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium.

In concordance with the proposed purposes we made up the following groups of subjects:

I. Overgifted teenagers (30). The group is composed of 17 girls and 13 boys medallists at international olympics of physics and mathematics. Their ages are from 13 to 18.

II. Preteenagers from 10 to 12 years old (50 subjects, 27 boys and 23 girls).

Teenagers without creative performances 13 to 18 years old with the subgroups:

III. 13—14 years (50 subjects, 26 boys and 24 girls)

IV. 15—16 years (50 subjects, 33 boys and 17 girls)

V. 17—18 years (50 subjects, 11 boys and 39 girls)

VI. Adults, teachers with different subjects (history, philosophy, geography, Romanian language and literature), from 20 to 66 years old; 50 subjects, 24 men and 26 women.

VII. Highly creative persons (17 subjects).

In the present research all groups of subjects will have the same number of members, that is 30.

The administration of the questionnaires was made individually, except for the pupils of the VIIth and IXth grades where they were administrated to groups of 5-7 subjects. The time for completing the questionnaire was on an average between 40 and 50 minutes.

The processing of the results for this type of questionnaire is very laborious. Partially in applying the questionnaires and in analysing the answers I was helped by two students in the last year who elaborated their degree works in the psychology of religion. Thus I want to thank for their collaboration my very young colleagues Gabriela Petrache and Beatrice Mihalache.

Results and their Interpretation

In the tables 1-7 the marks are presented which are obtained by the five great categories of subjects to the questionnaires regarding the determination of the stages of moral judgement and religious judgement.

The average value of the score for moral maturity (3.62) to overgifted teenagers corresponds to the ultimate stage (4) regardless of the age (13-18 years) or of gender.

To teenagers from 13 to 18 years without performances in their creative activity the average score for moral maturity of the group is 2.96 corresponding to stage 3.

In the case of the adults without creative performances the average score for moral judgement of the group is 3 (stage 3).

To highly creative adults (with very valuable and original results in their work) the average score of the group is 3.89 (stage 4).

We can observe that for the overgifted teenagers as well as for the highly creative adults the moral judgement is structured at the last stage (4).

Stage 4—the systemic standard is characterized by the presence of the following types of justifications:

- social requests—the average value is supported by its necessity in a society or in an institution. The persons refer explicitly to the social system when they talk about moral values;

- fundamental rights or values—appeal to fundamental rights or values which can be applied in any society;
- social responsabilities or contractual obligations—the adherence to the moral norms is motivated as responsibility, obligation or commitment which the actor has to accept;
- integrity or responsible character—appeal to considerations regarding integrity;
- procedural precedents—or standard and consistent practices. They justify the firmness of a normative moral value through the fact that the alternative is arbitrary and leads to social disaster;
- procedural equity or social justice—jusitifcation through appeal to what society owes the individual and application adapted to the situation of the standards in order to be right in the sense of equity (moral type B, the one that expresses ethical ideals);
- standards of conscience—justify the moral values by appeal to the standards of individual conscience (to self-respect, to personal satisfaction, etc., type B).

Stage 3 of the development of moral judgment is mutual and pro-social and includes the following criteria of justification:

a) Relationships or mutualities: appeal to mutual feelings which appear once the individual has understood the psychological meaning of the interpersonal relationship (type B);
b) Empathic assumption of the role: explicit, strongly emphatic references to the psychological or emotional state of welfare of the other;
c) Normative expectations: appeal to the normally expected rule or to the consequences of the violation of the normative expectations;
d) Subadjacent pro/anti-social intentions: appeal to the pro-social intentions (sympathy, sacrifice) of the normal personality;
e) Generalized care: appeal that generalizes the normative social prescriptions or values beyond the context of some particular rules or relationships (type B);
f) Interpersonal approval or disapproval: appeal to the feelings of clean conscience, of self-respect, etc. (type B).

To the persons without creative performances, beginning with the age of 13 and until adulthood it comes out that they attribute a reduced importance to the criteria of justification for type B.
Another difference refers to the distribution of the scores. In the case of the highly creative persons (teenagers and adults) the answers are much more homogeneous.
To the pupils of 10-12 years the development of moral judgement is in stage 2: instrumental. The criteria of justification for this stage are:

- *quid pro quo* changes—justification by appeal to the changes, "a tooth for a tooth." Includes anticipations of positive or negative reciprocity;
- strict equalities or inequalities—justification by appeal to the equalitarian empathy;
- concrete rights or liberties—appeal to liberties without constraint as to concrete rights;
- contingent preferences or dispositions—justification by favorable evaluation contingent with the actor's desires, talents;
- pragmatical needs—appeal to probable pragmatical needs;
- calculated advantages or disadvantages—justification by calculating anticipated practical benefits or losses.

The results of the research regarding the stages of moral judgement at different ages (from 10 to 60 years) emphasize that a big progress in the 12 -15 period is registered. This explains if we realize that during this interval what happens is the passing from the age of concrete operations to that of formal operations, after Piaget. From a moral judgement that is still marked by superficiality but also by the appearance of a "moral conscience," at the beginning with a dominant extrinsic character one passes on to a moral judgement characterized by maturity, based on the adequate and profound understanding of the socio-moral values, of the prescriptions which stand at the base of interpersonal relationships.

The progress in the socio-moral judgement is not realized in direct proportion to age; in the same stage of development multiple transformations happen, in different fields (intellectual, social, motivational, etc.). This is obvious for the group of subjects "15-16 years." Thus, although this group is placed on a mature level of development and registers a significant progress in comparison to the anterior stage, at his level the moral development stops, maybe even regresses, the regression being made relevant through reducing the frequency of the stages 3/2 and 3 and through a relatively high frequency of stage 2 (immature) characterized by egocentrism, appeal to rights and liberties, preferences or advantages. This situation does not prove a regression in the development of moral judgement but the passing towards a new form of egocentrism related to the formal logical thinking. At this age teenagers are eager to elaborate new ideas, theories about philosophical, ethical and religious problems. The egocentrism at this level is characterized by the teenagers' belief that reality obeys the idealistic constructions elaborated by them. Gradually they adapt their points of view to reality.

Religious judgement is in stage 4 for overgifted teenagers and in stage 4/5 for highly creative adults.

In stage 4 the relationship with God is only indirect, the individual continues to consider himself a responsible person, but from now on wonders about possibility. God represents this condition. God represents the fact itself of beating absurdity, despair, negative dependence. He represents the immanence hidden in this fact. In other words in this stage God is considered to be the condition of freedom, of responsibility and of hope. But this condition will be fulfilled only according to the "divine plan "—what God wants to realize in the world through the people.

Characteristic for the highly creative adults whose religious judgement is in stage 4/5 is the harmonious balancing of the bipolar dimensions: hope-absurdity, mystery-function, freedom-dependence, transcendence-immanence, trust-fear, sacred-profane, eternity-ephemerity. God is in all their relationships and commitments and at the same time He transcends them. History and revelation manifest there where people have faith and are available.

To teenagers from 13 to 18 years without creative performances the average score for religious maturity is 2.71, corresponding to stage 2/3, so we have to do with a transition stage. In the following we are presenting the characteristics of the two stages.

In stage 2 God's will may be influenced through prayers, sacrifices and obeying the religious norms. If we take good care of what God says and if we pass all the trials He sends us, He will love us as a loving and trustful father, we shall know happiness, health and success. Man can influence God or he can pay no attention to this matter. This depends on his needs and on his independently taken decision.

In stage 3 man considers himself totally responsible for his own life and for all that which exists in the world. Freedom, meaning, hope depend only on his personal decision. God represents something given outside man. He has His own domain of action, in the plenitude of His being he

has a freedom, a meaning and a hope which are totally other from those of man. Transcendence lies certainly outside the individual, but it represents the fundamental order of life and of the world.

From an evolutive point of view we can observe that at the age of 10-12 years religious judgement is in stage 1/2. It is interesting to notice that similar to the case of moral judgement there is a regression of the religious judgement in the interval of 17-18 years. Probably because religious thinking is more ample than moral thinking the progress is registered later (17-18 years instead of 15-16), a progress which also this time is not directly linear.

Kohlberg and Power13 pointed out that generally there are correspondences between religious and moral thinking, reaching the conclusion that moral judgement is necessary but not sufficient for religious judgement. They found the greatest concordance between the two types of judgements in stage 3 (100%).

Our results show that for highly creative teenagers and adults the concordance between moral and religious judgement exists for all the stages (in their case we are only talking about the superior stages 4 and 4/5).

To the group of pupils of 10 to 12 years moral development goes before the religious one; this is more obvious from the distribution of the scores: 47% of the subjects are at stage 2 of moral thinking and 53% of the pupils are at stage 1 of religious thinking.

For the teenagers' group there is a tendency of concordance between the stages of the moral and religious thinking for those from 13-14 and 15-16 years, while at 17-18 years again religious thinking remains behind the moral one.

To the adults without creative performances there is a very great concordance between the two types of judgement, both of them being at stage 3.

General Conclusion of the Research

1) The results regarding the teenagers and adults without creative preformances validate Oser and Gmünder's theory about the universality of the stages of the development of religious judgement for persons of orthodox religion.

2) The development of moral and religious judgement is precocious among overgifted teenagers.

3) Between moral judgement and religious judgement there are concordances especially in the final stages (not in those of transition) and also in those with a high degree of maturity.

Notes

1. A. Vergote*, Psychologie religieuse*, Bruxelles, Dessart, 1966.
2. Firmilian, *Învăþăturã de credinþã ortodoxã [studies of christian ortodoxy]*, Craiova, Edit. Centrului Mitropolitan al Olteniei, 1952, p.371.
3. *Ibidem* 1.
4. F. Oser ði P. Gmunder, *L' homme, son developpement religieux*. Paris, Cerf., 1991.
5. D. Graham*, Moral learning and development*. London, B.T. Batsford Ltd., 1972.
6. T. Piajet, *Le jugement moral chez l'enfant*. Paris, Alcan, 1932.
7. L. Kohlberg, "Education, moral development, and faith," *Journal of Moral Education,* vol. 4, 1, 1974, p. 13-19.
8. T. Gibbs, "Moral maturity: Measuring the development of sociomora," K. Basinger, *Reflection*, New Jersey, Lawrence Erlbaum & Associates, 1992.

9. Ibidem *8.*

10. T.H. Flavell, *Cognitive development*, New York, Prentice-Hall, 1977.

11. W. Damon, D. Hart, *Self-understanding in childhood and adolescence*, New York, Cambridge University, Press, 1991.

12. See T. Feffer.

13. F. C. Power, L. Kohlberg, "Religion, morality and ego development," in Silver Burnet, ed., *Toward moral and religions maturity* (New Jersey, 1980), p. 344-366.

14. F. Oser, "Stages of religions judgment," in Silver Burnet, ed. *ibidem* 13, pp. 278-314.

15. F. Oser ði P. Gmunder, *ibidem* 4.

Chapter XI
In Quest of the Lost Ecumenism

Magdalena Dumitrana

Once some blind men chanced to come near an animal that someone told them was an elephant. They were asked what the elephant was like. The blind men began to feel its body. One of them said the elephant was like a pillar: he had touched only its leg. Another said it was like a winnowing-fan: he had touched only its ear. In this way the others, having touched its tail or belly, gave their different versions of the elephant. Just so, a man who has seen only one aspect of God limits God to that alone. (Ramakrishna, (1))

The fundamental modality by which the human being sets up the majority of its mental and emotional constructs calls for a structure with borders; the delimitation, definition and denomination of the limits, frontiers and frameworks are basic instruments by which humans analyse and make judgements on what they do or do not understand. Fragmentation is a natural law and the fragmentariness is an intrinsic quality of the external and internal world of man, as he sees and lives it.

Knowledge "in part" is given to man precisely by his quality of human. He needs to develop a substantial effort to surpass this fragmentarity. By his nature too, man is given the tools by means of which to overcome the obstacles of the blindness about which Ramakrishna was speaking. This device is called the "image of God in Man" and it is used and developed either by theologians of different religions, or by highly spiritual minds, by the moral common sense. All of these are means to see the unity under the differentiation.

In despite of this, humankind with its various more or less local civilizations developed in the most purely analytical way focused, mainly upon the most visible and sensible—the external mind. From here come a vigorous multiplication of languages, habits, opinions, conceptions, morals, systems of thinking, explanations and prescriptions. Following the supreme example of the one Creative *Logos*, man restraints and alters all this into a named concept or word. The name, put into operation by the Divine energy, creates in its turn energies. Yet, in the name of the Ultimate truth, man manipulates the name-word under the pretext of creation. But in this context, his creation is a negative one which is a source of distinction and limitation. In a land of spiritual disintegration it is difficult to perceive the essential realities as they are, for example, the truth of the universal criteria that Ps. Denis the Areopagite set as the base of unification of differentiations:

About the divine minds it is said that they move in a circular form, when they are unified with the brilliances without beginning and end, the ones of beauty and good; in a straight line when they advance to take care of the inferior things, leading everything in the proper way. But they move also in a spiral form: because, when guiding in a providential way the inferior ones, they remain unmodified in their identity, rotating themselves ceaselessly around the beauty and good, out of each their identity rising (2, p.78).

If preserving self-identity and the unity with One is the sign of an enlightened spirituality, what would be the sign of the common spirit of the ordinary mind? This is the search for differentiation at any price, for singularisation and for a negative uniqueness. Thus operation is

accomplished by a transformation of the spiritual nature of the idea into a mundane component and by the singularization of the non-essential, the perennial or even the ephemeral: partition, division, delimitation. The whole exoteric motivation of the historical progress and of the predominance of one or another civilization relies on the pretension of the part to be the whole. One or another branch of mankind develops speeches for a global justification of its own actions and its interventions in history. To those, Constantin Noica, a modern Romanian philosopher, opposes a pure autochthonous solution, which seems however to be borrowed from the furthest Orient:

The dogs of history bark but do not bite. Or if they bite you, you make some objections and mind your own business. I remember the woodsman who met a bear in the mountains and pasted himself with mud. The bear stood on his back legs, looked at him, spat on him and left. This is what I would like to do with political history (3, p. 271).

In fact, the prescription was tested by the Romanian philosopher. Bitten in a proper sense by the prisons of history, his words proved their truth. Histories are passing while philosophies have survived.

Modern authors, coming from different cultural areas, emphasize the existence in our days of a broken world. They bring to the fore a process of contrary tendencies:

... people from everywhere feel a deep need for a unity of the human race and they are anxious for the disintegration of the human community according to religious, cultural, economic and political divisions.... Mankind, divided into different linguistic, ethnic, religious, cultural, geographical groups... never renounced the attempt to unify the human communities into a harmonious whole (4, p. 9).

The earliest efforts at global unification were determined by economic and political interests; usually they were accompanied by justifications of a cultural, civilizing or religious type. Then there emerged the concepts of North-South, East-West, the first, the second and third world, promoted to the rank of specific features of countries, lands or waste areas on the globe. Interested imitators of the interested promoters joined forces, and in this way, a whole culture was born—as independent cultural entity approaching 'zonal' issues in terms of Occident and Orient, and determining—openly or not— the sedimentation of the ideas of differences and separations in the conscience of the ordinary man. All this was done under cover of the good intention to unify and globalize.

The notions of Occident and Orient vary in their content according to the goals of the argumentation. They refer either to geographical zones of Europe (with movable borders), or to the parts of the Globe, or finally they refer to political, economic, cultural or religious realities. This political-economic-cultural construction distinguishes some genuine elements, belonging to the specific traits of the inhabitants from one region or another. These features are visible,—they cannot be denied and at the beginning of this century they were already clearly asserted by different personalities.

In 1927, a Romanian philosopher, Mihai Ralea concluded:

Under different variations of detail, man who inhabits today our continent is presented under two well defined types: the Occidental and the Oriental. In the West and centre of Europe reigns one

mentality; and toward the East, toward the most advanced posts of Asia, another one. The English, the French, the German, the Italian, the Scandinavian, despite all the differences between them, constitute the same civilization. Their technology, the way they approach life, their modality for adapting themselves to the environment, are common. Beyond, at the windows of Asia, where their peninsula entered into the life of Europe, the Turkish, Russians, part of the Balkan peoples, constitute another world, with other laws, with another soul, another philosophy (5, p. 73).

The differentiation becomes more emphatic in modern authors who remark the increasing distance between what are called East and West, between the Occidental and the Oriental worlds, a distance that is continuously created by the events of the history: colonialism, religious 'missionarism', racism, domination by Occidental science, technology, economy. This unchallenged domination created a psychology of the master, not only at the institutional level but also at the level of every individual living in the Occidental zone, subordinated to a certain type of ideology:

...during the last centuries, a mental habit was created, deeply rooted in Occidentals; the habit to consider the world as a vast territory that has to be exploited and to see the non-Occidentals as people that have to be enlightened by the real civilization. Also, there is a broadly spread feeling that the Occident can happily live without the non-Occidental world, peoples, cultures and religions. The biggest part of the Occidental instruction is firstly concerned with the Occidental tradition; the people finish their studies without learning anything about the non-Occidental histories, geographies, religions or cultures (4, p. 261).

The distance between West and East is deepened by the Orientals' attitude, which equates the Occident with modernity and modernity with the essence of evil:

Frequently the Orthodox people are afraid of modernity. They have the feeling that this modernity is imposed on them from outside, that it constitutes a brutal, sadistic intrusion of an Occident deformed by heresy. They desperately see how civilizations inspired more or less by their faith now are collapsing in front of them, because of the havoc of a technology without finality. The Orthodox people see individualism destroying traditional solidarities, the hedonism often violent and coarse that seems to make man forget his eternal destiny. It is true that modernity is addicted to nihilism and to the internal emptiness which is alive with all sorts of idolatries: simulacrum, trade, eroticism and drugs. It is true that, although it unifies the planet materially, modernity seems unable to share rightfully the resources and to assume the cultural diversity;

... However it would be false and dangerous to see only these aspects of the modernity. For it is surprisingly complex and heterogenous: modernity discusses its own realities and does not cease to look for solutions (6, p.23).

These words belong to the Patriarch of Antioc and express clearly a certain psychological subjectivity; it is rooted in a real situation but the reality of a situation cannot be a good argument for building a whole psychological conception of opposition.

The opposition of the different conceptions is merely an artificial construct built upon a false exaggeration of the differences, upon a continuous creation of conflicts, especially, of value-conflicts; upon the declaration, based on power, that certain cultural products are superior to

others; upon imposing spiritual edifices, acclaimed as unique and absolute; upon the continuing attempt to take possession of what remained still unpossessed, whether the project belongs to the physical world or to the realm of ideas.

This undertaking of a negative moulding of the human subjectivity, of an insemination of conflict and separation, belongs both to the Occident and the Orient. What is different are the instruments. However, despite the adverse facts, the attentive ear of some optimistic herald discerns another tonality:

Now, when the end of the twentieth century is close upon us, implying that we have heard more than two thirds of its melody, it is perhaps advisable for us to meditate upon the contrast and continuity between the tune of the nineteenth century and the one we have heard in our own times. Each melody has inside itself several themes that interpenetrate each other, forcing us to be selective and sensitive. The theme I have perceived from the melody developed during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, with a more accelerated crescendo, is the quest of mankind's unity (4, p. 8).

At this moment, one of the strongest themes that can be heard is that of the ecumenism. According to the dictionary, the term of ecumenism (*oikoumene*) is a derivation of the verb "*oikos*" (to build, to establish) and means "inhabited land". In Xenophon's work, the meaning is more extended, referring to the whole earth, to the universe. Further, we find the word "*oiko*": house, habitation, temple (7, pp. 1355-1357). The ordinary present meaning of ecumenism is the interaction of Christians, the restoration of the unity of traditional Churches (8, p. 256). However, the word is used more and more in broader contexts that accept also other religions than the Christian; it appears, often as a synonym for tolerance, mutual acceptance, a general understanding of the basis of common viewpoints.

When a word points in a right direction, it invites its usage. It itself dictates its own meanings, and in this case, the world "ecumenism" indicates a return to the original etymon: to live in the same house, to be together under the same roof. The bluntness and lack of impact of such other words as silence, understanding or tolerance, and their lack of contact with daily life, have generated not an abandonment of hope, but a new approach from another direction and under another name. The ecumenical power of philosophy has failed, on the one hand by its own fragmentation, and on the other hand by a lowering of people's cultural level. The new ecumenical authority, *viz.*, religion, requires not so much reason as feelings. Even if ignored, religion cannot be openly despised, at least not at this time. One can act against it if the economic or political interests so require, as for example, either supporting the Muslims in a war against Christians, or attacking the same Muslims under more or less Christian pretexts. In this way both religions are discredited. However, the assailants, caught in a bureaucratic trap of democracy, cannot undisguisedly eliminate the voice of religions, nor cancel the high significations from the Church's discourse. Therefore, for a certain phase, religious ecumenism can assume the task of universality and unity.

There are two opposite situations in which a discussion about ecumenism is useless: at the highest level, that of integral unity, the differences are equated in a common formula. This level does not belong to the mundane and therefore, cannot be reached by human reason. The second situation, at the lowest end, refers to the excess of differentiation—either collective or individual—which is synonymous with opposition. This is the hypostasis of non-ecumenism negative

ecumenism, as against the unity principle. The harmony and conflicts are just signs of the temporary winners, sometimes from up to down, sometimes from down to up.

Considering ecumenism in its broadest conception, there are many fields to be consider: national psychology, cultural personalities, philosophy, religion, theology. In everyone of these areas there is a possibility of engendering ecumenical ideas that are, intelligible and genuine in any geographical zone. Economy, technology and politics are not ecumenical; their power to create a humanist product is negligible, even if they fill man's life in every sphere of his existence.

Mircea Eliade noted:

To reach a spiritual signification means to arrive at an ecumenical value, to turn it into an object of universal circulation or to transform it into an instrument of civilization and human dignity (9, p. 26).

Therefore, we consider ecumenism as the assembly (*ecclesia*) of all spiritual values, regardless of their source: people, community or individual; whatever the time and space that gave them birth. We shall approach the fields with a potential for ecumenism, with examples taken from Romanian experience. The basis for discussion is Christian in nature, in the sense of observing not the Orthodox theological dogma, but its spirit as expressed by Jesus; norms asserting the binding powers of truth, understanding and non-violence as essential rules. For rational expression, the point of reference would be Kantian moral law.

The national psychology. One who really wants to know the psychology of a people has to approach first of all its tradition and mainly its folklore. There are people and communities which are active, expansionist and there are others of which the dominant feature is contemplation and transcendency. Beside these, every nation must more or less value ecumenism. The cultures which have an advantage are those which preserved in the villages, which have prolonged their rural life as the most sure guardian of the spiritual legacy and the direct path to self-knowledge, even the relation of the concrete to the ideal village can create harmony:

Each of us who departs from the village keeps the village not as a memory or as relics, but as a presence that crosses each of our body molecules.

Whether we want or not, the people live in each of us. As for us, who by culture have raised ourselves with our reason 'above' it, we still live this people in two ways at the time: we live it as it is, in its bitter reality and also as it should be, in its spiritualized and perfect image (10, p. 36).

From this point of view, Romanians among the most favored as the rural civilization, ignored or blamed by moderns, continues to function for them. Its spiritual matrix, created by the peasant house, the rural community and tradition, still has the power to generate spiritual life. Individuals, as isolated units, may be far from the ideal image; but the collective soul, its direct access to zones inaccessible to the individual, constitutes the essential element that defines the psychic continuity of a nation. The village stores the unknown richness of a community.

The basic feature of the spirituality of the Romanian village is definitely Christianity. One of the most direct proofs is that contained in the Romanian folklore. Beyond the descent of the saints and God on the earth in different poems, legends and fairy-tales; beyond the biblical explanations of cosmogony interpreted in a very specific manner; beyond the observance of Church rituals,

Romanian Christianity has not only an integral character, but also an intuitive-transcendent one. For example, Venus, the Roman goddess, who gave actually the name to 'Friday' (11) in Romanian, is a very important character in fairy-tales; here she became an wise and old woman, a great help in all positive endeavours. She keeps the attributes of the beneficient divinity, being called "Saint Vineri" (Saint Friday). But more interesting is the finding of Simion Mehedinti (geographer, ethnographer, philosopher and Christian pedagogue) which notes the modality in which the Romanian people's intuition surpasses the dogmatic doubts and debates, presenting as natural, a result that was reached by the learned theologians only with long delay:

It is not without importance to recall how deeply the veneration of the mother of the Lord penetrates the Romanian people's affectivity. It is known that, in the first centuries of Christianity, the Virgin Mary did not have any place in Liturgy. Her veneration started later, and only in the eighth century did the Church calendar contain four celebrations in Her honour. Still the opinions about this worship were divided for a long time. ... Let's judge now if after so much pain of the scholars, it is not worthy also to consider the way the Romanian people embrace in their soul together with Jesus, the Mother of the Lord, too, without lingering on theological finenesses. One should say that nobody from heaven is so often asked for help as is the Mother of the Lord (12, pp. 75-76).

There are countless folk poems which have the Mother of the Lord as the main character, or that the folk books (the life of the Mother of the Lord, the Letter of the Mother of the Lord) are fundamental for the religious folk culture, is indisputable. Also a peculiar fact is that the Mother of Lord is seen not so much as Virgin Mary, but as a mother whose pain, suffering and sacrifice are a model of life on earth and of the light from Heaven. Perhaps here is the moment to point out that the Romanian word itself for "world" comes directly from the Latin word for "light" (13). Pope John Paul II himself recalls this fact saying:

... according to a popular tradition, Romania is called the Garden of the Virgin Mary...I ask Mary that the beloved Romanian people grow in the spiritual and moral values underlying all society made after man's measure, and attentive to the common good (27, p.5).

Obviously, the same norms, the same principles and the same faith, are developed in a different modality in different communities:

The Christian doctrine is one and the same thing from eternity to eternity. But people who approach it, develop themselves in different ways, according to the dominant ethnic temperament of each of them. In the light of the sun, the wheat grows as wheat, and the grapes as grapes. There are peoples with a mystical temperament, that is developed in the contemplations of great solitaries. There are peoples with critical spirit, realized in a philosophical thinking. There are peoples with artistic genius that is glorified in the brilliant lights of beauty. Christianity is universal in Revelation, but becomes national according to the dominant mode of the ethnic temperament which realized this Christianity. This truth, certified by the historical reality, is concordant, on one side, with the natural law of the varieties of beings, and on the other side with the revealed doctrine of Grace, that works in endless ways, according to the natural modes, from being to being. The constant law of the Christian perfection requires a self-realization in Christ according to the maximum possibilities, rooted in a people's unique nature (10, p. 199).

From the beginning, therefore, ecumenism is based on differentiations which it upholds and brings near. The awareness of being something else is a first step, but from here, the ways for actions are multiple: either alienation with withdrawal, or alienation with aggressiveness; either stimulus for a compelled equalization or accentuation of differentiation and individualization (usually in manipulative interests); or finally the path of ecumenical acceptance.

It seems that or this psychological plain too Romanians have an open door for self-development. At a triple crossroad: geographical, political, linguistic, they attempt to assemble Occidental and Oriental features less as individuals and more as a community collecting the singularities within the same river bed. This fact urges the Romanian seek to understand and to make himself understood in all directions. On the one hand, Romanians live their Orthodoxy in the most contemplative spirit:

Generally, Orthodoxy is not a school for the practical life. Suitable to other periods, it did not have in itself that ferment that somewhere else has prepared in the believers' soul the aspirations to a better fate on the Earth, urging for political or social reforms. About Orthodoxy one cannot say, as is said about Protestantism, for example—that it has put in the peoples' consciences the intransigencies towards certain political opinions. … The Orthodoxy has maintained itself in the sublime sphere of the Saviours's words: My Kingdom is not of this world. ... Render ... unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are Gods'.

Living therefore its Orthodoxy, Romanian people

... preferred a clergy keeping itself far from political structure of the country; ... preferred also an interpretation of the Gospel closer to the first fathers of the Christian Church's interpretation. Orthodoxy wanted that the concerns for the practical morality be well differentiated from the religious ones, thus, the first is not allowed to be promoted from the height of the pulpit and thus increase discord in society... (14, pp. 107-108).

On the other hand, Romanians were permanently attentive to what was happening in the West; they knew the geography and history of Europe (and not only of it) and not a few Occidentals came to the courts of the Romanian rulers as physicians, counsellors, constructors. Gradually, Romanian institutions became Occidental and the 1848 Revolutions brought out the Romanians' appetite for modernity.

So another psychological feature showing up at this time is integration and adaptation, as is noted by Mihai Ralea:

If we carefully pay attention to the customs, the institutions, to the way our people reacts, we shall easily reach the conclusion that its psychology is certain expressed through an equidistant behavior, one between the militant voluntarism of the West and fatalistic passivity of the Orient. Laid geographically and spiritually between the influences that came from both sides, our soul has formed an equilibrium made of traits taken from both sides. These double influences did not remain in conflict, or dualism. They have melted-down, in our soul, creating a new synthesis, an equilibrium. Our psychological equilibrium is called adaptability.

By this we are distinct from the Oriental world but also from the Western one (5, p.76).

No need to say that this adaptability is an essential component of ecumenism. Obviously, the aptitude for ecumenism does not belong to one single people. It can be found as a psychological feature of any nation, but it is expressed in different forms. It may be attached to one or another reality—a good neighbourhood or communication on a cultural, political or economic plane. At the level of national psychologies there is also possible an ecumenism attached to religion. In this respect, the study of every nation's psychology and of the creativity realized by its members is fundamental. Among the multitude of the features, the selection of those that promote understanding and union and their emphasis in a people's conscience, leads to recalling and re-learning by the respective people the ecumenical behavior and attitudes. In contract from an ecumenical perspective nationalism can be a considerable obstacle to sectarian communitarian interests.

In the folk psychology and creation, culture as a global phenomenon develops ecumenical characteristics and the interests of many cultural personalities are stimulated and guided in this direction. Cultural ecumenism is one of the easiest ecumenisms to recognize and outline; its universal ideas are easily assimilated and recognized as such. It is more difficult is to recognize universal personalities, unless they are supported by non-cultural interests. However, these personalities, whether recognized or not exercise their ecumenical activity of influencing attitudes in the direction of unity or unification.

At any epoch, human communities have generated two types of ecumenical personalities:

- the migratory type—persons who move from one country to another, from one community to another one.
- the autochthonous type—persons who deepen firstly their own tradition and culture, using universal instruments.

The migratory ecumenical personality is usually an individual with a solid culture who for one or another reason lives in an ethnic community other than his own. He processes the new experiences firstly through the structures of thinking, principles, traditions specific to his nation of origin, to which he adds new ideas and thinking patterns. In a way, he is the representative of the specific in the universal.

The autochthonous personality becomes deeply involved in his own culture, the culture of his people, adding and integrating values, categories, instruments belonging to other cultures, unifying in this way principles separated by the time and interests of the temporary leaders. His ideas remain usually autochthonous firstly due to the fact the translations of his writings is very difficult, if not impossible. The language is too specific, too related to the unconsciousness of the respective people, too deeply involved in his community's spiritual life.

The role of individuals who have assumed, consciously or not, a cultural ecumenical task is fundamental. To the peoples' need to think within palpable limits there are answers from a tangible person who embodies an idea, a principle, a community or a nation; what was not understood, is now understood through a concrete, intelligible example. On the other side, the ecumenical qualities of a personality cannot express themselves and have their impact if the respective community has no capacities to receive these qualities, if the "ecumenical eye" is missing. Around 1936 Nichifor Crainic, a Romanian scholar, highlighted the unifying role of the culture for building an undivided Europe, psychologically and spiritually:

... the foundation of the European conscience is not only a geographical, continental or an economic space; first and foremost, the basis of the European conscience is the European culture. We adhere to Europe for the values contained in its culture, values that are unique in this world. Which are indeed, the powers that form the European culture, this crown of the humankind? ... these powers are: Christianity, the Ancient Classicism, and the creative genius of every European nation.

... We understand the European culture as a triumph of the European spirituality materialized in two words: national land for every people and Christian heaven for all together (10, pp. 109-110).

Thus, one can see that, at the beginning of this century, mostly after the first World War and around the second one, the idea of an European cultural ecumenism was old already.

Whatever would be the capitalist assertions about democracy or the socialist ones promoting the collective leadership, however strong would be the indoctrination of either side, one fact remains, no matter what the doctrine. The simple and obvious truth as that it is the individual who determines the change and not the masses. To become believable this needs a theoretical construction fitted to the limitation of the mental structures of the mass. If these theoretical structures are missing, the truth (or the non-truth) is certified by a person. Such a person, invested with cultural authority has the power to develop opposition to the normal tendency of a collectivity to lower the general cultural level. The existence of such a cultural personality, ecumenical by his own structure, is the affirmation of the essential importance of a high spiritual individual for preserving the human quality. Jung's words argue this point:

The tempo of the development of consciousness through science and technology was too rapid and left the unconscious, which could no longer keep up with it, far behind, thereby forcing it into a defensive position which expresses itself in a universal will to destruction. The political and social -isms of our day preach every conceivable ideal but, under this mask, they pursue the goal of lowering the level of our culture by restricting or altogether inhibiting the possibilities of individual development. They do this partly by creating a chaos controlled by terrorism, a primitive state of affairs that affords only the barest necessities of life and surpasses in horror the worst times of the so-called "Dark" Ages. It remains to be seen whether this experience of degradation and slavery will once more raise a cry for greater spiritual freedom.

The problem cannot be solved collectively, because the masses are not changed unless the individual changes. At the same time, even the best looking solution cannot be forced upon him, since it is a good solution only when it is combined with a natural process of development. It is therefore a hopeless undertaking to stake everything on collective recipes and procedures. The bettering of a general ill begins with the individual, and then only when he makes himself and not others responsible. This is naturally only possible in freedom, but not under a rule of force, whether this be exercised by a self-elected tyrant or by one thrown up by the mob (15, p. 349).

The ecumenical personality has the task to awake the conscience of the "stylistic unity," which in this context has the double quality: cultural and spiritual.

This original concept, created by Lucian Blaga, poet, playwright and philosopher and a great ecumenical Romanian personality, unifies the most dissimilar things: the classic French tragedy,

Leibniz's metaphysics, infinitesimal mathematics and the absolutist state. However, the style does not belong exclusively to spiritual engineering:

The style, it is true, in relationship to the man's conscious preoccupations, but the forms it takes, are holding too little to the order of the conscious determinations. A border tree, with its roots in another country, the style collects its juice from there, uncontrolled and free from customs formalities. Without us to know, without us to want, the style establishes itself; it enter partly in the light cone of the conscience, like a message from the empire of the supra-light, or like a magic creature from the great and dark fairy-tale of the telluric life. … Usually, only those people that geographicaly or chronologically live and breath within another stylistical unit are in the position to become aware of the "stylistic unity" of the works belonging to a certain zone or time (16, pp. 6-7).

With the progression of the civilization and the appearance and multiplication of the institutions for ordering and controlling society and the collective conscience, the stylistical unity began to crumble more and more, and retreated from the spiritual aristocracy. It began to separate from the active conscience but waited in the unconscious for the moment to return. This collective magma is waiting for a new spiritual individualization.

Returning to the cultural personality, it has to be said that Romanians possess fully the two types of ecumenical personalities. The first type, the "migrator", can be found for example in history, at the learned boyar Udriste Nasturel who translated in 1647, the book *Imitatio Christi* into Slavonic, the language of the Orthodox Church at that time. This was the first translation into Slavonic and was diffused in Eastern Europe. The same boyar translated from Slavonic into Romanian a popular Christian novel, very widespread thereafter among Romanians. Also, he built a house and modernized a castle in the Renaissance Style. Petru Movila is another ecumenical personality. Belonging to an important Romanian family with several *Voivodes* (kings), he became the Metropolitan of Kiev. He supported the introduction of the printing press in Moldavia. In 1642 the Orthodox Synod of Iasi (former Romanian capital) adopted the *Orthodox Avowal* of Petru Movila; the decision of the Synod, published in Iasi, is the first printed work in Moldavia (17, pp. 121; 119). The Latin version—Petru Movilã's *Confessio Orthodoxa*—is still often quoted in Western theological literature, analyzing its relationship with Occidental Theology (18).

Another Romanian personality who joined in his work the Orient with the Occident, is Dimitrie Cantemir (the XVIIIth century). Son of a Voivode of Moldavia and twice Voivode himself, Cantemir passed the first part of his life in Constantinople (Istambul). He wrote the first Romanian philosophical work: "The Council of the Wise-Man's Quarrel with the World or the Trial Between Soul and Body". The Romanian text is accompanied by a Greek version; subsequently an Arab version was made of it and preserved in several manuscripts. In 1714, for his particular merits, Dimitrie Cantemir, former voivode of Moldavia, was elected member of the Academy in Berlin, being the first Romanian member of a European Academy of science. Banished in 1711 to Russia, Dimitrie Cantemir wrote between 1714-1716, "Historia Incrementarum atqne decrementarum Aulae Othomanicae", printed for the first time in Tyndal's English version in London, in 1734-1735. The second English edition of 1756 also mentioned by Byron, was printed on the basis of a subscription-list headed by the Queen of England and the Prince of Wales. The French version (Paris, 1743), used and mentioned by Voltaire, as well as the German one (1745), were made after the English version. During the same period, Cantemir draws up, at the request of the Academy of Berlin, "Descriptio antiqui et hodierni status Moldaviae:", a

historical, geographical and ethnographical work, accompanied by a map, drawn according to the standard of European cartography of the time, the first Romanian map of Moldavia. It was printed first in German at Hamburg, and subsequently in Russian. Cantemir begins also "The Chronicle of the Ancient History of the Roman-Moldo-Walachians", a synthesis of the history of all Romanians; it focused upon the idea of the unity of origins, Romanity and upon the idea of the Romanians' continuity in Dacia. It asserts also, the part played by the Romanians in the world history by standing up against the Turkish invasion of Europe (17, p.135).

Cantemir took the initiative of the establishment of a Russian Academy; he is a private counsellor of Peter the Great, on whose behalf he undertakes scientific studies and writes about Moslem religion. An expert in Oriental problems for the West, Dimitrie Cantemir was the first 'Eastern European'. For Russia, one can say that the literary history of Russia begins with Antioh, the son-poet of Cantemir (3, pp. 30-31).

Closer to our time, one of the important unifying personalities is Mircea Eliade. About whom the great Romanian philosopher, Constantin Noica, said:

By his creation, Mircea Eliade succeeded at the same time to stir up the souls and to help them to arrive at an order, separating himself from his country but taking his country with him, and imposing himself in the universal culture, as no one other Romanian scholar has. Whence this interest for Eliade's work, both in our country as in the wide world? If he would have been only a historian of religions, even the most outstanding of his time, as it was said, he would have shared the destiny of the great specialists. But everybody who has read his work, here (in Romania) and in West, in the two American continents as in Japan, in Indonesia as in Australia, everybody felt that there is something special and new, something unexpectedly actual in his research of an unequalled extent; they felt that it is about the spiritual life of a man from 'everywhere'.

This spiritiual life, with its myths and beliefs, stays face to face with nothingness. If 30-40 years ago, the symbolisms, archetypes, myths and beliefs seemed exterior to the spiritual life, now we realize that they rule the spirit and that in one way or another, are laid into the core of history... (M. Eliade) has mediated between West and the Far Orient, between the material civilization and spirit, between the scientific culture and myth, between modern and primitive, between religions and tribal beliefs, between the important cultures and the folk cultures; he always has mediated between us, Romanians (with our protohistory and folklore, full of universal symbolisms) and the wide world of history; ...he even dreamt during half of a century, that our country be the mediator, the "pivot", he said, around which can take place the meeting between the two extreme worlds, the Eastern and the Western ones, which will decide the sense or non-sense of the blue planet (3, pp. 243; 19).

The other "interior" side of ecumenism, deepening the particular national spirit through certain Universal categories, is also well represented in Romania. The absence of the expansionist impulse, territorial or economic, is manifested in the subjective, cultural, spiritual plane. There was an ignorance of the Romanian culture and spirituality beyond its borders, due firstly to the lack of translations from Romanian into other languages. Many Romanian poets and philosophers could not find equivalents in other languages for different subtleties of their language and thinking. This the problem of untranslatability is a common problem for every national culture. However, it is precisely these untranslatable cultural personalities who bring universal ideas into Romanian culture, an appreciation of the spirit whatever be its cultural origins, and the enrichment of

affectivity by the incorporation of the others' feelings. Almost unknown by the universal culture, these personalities are in fact, the genuine creators, keepers and guardians of that universal culture. Among these characters of the Romanian culture one should be mentioned one who can be considered as a model of cultural ecumenism. He offers a most striking example through his novel *Mahmud's slippers*. The writer, Gala Galaction, is an Orthodox priest (20) who pleads for an ecumenism based on the community of the human features, against all the other criteria.

Here, in a few words, is the plot. During the Independence War against the Ottoman Empire (1877), a shoemaker, otherwise a kind and merciful man, kills, in a moment of drunkenness, the Turkish prisoner, Mahmud.

After he knocked him down, Savu the shoe-maker noticed that the Turk's footwear was broken, and his toes stiffened by frost. Suddenly it is revealed to him that his enemy was just a very tired, sick and poor man. Torn with remorse he buried the Turk in the Orthodox cemetery, in his own place from his family's grave. Since this moment he could not live any more a normal life; he confessed himself to a hermit who reprimanded him severely: "Your crime is Cain's crime. You killed your brother; you killed a human being" and gave him as a punishment to leave his house and wealth and to work without receiving any money in exchange. This confession and penance of the sinner is similar to the one found in the Romanian fairy-tales; it is an amalgam of traditional folk-justice and Christian mercy. For the guilt of killing a Turk without being in a right battle, the monk's judgement is firm: "For the life you have extinguished, I take as a pledge, your life... Go on foot, wandering throughout the world, on all the paths, through all the dangers and in any kind of weather; until you will break down one thousand pairs of footwear and then God will forgive you! But your life, however long it may be, would not be enough for such an ordeal. Then, here is what the Holy Spirit commands: you have to fabricate with your own hands a thousand pairs of footwear—of all kind and for all ages—to scour the world and to give them as alms to all the poor people and to all the desperate ones. And when you will expiate these one thousand pairs given as alms, God will have mercy and will forgive you."

In his wandering, Savu, the Orthodox Christian, became a very good friend with Ibraim the Turk to whom he told his whole story; the Turk read to him from the Koran and the Romanian read from the Bible to the Moslem. The two people then became friends, with a Jew. The commentary of the author (an Orthodox priest) is put in the mouth of Marcu, the Jew: "He is alone, up there and we are all, his children... and we make so much noise, fight each other, we oppress and hate each other... some of us are Jewish, others—Christians and others Moslems, but we are all the sons of the same heavenly father. How did we separate each other and go in all directions ?... But, whatever each person's belief is, it is right to show that we are brothers and we hope to meet each other again in the same heavenly and paternal house" (21, pp. 92-93; 120).

When he finished the last pairs of slippers, the shoemaker died and was buried in the Turkish cemetery, in the grave belonging to Ibraim the Turk. This interpretation of the destinies, the exchanges of life and death between people who, according to social and religious institutionalized rules should be separated, if not even in conflict, restores ecumenism in its own right; it re-reveals its genuine source which is the unique and ultimate light.

Another source for the promotion of ecumenism, actually, the source of putting this concept back into circulation for the modern world is the action of the Churches. They link ecumenism to the schism, considering it as a return to the primary Church. This ecumenism is related only to the restoration of the Christian *ecclesia*.

In this respect, the most important obstacle is, after an expression of Kitagawa, the *missionary imperialism*. This kind of imperialism contains two aspects: the first is visible and

refs to the fact that (almost) every religion tries to dominate the spirit of another nation by heroic wars, crusades, aggressive missionary activities. This aspect could be called an active religious imperialism. The second aspect, less visible, could be called a passive religious imperialism; this refers to the subjectivity of every religion, that interprets in its own way both the socio-cultural and the divine reality. Every religion holds strongly to its conception, implicitly attacking the other religions' postulates. Kitakawa remarks that:

... even the most tolerant religious conception is usually anchored in the specific perspective of that religion and in the way it defines the nature of the reality, world and of the man's destiny (4, p. 278).

The same observation was made a long time before by Ramakrishna, using a picturesque image:

People worship God according to their tastes and temperaments. The mother cooks the same fish differently for her children, that each one may have what suits his stomach (1, p. 189)

Another voice found a "modern" feature of religions that had a negative impact greater perhaps than imperialism. Olivier Clement talked thus about the temptation of the fundamentalism exhibited by Christians and mostly by the Orthodoxies:

The communism fell down, but in the freed historic field, the fundamentalism appeared within the great religions. It comes on one side, from the Occidental 'modernity' in its most vulgar forms: money as the unique criterion of appreciation, violence, drugs, sexual liberty which demolishes the symbol of man-women relationship.

More profoundly, the shock comes from the traditional civilizations—within which man is part of a collectivity and knows through it, without reflecting, a relation of quasi-fusion with the divinity, with the universe—to the modern civilization, characterized by individual liberty, the urge for choosing, the fascination for technology, all of these determining a huge up-rooting of man. In the Occident, this passage was realized step by step, taking centuries and allowing at the same time, the development of the critical spirit, tolerance, dialogue.

While in the Occidental Europe and North America modernity was born from a sociologic, psychologic, and spiritual local field, in the rest of the world, it was brutally imposed by outside. It destroyed the mental and social structures, pushed itself onto the huge millions of peasants perplexed by the market economy (21, pp. 122-123).

Leaving aside the affirmations concerning the identity between capitalism and modernism, as well as the lack of accuracy concerning the former socialist countries (we lived in the modern epoch too, though in a controlled way), O. Clement's words are essentially true. The abolition of socialism has created the illusion that people will have an interval for meditation, recovery and the expression of their own identity. Instead, they have fully received the *black* wave of the market economy. The main refuge—the Orthodox religion (because the majority of the former socialist countries are Orthodox)—was forced to take up a position against the unexpected invasion and

naturally, the declarations of Churches were severe or even very severe. Some of the Eastern Churches understand and recognize that:

If Western people, says Ignatie the Fourth, Patriarch of Antioch—opened themselves too much towards the world, the Christians from the Orient have the tendency to marginalize themselves in relation to the world, to treat themselves as in a beautiful decorated grave (6, p. 27).

Christian "fundamentalism" is fed by a previous source of error, which also had determined, the schism. It is a specific characteristic of human beings as individuals or as a community that on the basis of their own subjective and limited experience they are the exclusive keeper of the truth. The desire to possess that has generated the property rights was extended from the material to spiritual, attaining finally the dangerous assertion of the possession of the true knowledge of God, of the possession therefore, of the Divinity itself.

At these, Ramakhrisna replies:

Do you know what the truth is? God has made different religions to suit different aspirants, times and countries. All doctrines are only so many paths; but a path is by no means God Himself. Indeed, one can reach God if one follows any of the paths with whole-hearted devotion (1, p. 559).

Obviously, his words, as well as other voices of the modern times, remained unheard. There is a logical and metaphysical impossibility, after an expression of Frithjof Schuon, of possessing the truth. The exoteric power claim for an exclusive hold upon a unique truth or of The Truth is an error. Any truth that is expressed has to be wrapped in a form for its expression. From the metaphysical point of view, it is impossible for a form to have a unique value, excluding other forms. By definition a form cannot be exclusive, it cannot be the only possible expression of a thing (22, pp. 44; 46).

To be convincing, the right argumentation has to meet receivers, at least equal in their affective or rational development to the transmitter. The proof that this is not happening is that the question of the possession of the absolute truth remains open with every religion claiming it without concession.

Orthodox "fundamentalism" is stimulated by a certain Occidental feature, seen as opposed to the Oriental characteristics, that is, the psychology of the master. Kitagawa describes it exactly: the Occidental domination of the whole world in the last four hundred and fifty years, and the strong expansion of the Christian mission activity all over the globe, have determined an intense wish of the non-Occidental people, nations, cultures and religious to separate themselves from everything Occidental. Even the attempts at agreement and tolerance are touched by the virus of subjective and self-sufficient blindness. Interreligious and intercultural dialogues take place under the illusion that the only reliable modality is the Occidental way to see the reality; this is the most adequate common framework for any future dialogue. Even the Occidental specialists in non-Occidental thinking, literature and religions consider their methods as impartial and objective, while non-Occidentals see them as anchored in a self-legitimated circularity (4, pp.25;221).

Despite the multiplication of the conflict-motives, or perhaps precisely due to that, a movement of unification appeared—the ecumenical movement. The ecumenical movement was born from the anxiety and dissatisfaction of the contemporary Christian conscience which has had to confront two phenomena of contemporary Christianity: its unsatisfactory answer to the aspirations and challenges of modern humanity as well as to its disintegration from within. At the

same time, this movement was born from the will to cure these negative phenomena (23, p. 544). That is why ecumenism is a historic emergency (24, p. 215).

In this respect, the ecumenical movement has created two terms the significance of which has received general agreement: that of "Christian service" and "pro-existence." Service comes from a sentiment of the equality and natural unity of people, aiming at their restoration. By this, the service contributes permanently to maintaining and enriching the community. To serve people means to serve simultaneously the superior values; in a Christian sense it means to serve God. The term "pro-existence" means the existence *for* another. This highlights that coexistence signifies the existence of many together. Pro-existence signifies existing together with another and for everyone from the existing people. Therefore, as said Father Stãniloaie, to serve means to work for others but to pro-exist means more, namely, to exist for the others. The pro-existence excludes ontologically the selfishness that, in fact, is a perversity or alienation of human nature (25, p. 1027).

Despite the new concepts, despite the repeated attempts of the Christian Churches to reach together the primary divine unicity, every Church remains locked in its own larder. The Orthodox Church promotes firmly the conception according to which the redemption is only for those who belong to Orthodoxy. In spite of its declarations for ecumenism, the Catholic Church does the same:

The promotion of the restoration of the Unity between all Christians is one of the main goals of the Holy Ecumenical Council Vatican II. Christ the Lord has established one single Church and however many Christian Communities appear to people as being the true heritage of Christ; all of them claims that they are the Lord's disciples, but they are not alike and walk on different paths, as if Christ Himself were divided. This separation contradicts openly, Christ's will...

... the brothers separated from us both as individuals and as community and their Churches, do not enjoy the unity that Jesus Christ wanted to give to everybody...

It is true, only through the Catholic Church of Christ, that is the general instrument for redemption, can be gained the whole plenitude of the means of redemption (26, pp. 119, 121).

It is also true, however, that every epoch, every generation remembers not only the occasion of disagreement, but also those of harmony. In this context, the visit of the Pope John Paul II to Romania in May 1999, has a distinctive significance and importance on the path to Christian ecclesial unity. It was the first visit a Pope paid to a prevailingly Orthodox country after the great Schism of 1054. Therefore it was a truly historic visit of great ecumenical impact for both Churches, for the Roman-Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church in general, and for the Romanian Orthodox Church in particular. On this occasion, the Pope highlighted the role of every national Church in building the true ecumenism:

The monasteries, the churches covered with frescos, the icons, the liturgical vestments, the manuscripts are not just gems of your culture, but also impressive pieces of evidence attesting Christian faith, a live Christian faith. This artistic heritage born from the brasier of monks and nuns, of craftsmen and villagers inspired by the beauty of the Byzantine liturgy constitutes a very significant contribution to the dialogue between East and West and to the revival of that brotherliness the Holy spirit kindles in us on the eve of the new millennium. Your Romanian land can become a meeting and communion point. It is crossed by the great Danube, which flows

through the East and the West alike. May Romania, just like this river, be able to foster relations of understanding and communion between various peoples themselves helping to assert the civilization of love in the world too (27, p. 12).

In spite of different endeavours for the rapprochement, the religious doctrines and institutions did not get closer and a favorable anticipation seems venturesome. The temporary solution, offered by different sources is less sensitive to conflicts. This solution refers to the valorization of the cultural ecumenical attitude. The present period is not a final ending stage, that is, one of union. Its task is related to information and knowledge, to appreciation and perhaps incorporation of some of the values belonging to other religious cultures. Seventy years ago, the Romanian thinkers already opened this path. Here is what Nichifor Crainic, a famous professor of theology said at that time:

Concerning the religious problem in Europe of tomorrow... this question is thorny and has many sides needing to be discussed. One of the main aspects would be the union of all confessions in one single universal church organism. The common Christian ideal and the common dangers would logically lead to this conclusion. All Christian confessions pray for union but they do not agree upon the modality to realize this. It seems that this event, that would be the greatest in the world history since Jesus Christ's birth, is not in the man's power but only in God's will. But, the religious question in Europe of tomorrow has also a cultural aspect that cannot be ignored. The religion is the great inspirer of the Romanian culture, ... but especially a great inspirer of the European culture. ... Thus, if each of us protects his own country, he protects at the same time the European culture that involves the participation of every nation (10, p. 109).

Teodor M. Popescu, another important professor of theology stated at about the same period:

Religion does not produce only emotional dispositions and acts of internal devotion, but it is also an attitude toward nature and life and by this, religion produces cultural acts: morale, art, literature, juridical, social, political even, conceptions, acts being pre-eminently historic. All religions are carriers of moral conceptions and aims, therefore there are educators and constitute efforts for the keeping and preserving the values. Thus, by its function, religion becomes what it does not seem to be by its nature: a cultural value, one of a special power that helps the soul to rise above the nature.

What I said about the cultural value of religion, can be said twofold about Christianity. Christianity constitutes pre-eminently the religion and it is also eminently the cultural religion...

The cooperation of Christianity in human culture was mostly of a moral nature. The cultural principle of Christianity is one of moral order. But precisely this kind of principle characterized the real culture" (28, pp. 17; 220).

The same accent on the cultural aspects is placed by the Pope John-Paul II in his *Orientale Lumen*; he highlights the cultural specificity of the Orthodox religion, related to every particular community and shows that, in an epoch when the right of every people to express according to its own cultural national patrimony is recognized as fundamental, the experience of each Oriental Church appears as a success of inculturation worthy of interest; the announcement

of Gospel has also to be rooted in the specificity of the cultures and open to universality, to everybody's mutual enrichment (29, p. 100).

There is here a tendency to enlarge the cultural aspect of religion until one makes it *the* defining trait. Then religion no longer intersects with culture, but becomes a part of it, together with music, literature and art it loses its ecumenical specificity. This tendency has caused, to use Father Ion Bria's expression, the 'religious illiteracy' of the present time; the results of which are the advancement in secularization and the departure from religion. The same author sees the cultural contribution of Christian spirituality in the search for a common social ethics and in the establishment of the rules for a right life, for what is called orthopraxis, the right action. The orthopraxis has to be the base for future ecumenism (24, p. 43; 109).

Our epoch is characterized by a strong cultural exchange between Far East and West. It is based not on conventions, agreements or institutional willingness, but first of all on the emigration phenomenon, to which one could add powerful cultural initiatives. At about the end of the second World War, Henri de Lubac, a Catholic priest and an erudite researcher, noted that Europe was prepared to be spiritually colonized by the Orient, that there is no shelf in the European bookshops more solicited than the one containing books about Indian spirituality. Hendrik Kraemer, a Protestant Dutch specialist in missiology, also confirmed that art, literature, and psychoanalysis manifest a spontaneous opening, an availability for letting be themselves spiritually invaded by the Orient.

The phenomenon is fully confirmed by J.M. Kitagawa, a specialist in history of religion. He asserts that today anyone can see how much the Oriental influence has penetrated into Europe and North America. The Orient became a part of the immediate experience of many ordinary people from the Occident through art, literature, food, movies, karate, judo, radio, TV, computer technologies, automobiles. But more significant is the popularity in the Occident of the different kinds of Oriental spirituality and different religious traditions (4, pp. 226-263). Therefore, a phenomenon of "orientalization" of the Occident takes place, which is a natural reaction, to the colonization and missionary activity by the West in the East. The distinctive feature of the Eastern influence towards the West is that the "Orientalization" takes place in a much less violent way.

These facts confirm that we are still in a pre-ecumenical period; the events are not yet settled, but they are developing. Reflection upon their significance belongs to some individuals and not to everyone; the ecumenical attitude characterizes individuals and some communities more or less large, but in no way the institutional social structures or the official ideologies. In this respect the excessive institutionalization of the religious systems is a very difficult obstacle. The prevalence of the political values, the assumption by the political rulers of "religious or priestly functions", the teaching of the "Gospel preaching liberty, equality, fraternity, science and democracy," the promise of a "secularized salvation" (4, pp. 248-250), all of these are walls built up continuously by the interests of the mundane kingdom.

What can be, therefore, the picture of the future religious ecumenism ? One thing is sure, says Father Constantin Galeriu, namely that the Church's wish for unity has appeared in the moment even of its split. The unity is original and for that, it remains forever a fundamental aspiration. This endeavour was sometimes stronger and sometimes weaker, but was found permanently in history showing that the spirit of ecumenism, of the affiliation of all the Christians to the same Body of Christ was never extinguished (30, p. 611).

Father Ion Bria completes his look backwards with the forward progress of history, reminding us that the sense of the Lord's work in the World, the sense of salvation, is precisely the sense of

the unity of everyone. Concerning the Church, the goal of God is inseparable from the plan of the world's unity and salvation (24, p. 163).

At the same time, all these authors consider that the idea of a unique religion and Church is inconceivable. It is impossible, writes Kitagawa:

... that one single religion or a supreme ideology contain all the others or that different traditions abandon their particularities in order to give birth to unity. … The different religious will continue to evolve according to their own dynamics, crossing each other over the globe surface (4, p. 276).

Indeed, it is hard to believe that the Church institutions will find a common path; it is difficult to imagine also that they will recognize the fact that each of them possesses one part of the truth and not the whole truth. As long as the Western Churches and Eastern Churches will point to each other as "they" instead of feeling themselves all as "we", the argument will remain only as a wish and not as an honest aspiration.

A new chance is given through so called Orientalization of the Occident. Seen by Western people with only the eye of the intelligence and by the people of the Eastern churches only with a negative affectivity, Oriental philosophy and religion, dishonoured and vulgarized by all kinds of "Oriental" communities and sects, still remain to be discovered in their wisdom and generous ecumenism. Again Ramakrishna offers a model of thinking:

With sincerity and earnestness one can realize God through all religious. The Vaishnavas will realize God, and so will the Saktas, the Vedantists and the Brahmins. The Moslems and Christians will realize Him, too. All will certainly realize God if they are earnest and sincere... God can be reached by different paths. Suppose there are errors in the religion that one has accepted; if one is sincere and earnest, then God Himself will correct those errors... If there are errors in other religions, that is none of our business. God, to whom the world belongs, shall take care of that (1, p. 191)

As was said, delimitations of any kind are only the fruits of the limitations of the human mind. This major infirmity usually is strategically hidden under the need for discussions, conceptions and philosophies, or under what is called, in our times, dialogue. But this dialogue too is restricted at certain planes, is held by more or less isolated groups, on more or less specific topics, and the results do not have impact beyond the initial level of the dialogue.

For this a first cause is the increasing bureaucratisation of society, which does not allow a rapid circulation of communication, but introduces instead many times involuntarily but sometimes deliberately, obstacles of every kind.

Another cause consists of the crumbling, the growing particularisation of the professions, specializations, interests. Even if the communication would be realized in good conditions, it would not interest anyone outside the specific circle, due to the unintelligible language employed. Here a complementary cause appears, related to the ever more narrow capacity of individuals and groups to receive messages, either due to the too encoded language inaccessible to the receivers, or to the growing specificity of the interests of the different groups, leading to attention being drawn away to other domains.

Coming back to delimitations, divisions of the type North-South, East-West, and so on are concepts uncovered by genuine reality. They were initially conventions for offering to the human mind milestones for a global perception of reality. Through their transfer to other interest zones

and their excessive utilization, these conventions have gained their own life, and have become basic criteria for naming and reasoning upon phenomena and events. Instead of remaining forms, that is, names given to certain categories of realities, they became essences to which the categories of reality are attached.

This reverse rapport between form and essence will obviously finish in a dead end. Until then, however, it is a useful tool of ideologies and political indoctrination. The divisions and the division of divisions constitute a natural phenomenon. They cannot and must not be stopped. The error and what is bad will appear when these divisions are presented as implacable realities or absolute truths with compulsory consequences.

In spite of this, people are born united, among themselves, but also with the others. The subseqment social development of their lives brings to them differentiation and often alienation. The prescription for healing is very simple and holds to the unique gift of man called conscience and more deeply to his spirituality. It holds to that which the religious people from everywhere call the God-image in man, whatever the name they give to God. However, as simple as is the prescription for awakening conscience, it is difficult to follow. Opening of the eyes of mind and heart is the only way by which one can surpass an apparent reality for a genuine one. The Romanian philosopher Constantin Noica escaped from the apparent reality of political prison to advises:

You must see therefore, around you, the wonders—the miracle of nature, of word, of man, of love...The miracles swarm around us. We have just to stretch out our hand, as in Heaven and to pick them up, as in the Heaven Garden. All we need is to pay attention and find the plane within which everybody can come into resonance with the miracle (3, p. 260)

The language of union, self-union and inter-union, is therefore, a language of poetry, intuition and of faith; it is the opposite of the scientific language that is considered the nucleus of modernity. But paradoxically, at the scientific level it is easier to find the equalization of differentiations of any kind, including those between East and West. One could even speak about an ecumenism of the language of Science though certainly this would be a false discovery since ecumenism is given not by science but by the unicity of a measurable reality, to which the scientific instruments refer.

The partial ecumenisms either refer to art, science or religion (as a sum of concepts reasoned by man) and cannot, anyone of them, lead to the authentic unity. They are separate paths, seldom parallel which sooner or later prove their limits. In this respect the ecumenism cannot develop; besides, at a certain point in time it annuls its own meaning and reality.

The ecumenical path is universal, not particular. It transcends both tradition and modernity, the cardinal points of the globe, the local psychologies. It transcends the human being itself and includes not only people, but also the animals, birds, fish, plants, waters, stones and clouds.

Authentic ecumenism, the one which gathers all creation under the same roof, contains both what can be seen and what cannot be seen. For what man cannot understand, God will take care of, as Ramakrishna said. For the rest, we can join Constantin Noica in prayer:

To the One who contains us, let's ask at every beginning of the day: Our daily being, give it us, today. May our acts and love have a meaning and our day last (3, p. 267).

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Chapter XII
The Mission of the Romanian Orthodox Church Today

Magdalena Dumitrana

Short Historical Picture

The ethnogenesis of the Romanian people originated simultaneously with the colonization of Dacia1 and with the romanization of its autochthonous element. At the middle of the first century B.C., one of the greatest Dacian Emperors, Burebista, joined the Geto-Dacian tribes from the intra-Carpathian and extra-Carpathian areas and laid the foundations of the Dacian centralised state, with its military, cultural and religious centre inside the Carpathian arc, in Transylvania2.

During the 7th and 6th centuries B.C., the shores of the Black Sea had been a target of Greek colonization. By tradition, 657/656 B.C. is the foundation year of the oldest Greek colony on the west coast of the Black Sea, namely Istros (called Histria by the Romans). Together with such others colonies as Callatis, Tomis, etc., (lasting until today) these Greek sites have played an important role in the Christianization of the Dacians. In the 2nd century B.C. the name of Scythia Mikra (Scythia Minor) was commonly used to designate the territory between the Danube and the Black Sea. By the beginning of the 2nd century A.D. the surviving Scythian enclaves in the mass of the native population were completely assimilated by Geto-Dacians.

The second great Dacian king was Decebal. During his reign, an accelerated process of the state centralization occurred in the face of the imminent Roman danger. For two decades the confrontation with the Dacian state constituted the major problem of the Roman foreign policy3. Finally winner, the Emperor Trajan assumed the triumphal name of "Dacicus" (year 106). Following this, a period of colonization and romanization started during which the process of formation of Romanian people also began. Under the pressure of the attacks of the migratory peoples and of the free Dacian and needing to strengthen the Danubian border, the Emperor Aurelianus ordered the withdrawal of the Roman army and administration from Dacia (year 271). But the majority of Daco-Roman population, thoroughly and irreversibly romanized, remained. The end of the Roman domination opened up the final period of the process of the formation of the Romanian people (centuries 3 and 4).

The ethnogenesis of the Romanian people began with the colonization of Dacia and romanization of the autochthonous inhabitants; it continued by the gradual assimilation of the Slav element and of the other non-Roman ethnic elements who were within the Carpatho-Danubian space or arrived from South of the Danube.

Romanian is a Latin language, the only direct successor of the Latin language; it originated in the popular Latin used by the Roman colonists. It contains also Geto-Dacian and Slavonic lexical elements. Both the vocabulary and grammar are Latin in essence.

The essential feature of the new Romanian people is that it was born Christian. There is complete simultaneity between the people's genesis and its Christianity. Christianity spread among our ancestors coming from the East, the place of origin of Christianity itself. The beginnings of Romanian Christianity cannot be specified, but seems to go far back to the Apostolic period. The Apostle Andrew starting from Asia Minor crossed the Caucasus Mountains and the south of Russia, and came down through Moldova, Dobrogea and Bulgaria toward Greece where he died4.

As already mentioned, the Greek colonies established in Dobrogea on the Western side of the Black Sea, played their part in the conversion process. the Christian religion penetrated through the intermediary of some colonists and Roman soldiers in the 2nd-3th centuries, and spread in the Danubian provinces5.

Discoveries of a palaeo-Christian character appear only in the regions comprised wihtin the frontier of the former Roman province, proof that the new religion was adopted only by the Daco-Roman population. The basical notions of Christianity are rendered in the Romanian language by words of Latin origin. It is meaningful to notice that over ninety percent of the words of the "Our Father" prayer are Latin in origin. Later, terms for church administration were borrowed from the Slavic languages. A Romanian bishop took part in the Nicean Council (year 325). During the anti-Christian persecutions perpetrated by Diocletian (303-304) Christian martyrologies recorded a large number of Romanian martyrs. There are strong proofs of Daco-Roman martyrs until the end of the 4th century.

There was a series of important theologians in Scythia Minor (Dobrogea of today), in the 4th century, among whom Dionisos Exiguus who established the chronology of the Christian Era, beginning from Jesus' birth (with an error of only 4-5 years).

From then on the Christianity experienced continuous growth and development in the Romanian territories. Many Romanian emperors have stressed the importance of the Orthodox belief, setting a Christian model in their own behavior and also building many churches and covents all over Romania and on Mount Athos—seen as a spiritual centre of the entire Orthodoxy, and blessed by the presence of the Virgin Mary, Herself.

Characteristics of Romanian Orthodoxy

It is more appropriate to speak about a "Romanian Orthodoxy" than simply about "Orthodoxy" since there are specific features in the religious behaviour and attitude both of the common people and hierarchs in the Romanian territories.

The following are its characteristic traits:

a) the absence of the confessional wars; the absence of the crimes in the name of Bible; the absence of the propensity for revenge.
b) neutrality concerning dogmatic fights; an absence of heresies and heretics
c) strong attention to spirituality and the soul
d) fidelity towards tradition as source of Revelation
e) an ecumenical attitude towards the other confessions, denominations and religions6.

These characteristics are not determined by the ideological structure of Romanian theology, but are imposed in the Orthodox theology by popular religious thinking which assimilated Christianity as an indivisible part of the Romanian people's psychology. In ordinary language, the word "Christian" is synonymous to the word "Romanian". The folk poetry is full of the presence of Jesus Christ and Mary. A Hungarian musician, Bela Bartok, considers that no neighbouring people has such rich musical material concerning Christmas as do the Romanians.

Very likely the ideas of early Christianity were grafted on the pre-existing characteristics of the Geto-Dacian ancestors7. The essential fact is that that neither the present situation of the Romanian Orthodox Church nor its future development projections can be analysed and evaluated objectively without taking these features into consideration.

One of the important Romanian theologiens (I. Bria) describes the actual position of the Romanian Orthodox Church as follows:

Due to the restrictions of a missionary and educational order priests had became faithful custodians of a tradition, representatives of national institution that played an important role in the past; they were spiritual parents conveying the popular pious experience. Due to this activity, the priests could not exercise their critical spirit upon the evolution of the society and the state control of religious life. Believers have been left with the illusion that there could be no better society, and with the feeling that atheism were not so noxious as it actually was (1, p. 37).

After a period during which the aim, both at the ideological and the political levels, was desacralization of the Christian values, religious ignorance, suppression of faith and hope, and limitation of mystery people look for a key for reading the world and history, perhaps in an invisible realm. The dictatorship made of society a theatre whose idols hated each other. Because of this ideology, people became afraid of history, wanted to abandon the global ideological systems which were aggressing them, wished to retire into religiosity as an esoteric space, somehow irrational with revelations and mysterious apparitions. The 1992 census has revealed the impressive weight of Orthodoxy. Nobody believed that after a half century of restrictions and mutilations, the Church would still have so many believers.

But these favourable statistics need to be correctly interpreted, lest the Church would be an easy prey for illusions, for despite of these positive statistics there is no record of genuine participation by citizens in Church activities. This is in direct contradiction of the religious sentiment of the believers and the "Christian" image of the country. This situation is true not only of Romania, but can be found also in other countries that are experiencing an advanced process of secularization. But in Romania the erosion is more disguised and thus much the worse. The vestiges of the atheism are there, visible and invisible. In contrast there is also an amorphous spirituality, a diffuse faith, a stratum of piety untouched by secularism. The crisis of faith is a very complex one and needs a deeper analysis. At this moment, there is a great distance between the different groups of believers even inside of Church; there is also an important gap between these groups and those outside of the Church.

The question then is how the mission of the Romanian Church is to be accomplished in a situation field of religious and moral crisis. What is its historical mission in a country in which many people still yearn for times part?

Another significant feature of the Romanian Orthodoxy must not be forgotten: Romania is the only Orthodox country of Latin language. This characteristic has generated distinct traits in the Romanian Orthodox Church, while at the same time generating certain difficulties. This way explaining the struggle of the Church to preserve the religious and national identity while surrounded on the East by the Slavic imperial Orthodoxy, calling itself "the third Rome", and on the West by the Austro-Hungarian Empire that manifested a strong opposition to Romanian Orthodoxy (1, pp. 30, 31, 34, 50).

The Present Mission of the Romanian Orthodox Church

The communist ideology has destroyed the fundamental markers of Christian society. People no longer possess the elements that have determined the development of its Christian culture. This is one of the reasons for the tendency to re-defining the constituent coordinates of Christian

institutions in terms of the past. Many people cultivated the illusion that once the political regime changed, it would be natural to return to a religious society. While others, noting the degree of economic, moral and cultural poverty, believed that religion itself had lost its power and influence so that in the present situation religion cannot be but a palliative. Actually, the society seldom used Church services as a palliative. While true that the Orthodox Church can intervene actively in education, the charity field or people's welfare, these possibilities do not automatically assure their real fructification of them.

Due to this situation, two directions must be reconsidered by the Romanian Orthodox Church in facing the present transformed society:

Building the Internal Unity of the Romanian Orthodox Church

The first and main modality is the path of the Gospel, that is, of radical conversion to a transformation of human existence and community following the Gospel principles. Only in this context, through a sanctification of man and a real metamorphosis of society, can the healing virtues of the Orthodox faith and spirituality be found.

For this there is first of all need for an internal and external reconciliation, for communication inside and outside the Church. The Church is not free from the danger of the crisis that disintegrates society. Its internal unity, through cohesion of the priests and believers, is the main task. Also, if there is a real will for joint participation by laity and priests in decisions making, then the former must have access to the Church institutions and to clerical committees and meetings.

One of the concrete tasks of the theology is therefore to restore to Orthodoxy its popular character in the noblest meaning of the word, that is, its spiritual efficiency. This requires new interpretations and commentaries to help the Orthodox tradition to become the nucleus of the unity in every place instead (as sometimes happens now) of deepening confusion. This requires a popularization of the Orthodox theology itself, for every believer to become a catechumen.

Because, the Holy Liturgy is not exclusively a clerical service, theology is not only an academic mission but the witness of the entire faithful people. The Orthodox priests have to give special priority to the pastoral mission among those who are poor, discouraged, dispossessed, confused. These people are in the majority "unorthodox"; without knowledge and help they can be easily manipulated and lost. The priest has to give proof of a great and real compassion and solicitude toward those who are struggling with material and spiritual constraints, especially those relating to personal dignity. The priest has to make the effort to revive the trust and hope of the suffering people. The believer and any other person who suffers must find within the Christian community genuine therapy—a communion of support and help. Whether a nominal member of the parish or not, the person who suffers injustice and cruelty belongs to Church (1, pp. 138-139).

Another category of people requesting a special attention is the youth. Freed from of the captivity of a centrally ordered or "arranged" history, young people must be creators of history in a Christian spirit. The Church may give major importance to the ethics of teenagers, offering then programs of religious and moral education. The problems of adolescents are actually problems of society itself. They have to be approached with much pastoral skill in order to help young people to have clear vision and become able to see the horizons of their destiny (1, p. 33).

Another noticeable aspect is the urgent need for the conversion of the Christian family, the most important milieu for the spiritual growth of children and youth. The degradation or the loss of the familial milieu (more and more children roam streets to obtain the minimum for survival) leads to the loss of the child's spiritual being. New dramatic situations constitute a crisis of the

family and school: the failure of the schools, divorce of the parents, parents with severe health problems, unemployment, violence and prostitution.

To combat evils is not enough; responding to human sufferings is of equal importance. Parents must escape the confusion from lack of faith and moral complicity. The church cannot therefore be indifferent towards the hard conditions of life and education in the family.

None of the goals of the internal reform of the Romanian Orthodox Church can be accomplished without priests with ability to lead towards these goals. Therefore, the theological educational system must be changed in such a way that the young priests to gain the ability to understand secularised society. Without abandoning the knowledge of the Lord by prayer and cult, they have to learn how to retain their position as a spiritual leader while at the same time being involved in very concrete situations in order to claim help laymen. The most important condition for the Church's renewal, and that of the country as well, is the renewal of the priests themselves. They will not succeed in re-kindling the faith in Christian hearts and in protecting civil society unless they radically change their way of life.

Accordingly, the important mission upon which the Romanian Orthodox Church has to concentrate at present time is the Evangelisation inside the already constituted Church:

The Church does understand by mission either combating other Churches legitimately engaged in preaching the Gospel, or diluting the Gospel within nationalist or ethnic traditions. The defence of the faith means the concentration of the priest's attention and the believer's interest upon the uninterrupted apostolic tradition, the only tradition that differentiates the Church belonging to Christ from other religious movements. This tradition is embodied in the life of the local martyrs and saints, in the local cult, culture and history of the believers who constituted a particular Church. The Orthodox Church doubts the truth of any mission that does not accept the historical, chronological transmission of the faith in Jesus Christ and the Gospel's embodiment in the spiritual experience of a concrete people, existing in a certain place and time. The Church cannot withdraw from the responsibility to evangelize, to preach the Good News to the present generation. This mission is part of the essential and permanent calling of the Church. In this respect the Orthodox people are ready to take part in the evangelization of the present generation. However, by this, they do not understand the geographical extension of one Church to the detriment of another Church" (1, pp. 80-81).

Building the External Unity of the Romanian Orthodox Church

Prone to ecumenism by its very pattern of the theological ideas, the Romanian Orthodox Church sees, however, a series of gaps. There are some examples of negative tendencies:

... various formulas are used, as for example 'the genuine Church is only the Orthodox one, while the other Churches are just on the way to be born,' or 'the Orthodox Churches are Churches that do not fulfil the conditions for being a genuine Church' ... some people even deny the general priesthood of the Christians that do not belong to the Orthodox Church, holding this affirmation as an infallible Orthodox dogma (1, p. 134).

That is why the Romanian Orthodoxy must select ecumenical themes and activities worthy further exploration.

There is a reciprocity between the mission of the local Church and the ecumenical unity of all Churches, between the specific identity of a Church and the identic universality of Christ in each of the Churches and at the same time, in all. In this context, the Romanian Orthodox Church has to develop continuously the relationships with other Churches and Christian communities in Romania. Proselytism is especially practised in "non-ecumenical" situations, when the Churches do not know mutually recognize or each other (1, p. 133). Due to sectarian proselytism, Orthodox priests are reluctant about what is called local ecumenism. Without the experience of active missionary evangelization, theologians and priests speak against the publishing of "Protestant Bibles" or against the un-Orthodox evangelization campaigns. They need to restrain this gratuitous behaviour to justified situations, while at the same time making an effort to demonstrate with missiological arguments the intention of proselytism, if indeed this is really the situation.

In an ecumenical epoch, the only form of missionary cooperation is the common witness. Ethnic, confessional, cultural factors are positive values that have to determine a common Christian testimony (1, p. 40).

The ecumenical dialogue requires certain concrete activities, first a "healing of memory"—by removing mutual condemnations and excommunications; by accepting the saints worshipped in every Church; by a full recognition of the other Churches based on their witness to the faith concerning the main dogmas. Missionary, catechetical and pastoral activity must be placed in an ecumenical context. The direction of God's work in the world, the direction of the redemption is the unity of all people. God's goal concerning the Church is inseparable from his plan for the unity and redemption of the world. Therefore the Church has to become a redeemed community, within which the barriers between the human races, sexes, the social categories are broken down (1, pp. 216;163).

Conclusion

Coming out from a long and difficult period, during which the only way to survive was a passive external resistance (together with a free spirit within) the Romanian Orthodox Church is aware that it needs an important transformation, following the radical change of Romanian civil society.

- Accordingly to this situation, there are few directions to be followed as important parts of the mission of the Romanian Orthodox Church today;
- A transformation in the theological education responsible for the young priests initial training and consequently, the building of a new model of the priest;
- A more accesible Church language and a rapprochement to laymen in the activities concerning the cult;
- A priority of the social aspect of the Orthodox Church mission concerning the material, psychological and spiritual help offered to people, mainly to those found in desperate situations;
- The entire mission of the Romanian Orthodox Church is focused upon the Romanians, wherever they are, not aimed at other nations or people who are already Christians but not Orthodox.

Notes

1. The first information about Getae, as the autochthonous population of the territories extending along the Lower Danube, are found in the literary and historical writings of the Greek authors (Hecateus, Sophocles, Herodotus, Thucydides). The name Dacia appears for the first time in the writings of Plinius the Elder and Tacitus. They mention the Geto-Dacians in the context of Darius' expedition (514 B.C.). These Geto-Dacians represented the northern, strongly individualised branch of the Thracians, speaking a language belonging to the Indo-European linguistic family (5).

2. "Having become the leader of a people exhausted by frequent wars, the Getic Burebista raised it so much through drilling, abstention from wine and obedience to orders that he achieved a powerful state within a few years, coming to be feared by the Roman themselves" (Strabo,*Geography*, VII, 3, 11) (5).

3. 150 years after the events, the historian Cassius Dio describes Decebal (*Roman History*, LXVII, 6, 1) as follows: "He was very experienced in war matters and skilled in deed, knowing how to choose the occasion to attack the enemy and withdraw at the right time. Clever in laying traps, he was valiant in struggle, knowing how to avail himself skillfully, of a victory and get off a defeat, on account of which he was a dreaded antagonist to the Romans" (5).

4. The basis for this affirmation is by the information given by the historian Eusebius of Cezareea in Historia Ecclesiastica III, 1 (8).

5. Dacia is considered among Christianized countries by Tertulian, in his work *Apologeticum* (year 200) (8).

6. Around 1435, John Hus' followers found a refuge in Moldova and Pope Eugene IV expressed his discontent. In 1446 a new papal document said: "We find out with the most displeasure that in the Moldavian kingdom numerous heretics have sheltered, especially the ones from the abominable sect of the Hussites". In 1460 another numerous group of Hussites come to ask for Romanian hospitality, being expelled by the Hungarian king, or rather due to the fanaticism of the Catholic bishops. In the place where these unfortunate fugitives have settled, houses and churches were built, giving birth in this way to the little town Husi ['hu i], the name of which is preserved until today in memory of its founders… The Romanians' tolerance for any other religion were so absolute that without themselves making propaganda, they allowed people of other beliefs to conduct proselytism, one's converting the others… In Moldova, the Catholics converted Hussites, in Walachia the Lutherans converted Catholics. Our forefathers, watching these theological fights, did not even think to convert to Orthodoxy these people who ate the Romanian bread and salt in the land of Romania (3, pp. 29-31).

Throughout history the same attitude is manifested toward Catholics, though they were aggressive towards the Orthodox people in Transylvania whom they came to call heretics. The Catholics tried also in the other Romanian lands (Moldova and Walachia) to convert the Orthodox people, but without success… The same tolerant attitude is manifested toward Tartars and Turks even if for centuries Romanian lands were subjugated by the Ottoman Empire. Between the XVth-XVIIth centuries many Tartars found shelter on Romanian territory being chased from Poland and Lithuania due to their religion. Hebrews lived without problem in Romanian territories; in the XVth and XVIth centuries Spanish Hebrews came here, having been forced to leave Spain and rejected by France, Italy and Germany. In that period in France and England, Hebrews were not considered human beings but "comme les animaux" (Merlin, *Repertoire de jurisprudence*); in Romania came also the Hebrews also came to Romania from Poland (sec. XV, XVII) (3, pp. 28-31; 62; 65).

7. "There is an element about which nobody doubts in the whole history of Getae (Dacians): religious fervour was always their predominant trait" (Strabon) (6, p. 87) "(Dacians) were always ready to die. The wish for death had its source from the belief that everything that is worldly is of small value as compared to what will follow in the perfect and immortal world of the souls" (Pomponius Mela, the author of the oldest geographical work, 1st century (7, p. 13; 6, p. 97).

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