

# ACADEMY OF ROMANIAN SCIENTISTS



## ANNALS

### THE ACADEMY OF ROMANIAN SCIENTISTS

**Department ARS New York  
and  
The Section of Philosophy, Psychology Theology and Journalism**

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- **ROMANIAN PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION: SELECTED AUTHORS**

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## THE ANNALS OF THE ACADEMY OF ROMANIAN SCIENTISTS

SERIES OF THE NEW YORK DEPARTMENT OF ARS AND THE SECTION OF PHILOSOPHY,  
PSYCHOLOGY, THEOLOGY AND JOURNALISM

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**Selected papers of:**

**“Science, Religion and Society”  
The Fall Scientific Session  
Academy of Romanian Scientists  
– 2011 –**

**THE ACADEMY OF ROMANIAN SCIENTISTS**

**Department ARS New York  
and  
The Section of Philosophy, Psychology Theology and Journalism**



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## SCIENTIFIC LIFE

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***Opening speech at the autumn Scientific Session  
with the theme  
SCIENCE, RELIGION, SOCIETY***

*Dear participants,*

*We are opening today, September 23, 2011 at the Monastery of "Acoperământul Maicii Domnului," the Autumn Scientific Session of the Academy of Romanian Scientists in collaboration with the Archdiocese and Archbishop of Tomis and Suceava and Radauti, debating for the second time a much discussed issue "Science, religion and society," especially since we are in the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century facing the knowledge society and, why not, a society progressing to that of consciousness.*

*In fact, the notion of science comes from the Latin "scientia" which translated means knowledge. In the current perspective, science includes an amount of information about the "machinery of nature, of natural causes and its natural processes".*

*Depending on the field studied, we acknowledge a great variety of sciences: physics, mathematics, astronomy, biology, genetics, ecology, etc.*

*Over time scientists have tried to discover the objective truth and believed, but their faith was wrong because no one was able to divide their personality and separate the scholar from the "philosopher" or the inner "believer." Speaking of a human being, we encounter the paradox of its objectivity on nature of because the scientist (scholar) filters knowledge first through his senses, which are subjective, the mind which is also subjective, and then through her or his own philosophy which is subjective, too.*

*It follows that science seeks truth, but never reaches to knowing the "absolute truth" for the simple fact that human consciousness itself is relative and evolving.*

*The philosopher Immanuel Kant said that all knowledge, all human knowledge bears the imprint of its own structures of mind. That is, in order that man could be able to interpret the facts, he projects on them her or his own designs of judgment. As Kant, the Swiss psychiatrist Jean Piaget says that all human knowledge is of genetic origin.*

*On this origin depends how our mind is built.*

*Therefore, tomorrow's discoveries shall set in perspective the scientific certainties of today. For example, Euclid's geometry theorems for thousands of years were an "absolute truth" until the nineteenth century when the Russian mathematician Lobachevski and Transylvanian Janos Bolyai identified the non-Euclidian geometry which is outside the scope of application of Euclid's theory.*

*Another well-known example is the mechanical physics Newton's theory considered universal for hundreds of years until Einstein stated the relativity theory.*

*Very recently, two American scientists from the nuclear reactor Mc. MASTER (Dr. Henry Schwarcz and Dr. Jack Rink) overthrew all dating of the paleontologists, using for the first time the method called "Electro Spin Resonance" with Cobalt 60. They have established that the skull of "Jawa man," assessed so far to about 300,000 years has actually only 30,000 years. Therefore, the performance of modern technology brings new information in human knowledge and not only.*

### ***But what is religion?***

*The word religion comes from the Latin "re-ligia = reread" i.e. the act of repeating the Scriptures according to Cicero, or "re-ligia", which means "to bind, to reconnect, to link with God."*

*Today we can say that religion is an ideology, or a conception of life that recognizes the existence of a supernatural and invisible power that controls nature and human destiny and that of the world, and to which man owes obedience, respect and worship. Like science, religion offers man Understanding that has Divinity as a referee.*

*It reveals man the truth about God, world and man.*



*The two fields "science and religion" are totally parallel, but they intersect in the discussions concerning the origin and creation of the world.*

*Today, modern science cannot explain exactly the origin of the physical Universe. One must first accept the existence of non-physical spiritual universe unknown to us. In this situation we can explain the appearance of Big Bang as a necessity of a divine nature known and accepted by Christianity.*

*Scientists have found that the Big Bang was more than 15 billion years ago, as the only physical point of spiritual universe.*

*CERN experiment in Switzerland is known as a kind of Big Bang with the participation of Romanian physicists and aims to identify that particle, "boson Higgs," created at a very high energy, called the God particle. This experiment, according to researchers, brings new contributions to the knowledge of the universe.*

*Even today, the origin of the world is one of the greatest mysteries of mankind. Science and religion provide answers concerning the origin of our world and the origin of mankind, respectively.*

*Science deals with the natural sphere, and religion accounts for the supernatural. Science deals with Creation, and religion is concerned with the Creator.*

*According to the philosopher and physicist Pierre Duhem (1861-1916) "the claims of science are inherently limited, so that they leave room for other truths, such as the metaphysical and religious truths, which by their nature are more inclusive. "*

*In this respect, Albert Einstein also stated and I quote: "Religion is the noblest impulse for scientific research. The one who did not know it I find to be dead or at least blind. Recognizing the existence of what is impenetrable for us, recognizing the manifestation of the highest reason, in front of which our mind is quite primitive, represents the true religious sentiment.*

*Religion consists of a humble admiration of the high spirit, which reveals the self in the little that we can know of reality, using our weak and transitory reason. This conviction is at the basis of any superior scientific work." (End of quote).*

*The words quoted show that science does not refer to the whole reality in which we live, but only to a certain aspect of it, and as our religious experience is as real and fundamental as the scientific one, the recognition of the two can not bring any damage to human knowledge, but approach the question from two different angles.*

*The dialogue between science and religion has always existed and its revival is part of a general process designed to accomplish the understanding of the world through these both ways of knowledge offered as well by religion and by science.*

*Having said these, we consider that the topic of the themes in discussion is eloquent and comprehensive enough to provide, in our opinion, the success of this scientific session.*

*Thank you!*

*Gen. (r), Professor, M.D., PhD., Dr. H.C., Vasile Cîndea*

*President of the Academy of Romanian Scientists*

## THE DIVINE TRINITY AS PARADIGM FOR IDEAL HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS: AN ORTHODOX PERSPECTIVE

Theodor DAMIAN\*

**Abstract.** Investigating the contemporary Western society it is easy to notice the rapid erosion of family values, the relativization of such values as friendships, commitment, honesty and the like, the blind dismissing of tradition, and other similar tendencies and attitudes. In fact, it seems that the more a certain thing is valuable to people, the more it will become subject to direct and indirect attacks and denigration. As if nothing is holy any longer in our days except for the self-righteousness of the individual or of a certain group of people. The paper analyzes also the aspect that many blame religion for the violence we see in our world today. There is a need for everyone to listen, to learn, to re-examine, to apply that imperatively necessary *audietur et altera pars*.

**Key words:** Western society, relativization of values, self-righteousness, violence, human nature

### Introduction

As René Girard put it, “the violence we would love to transfer to religion is really our own, and we must confront it directly. To turn religions into scapegoats of our own violence can only backfire in the end”<sup>1</sup>.

Three observations must be made here: first, there is a tendency in our days to transfer violence to religion and since we look for the cause of our illness in the wrong place we will never heal; second, but related to the first, we are not ready for critical self-examination, for a direct confrontation with ourselves. It is good to remind ourselves in this context that Socrates placed the worthiness of life in the process of self-examination. Third, again related to the first one, looking for scapegoats just in order for us to falsely feel good, which is lying to ourselves, the gravest of all lies, is going to backfire in the end. It is going to produce more violence, pain and destruction. This reminds one of Christ’s warning when He said that the last lie will be worse than the first one (Matthew 27, 64).

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\* Full Member of the Academy of Romanian Scientists, New York Department, Professor PhD at Metropolitan College of New York.

<sup>1</sup> René Girard, “Violence and Religion: Cause or Effect”, in *The Hedgehog Review*, vol. VI, Nr. 1, Spring 2004, p. 20.

We live in a world based on a mentality of self-righteousness. That by itself is a cause of aggression and violence. When it comes to defending ourselves even with all our deviations, no value is too great to be attacked, to be vilified and scapegoated.

If we look at the contemporary Western society it is easy to notice the rapid erosion of family values, the relativization of such values as friendships, commitment, honesty and the like, the blind dismissing of tradition, and other similar tendencies and attitudes. In fact, it seems that the more a certain thing is valuable to people, the more it will become subject to direct and indirect attacks and denigration. As if nothing is holy any longer in our days except for the self-righteousness of the individual or of a certain group of people.

There are plenty of those who blame religion for the violence we see in our world today. There is a need for everyone to listen, to learn, to re-examine, to apply that imperatively necessary *audietur et altera pars*.

The topic of my paper springs from the conviction that religion is not to be blamed for the violence we witness in our jungle; on the contrary, it offers ideal modes of being in the world, and, as Mahatma Ghandi believed, no matter which form it takes culturally, it helps us discover the truth of our common root<sup>1</sup> which in turn gives us one of the most solid foundations for a harmonious life together.

The paper will start with an assumption that violence is characteristic to human nature and then will discuss shortly the doctrine of the Trinity as understood in the Orthodox Christian tradition, more particularly in terms of the origin and model of human personhood, as paradigm for proper human relations and interaction.

### **Human nature and violence**

René Girard is convinced that violence does not come from religion but from the human nature and that, in fact, religion appears as a consequence of this violence and as a way of protection against it.<sup>2</sup>

From a theological point of view we will have to specify from the beginning that when we speak of human nature as a source of violence, we refer to the fallen human nature. Girard's assumption is shared by psychologists old and new. Freud, for instance, the way he is understood by Erich Fromm, believes that man's tendency to acquire and possess is an expression of human nature, but also reflects man's immaturity and illness. The same description is, of course, valid for a society where having takes priority over being.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See: Eugen Drewermann, *Ich steige hinab in die Barke der Sonne: Meditationen zu Tod und Auferstehung*, Walter-Verlag, Olten und Freiburg i.B., 5. Aufl., 1992, p. 9.

<sup>2</sup> René Girard, *op. cit.*, pp. 8, 13.

<sup>3</sup> Erich Fromm, *Avoir ou être, un choix dont dépend l'avenir de l'homme*, Editions Robert Laffont,

Reflecting upon the torture of Irak's prisoners in Abu Ghraib by mostly American soldiers, American psychologist Philip G. Zimbardo asks the very common question: what makes men into monsters? And by the end of his reflections on human nature he concludes that even the best of us, under wrong circumstances, can become perpetrators of evil.<sup>1</sup>

The mentioned desire to have, to accumulate more, intrinsic to actual human nature, not only engenders envy and jealousy from the part of others, feelings of revenge and calls for justice on the part of those who were dispossessed, but also fear of losing the accumulation on the part of the one who has or acquired. This kind of spirit generates an irrational tendency to gigantism, as Emil Cioran notices<sup>2</sup> and leads to bestialization and even to the deification of the bestial, in Berdiaev's words.<sup>3</sup>

In one of his seminal anthropologic works Abraham Heschel warns that the opposite of the human is not even the animal, but the demonic. He deplores man's giving to himself zoologic definitions and thus taking on the image of the animal instead of looking for higher standards.<sup>4</sup>

Indeed, starting even with Aristotle's definition according to which man is a social animal (*zoon politikon anthropos*) man has been compared with the animal, at least in this common translation. In my view, this is a mistranslation and misinterpretation for two reasons: first, animals are social, too; in this case the definition does not tell anything specific about man, and therefore is not a definition. Second, the word *zoon* comes from *zoï*, "life"; *zoon* then is "living being" in its primary sense; *politikon* is "who lives in the city", *polis*. To live in the city implies rules, civilization, politeness, protocol etc.

Similar to Aristotle's definition of man, translated and transmitted to us in zoological terms, there are other more modern definitions according to which man is an animal who makes tools, animal who cooks his food, etc.

Whatever your term of comparison or point of reference is, that is what you will tend to become. We know that from daily experience. Tell your little child constantly that he is good, talk to him or her only in positive terms and you will see how wonderfully that child grows; tell him constantly that he is bad, hit and hurt him all the time and you will see what child you will have. While exceptions might exist, the rule is that you become the value you adopt. Tell me the values you have and I will tell you who you are.

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Paris, 1978, p. 104.

<sup>1</sup> Philipp G. Zimbardo, "After Abu Ghraib, Psychologist Asks: Is It Our Nature to Torture", in *Science and Theology News*, July/August 2004, p. 8.

<sup>2</sup> E. Cioran, *The Fall into Time*, translated from French by Richard Howard, Quadrangle Books, Chicago, 1970, pp. 44-45.

<sup>3</sup> N. Berdiaev, *The Fall of Man in the Modern World*, Ann Arbor Paperbacks, The University of Michigan Press, 1963, p. 43.

<sup>4</sup> A. Heschel, *Who is Man?*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, CA 1965, pp. 20-25; 101.

### Man as the image of God

This is where religion comes fundamentally and significantly into play. Religion promotes the idea of God, of a higher power, of a higher standard and point of reference. It basically means reconnection, which implies subtly the idea of a fall, of a separation, but indicates link, connection to a power that gives you security, stability and protection but also essential rules and regulations for a better life, that you are asked to consider. This is the difference between zoological and theological.

According to Christian doctrine, man is created in the image of God. The image consists basically of reason, feelings and will as they are characteristic to the human being. But man was also created in God's likeness, that is with the possibility to attain holiness and immortality. As Fr. Dumitru Staniloae writes, "man is a being who is rational and endowed with the ability to speak, who is communicative, inexhaustible, and that is why he is thirsting for immortality. Man is capable of immortality".<sup>1</sup>

Man's great chance was that he was created out of God's love. That is why, even after the fall, God did not dismiss him altogether. Through the fall the image was darkened, not destroyed. This point is so important for its dignifying character that the Church put it at hand for everyone, in common worship. One hears during the Orthodox burial service: "I am the image of Your ineffable glory, even though I bear the marks of sin." This is, one can say, the most beautiful and noble definition ever given to the human being.

The image of God in man is what keeps man into being. Man's existence was and is due entirely to God's love. Just because this love was the same before and after the fall it indicates that it is divine, perfect, total. God hates sin, but loves the sinner. Thus there is no ontological identification between sin and sinner. That is why the salvation offered by God is consistent with God's own ways. In Christ, man is given the chance to go back to where he used to be and start again. Since Christ is true God and true man, participation in Christ's life is participation in the divine life.

The human hypostasis of Christ is the bridge on which man walks from himself to God, on which he or she walks the way of likeness to God: holiness and immortality. If I am in Christ I am in God. Participation is the foundation *sine qua non* for deification.

Being created in the image of God implies that the ultimate goal of man's life is deification. This is a process without end. St. Gregory of Nyssa calls it *epectasis*. It is the constant tendency to reach higher. It starts here and it never ends because in God there is no end. That is why Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite calls God "the beyond beingly being."

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<sup>1</sup> Dumitru Staniloae, *Chipul nemuritor al lui Dumnezeu [The Eternal Image of God]*, (in Romanian), Editura Mitropoliei Olteniei, Craiova, 1987, p. 11.

This way of participation lets man live always *sub specie aeternitatis*. He cannot live without this eschatological perspective, because it is in perfect accord with his nature.<sup>1</sup> In this sense one is called to have a doxologic existence, somehow similar to the one described by St. Augustine in his beautiful exhortation: “Sing with your voice, sing with your heart, sing to the Lord a new song. Sing as the traveler does: he sings and advances, he sings in order to renew his strength. You too, sing in order to strengthen yourself in the right faith and in the purity of life.”

### **The Holy Trinity and the human communion**

The Holy Trinity, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, is at the basis of one of the most important doctrines in the Orthodox tradition. To say that we believe in one God in three persons or hypostases is paradoxical, but the paradox is exactly the appropriate language one should use when talking about God. The paradox is not only about the three in one, but also about the application of both apophatic and cataphatic theology – via negativa and via positiva – to the same reality: to say that we believe in the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, is cataphatic, a positive affirmation, but to say that we believe in one God in three persons or hypostases is an apophatic or negative affirmation.

In his discussion with Ablabius, St. Gregory of Nyssa argues against the theory of Sabelius who believed that three hypostases in the Trinity mean three gods. Specifying the difference between essence and energy in the Trinity, St. Gregory explains that all we know about the Trinity is related to the energy, movement, manifestation, not to the essence. Yet, any divine operation or energy has a Trinitarian character since it is “from the Father, through the Son, in the Holy Spirit.”<sup>2</sup>

As John Meyendorff explains, God is unknowable in His essence not because of the fallen condition of man and hence of his incapacity of perfect knowledge, but because as Creator, God completely transcends any created level of existence, so He is unknowable in Himself, but not to Himself.<sup>3</sup>

It is appropriate here to specify that the three persons of the Trinity are not just types of intra-Trinitarian relationships,<sup>4</sup> in other words reflecting and describing *Deus ad intra*; that would mean to limit the Trinity to a theological concept, depriving It of the economic hypostatic manifestations – *Deus ad extra* – which represent for us the only basis on which we can say anything at all about the Divine Trinity.

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<sup>1</sup> Theodor Damian, *Theological and Spiritual Dimensions of Icons According to St. Theodore of Studion*, The Edwin Mellen Press, Lewiston, Queenstown, Lampeter, 2002, p. 23.

<sup>2</sup> John Meyendorff, *Christ in the Eastern Christian Thought*, St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, Crestwood, NY, 1975, p. 144.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 93-94.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 213.

One of the most popular, plastic, and educational ways to talk about the paradox of one God in three persons is Rublev's icon of the Trinity. There are several interpretations of it. L. Ouspensky and Vladimir Lossky's interpretation, to which I am referring here, is based on the Creed. First of all, the three angels are identical. This symbolizes the unity of essence or nature; one *ousia*. Then, the angel from the left clothed in a very pale, transparent vestment is the Father, whom we know very little. The angel in the middle, who faces us, is dressed with vestments in blue and red. He has behind him a tree. He is the Son, because it was the Son who faced us in the Incarnation; it was through the Incarnation that He allowed us to know more fully about Him. The two colors of the vestments represent the two natures in Christ, the human and the divine, and also their harmonious coexistence. Blue is the color of the sky, signifying the divine. Red is the color of blood, signifying the human. The tree in the background represents the cross. The angel on the right, whom, like the first one, we do not see fully, but only in profile, and who is clothed in green, is the Holy Spirit. We know little about Him that is why we do not see His full face. The color symbolizes life, as He is called the Giver of Life.

There is a circle that circumscribes the angels who are sitting at the table on which there is a chalice. The circle is not closed. It symbolizes the Church with the Eucharist through which we enter the divine life of the Trinity.<sup>1</sup>

The Holy Trinity, in the Orthodox tradition, is not a static principle of faith. It is the expression of a significantly dynamic relationship that renders justice to God, when we refer to His total transcendence and to the unknowability of His nature, but also to the human mind, with its need for logical comprehension, when we refer to the divine energies operating in creation.

Against modern tendencies to replace the Trinitarian attributes with other adjectives, such as Creator, Savior and Sanctifier, for instance, the Orthodox theology advocates for the maintenance of the classic, biblical appellatives which alone express at the same time, adequately both the intra-Trinitarian and the extra-Trinitarian relationships.

If man is created in the image of God and God is Trinity then man is the image of that Trinity. That means that man first of all has an ontological structure that is communitarian. Community is the opposite of fragmentation, therefore it implies unity at several levels. Just like in the Divine Trinity where we speak of one nature and three hypostases or persons, so with man: I am of the same nature with every other man while I have a distinct person, or hypostasis. It is like the definition which implies the two elements that we call proximate genre and specific difference. Both of them apply to me. When it comes to genre I am part of all those that are in it. We share the genre. Then I have my own specific traits that do not separate but only distinguish me from the others with whom I share the

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<sup>1</sup> *Dieu est vivant, Catéchisme pour les familles*, Cerf, Paris, 1979, p. 81.



genre. It really takes a divine mind to make such thing possible! United but different by distinction. Just like the Council of Chalcedon (452) formulated the way the two hypostases in Christ relate to each other with no separation, no division, with no confusion and no change. This is like *unitas in diversitas*, unity in diversity, the ideal mode of being in the world. And logically speaking it has to be ideal since this is the image of God. Of course, this is not all. The image is a gift to man. It depends on what one does with what one receives. This is where the fundamental responsibility of man comes into play and which is the ground of any type of ethics.

The communitarian, social character of man's existential destiny gives him not only power but also offers him infinite ways of growth and enrichment. Through the commonality of nature, which transcends me fundamentally, and on which I have no total control, I come in touch with every individual of my genre. Every good that one does affects me whether I realize it or not, just as every evil. In other words we are all in this pot together.

Just like C.G. Jung spoke of a collective unconscious that would represent a kind of common ground for humanity, so in this case our common nature is the collective element. In some cases maybe unconscious, because people do not realize it, but that does not mean it is unscientizable.

Due to this gift that we have through our creation in the image of God, we can say, paraphrasing well known existentialistic language, that we are condemned to community, or to use a less deterministic language, we are given ontologically the gift of community. That is why fragmentation, division, separation is a sin, because it goes against nature, against the divine intention for and with us, against the most intimate structures that make us who we are.

When we speak about Trinity we do not mean sheer numbers. The number in itself does not make communion which is the sustaining power of any existence. By the same token, when we refer to human community we do not imagine numbers only, because numbers can be easily divided; we speak first of all of togetherness, consubstantiality. That is why we cannot speak separately about trinity in God without talking at the same time about unity and oneness, just as we cannot speak about the mystery of man just in terms of numbers, like one individual versus many or other individuals, without at the same time speaking about the unity and oneness of humankind.

If something is complementary to something else and helps the thing to which it is complementary to be what it is, then the thing that is complementary is part of the essential definition of the other one, which is why we cannot speak of one without the other. The same applies to oneness and trinity in God and to oneness and plurality in man's case.

On the other hand, if we are created in the image of the Trinity that means we have something from each divine person. Whatever attributes we believe the

Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit have, keeping the proportions, are to be found in man, at the human level.

Having a multiplicity of qualities from a multiplicity of persons man's existence has infinite opportunities for growth. Man can grow multidirectionally and multilaterally to horizons never imagined that come from God, but also from other humans.

In fact this infinite number of opportunities for growth is confirmed by man's thirst for eternity and infinite, for endless growth in the realm of the good.

### **Personhood as transcendence**

By elaborating with particular emphasis on the personal character of God and of God's relationships *ad intra* and *ad extra* the Cappadocian Fathers first of all saved the doctrine of the Trinity from becoming an abstract philosophical system,<sup>1</sup> but at the same time gave the human personhood the highest possible dignity and importance.

The persons of the Trinity, Paul Florensky comments, are *homoousios* (of the same nature) not just similar to each other (*homiousios*). By the same token, based on the doctrine of man's creation in the image of God, all human beings are *homoousios*, of the same nature, not just *homiousios*, similar to each other. This consubstantiality of the humans, understood in the most realistic way made concrete in the human personhood is the true ground for ethics and morality.

Being based on the unity of nature, the human personhood tends naturally towards communion. The initial endowment of man with the possibility to reach immortality remains for ever a virtual reality. Both the tendency towards communion and the virtual immortality are reflected in the act of communication. My thirst to communicate myself to the other, in a relationship of authentic love, is never exhausted; the same is valid with the unexhausted thirst to receive the loved one's offer of himself in his communication to me.

I am who I am as a human being and person based on this need to offer myself to others and to receive the others' offer through communication. Because it grows out of authentic love, I never get tired of this offering of myself to the one I love, as I do not get tired of receiving the continuous offer of the one I love. This type of exchange is characteristic of the divine persons in the Trinity.<sup>2</sup> The only difference resides in the fact that with the Trinity there is perfect and total communication whereas in the human realm the communication is only partial and imperfect. Yet this is something we realize painfully. This pain in itself and our never giving up indicates that we are made for more, but at the same time, it indicates the inexhaustibility of the mystery of the human person.

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<sup>1</sup> John Meyendorff, *op. cit.*, pp. 98-99.

<sup>2</sup> D. Staniloae, *op. cit.*, p. 338.

This is how Dumitru Staniloae puts it: “The fact that I cannot communicate myself entirely to others shows me the inexhaustible mystery that I am even though even as a mystery I do not know myself except through the fact that I communicate myself to the others. My mystery does not contradict the fact that I know myself as a person that communicates itself to other persons that make themselves known to me as mysteries.”<sup>1</sup>

The mystery of the human person is another dimension that connects us to God, and is explainable in and through the image of God that we are. The difference consists in the fact that while God is not a mystery to Himself but only to us, we are mysteries, each one to oneself and to one another.

The connection between us is a mystery in itself as well. It springs from the ontological need planted in our being by the One who created us together and for one another.<sup>2</sup> This is a *datum* which manifests itself in us independent of our will. That means that my communication here, with others, at the horizontal level is the basis of my communication with God at the vertical level; one prepares me for the other.

The better I communicate with others here, and through communication offer myself to them, the easier I will get ready to communicate with God to whom I have to offer myself entirely and unconditionally.

Such an offer requires a similar type of love, which has its paradigm in the Divine Trinity who, for St. Ignatius of Antioch is “the unmoveable movement of love”.<sup>3</sup> This love makes the persons transparent to one another. It is like the burning bush: it burns without consuming itself. The unity of love, its power and permanency, creates a perichoretic type of existence that in the Trinity is manifest in the unity and interpenetration of reason, feelings, will and action. What one person thinks and wants, at the same time the other two do. Love is the eternal dimension in the human being. When I love God and have the feeling that I am loved by Him I progress into a life that I don’t want to end. The same is valid in the human realm: if I authentically love a person and I know I am loved by him or her, I don’t want to die as I don’t want him or her to ever die.<sup>4</sup> It is my offer in love to the others that makes them transcend their own limits and progress beyond them, towards eternity and God, and vice versa, their love for me makes me transcend my own limits and progress towards eternity and God. That is why Roger Garaudy personalized transcendence by saying: “my transcendence is you”.

This transcendence is then intrinsic to our relations. It gives them the taste of the infinite and eternity in a way that with each transcended limit I have the

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 114.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 100.

<sup>3</sup> S.B. Ignatius IV Patriarch of Antioch, *Sauver la Création*, col. “Theophanie”, Desclée de Brouwer, Paris, 1989, p. 113.

<sup>4</sup> D. Staniloae, *op. cit.*, p. 10.

feeling of fulfillment which yet becomes the stepping stone for a new desire of a new fulfillment. This is the type of dynamics that characterizes our relationships.

In Dumitru Staniloae's words, "we sustain our life through mutual communication; however we remain contents of incommunicable mysteries. We sustain our life perpetually through perpetual communication as mysteries, through the fact that we do not exhaust what we communicate. This situation generates our desire to receive as much as possible from the other, through his or her communication."<sup>1</sup>

Communication as a tool that helps build the relationship and communion is a mystery in itself. It is a kind of language that precedes us because it comes from God as it is given to us by God. That is why learning to communicate is a process of anamnesis, of remembering. The inner language of communication (not the external one, the words), is what brings the others to us and makes them transparent to us, thus helping us to discover them, to "see" them in their inner dimensions. This language that helps us to approach and address them properly is the language of contemplation and knowledge: gnosis. It reveals to us the others' identity and facilitates our participation in that identity. That means we "see" how they are and through that we enter in a perichoretic relationship that allows an essential interpenetration which is communion of eternal life.

In this way our communication becomes an expression of our longing for the original communion placed in us by God through our creation in His Trinitarian image, and ultimately, an expression of our longing for God.

Such communication instores and restores the original communion with each other and implicitly with God. In that it has a sacramental dimension that makes it become liturgy, doxological chant.

### **You are therefore I am**

That is why we believe that the Holy Trinity is not an abstract concept of God but a faith experience that transforms us and draws us to higher dimensions of existence. The inaccessibility of the divine nature, the mystery of God in general, does not stand in the way of the experience of God in faith. God's transcendence does not annihilate God's immanence, His economic manifestations in creation which are at the center of the religious life, as it is evident from the innumerable hymns, troparia, prayers, invocations, throughout the many forms of liturgical services in the Orthodox tradition.<sup>2</sup>

So vivid is the image of the Trinity as a concrete reality in the life of the Orthodox believer that the Russian movie maker, Tarkovsky, commenting on his

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 47.

<sup>2</sup> John Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology, Historical Trends and Doctrinal Themes*, Fordham University Press, New York, 1979, p. 184.

movie on Rublev and on Rublev's famous icon of the Trinity, wrote: "Here is, finally, the Trinity, great, serene, entirely penetrated by a vibrant joy from which human fraternity springs. The concrete openness of the One in three and of the triple union in The One, offers a prodigious perspective to the human future still to be reached in centuries to come."<sup>1</sup>

This is the reason for which the Holy Trinity is considered the social program of Orthodoxy. That is, from the Trinity we know that a person exists only in communion with other persons. If Descartes defined man in terms of his or her rational capacity: *cogito ergo sum*, in the Orthodox Church, based on this Trinitarian personalistic theology, man is defined in terms of his or her authentic communion with God and the other: you are therefore I am. The "you" is God, first of all, then fellow human beings.

### Conclusion

Today we are living witnesses of a strange paradox. The more "civilized" and sophisticated we become the more we have a problem to live in peace and harmony with each other.

When we learn of war and violence in the history books somehow we say: that's history. In the past man has not been so advanced in knowledge as we are today. But it seems that today we have even more war and violence than in previous times. The 20<sup>th</sup> Century, experts say, killed more people than the entire history up to it. We began the 21st century in the same way. It seems that there is a jungle within the individual that is cultivated by the jungle outside and vice-versa or both at once.

In this situation man needs to do something that will save him from final, irreversible destruction. Violence is not in religion, it is in man's corrupted mentality.

Where can we turn to find hope? Science and technology did not help in that direction up to now. On the contrary, with new scientific and technological discoveries, it seems that more threat is added to our existence. Economy and politics? History shows that there is no salvation in them. Arts? It is nice to think that beauty will save the world. God is supreme beauty after all.

Apparently religion remains the ancestral and the new source for hope and harmony.

When I said that the divine Trinity is the social program of Orthodoxy, that implies that the Trinity obliges us to discard any form of egotistic individualism that leads to the destruction of communion and of life, but also to make sure we do not fall into depersonalizing collectivism that annihilates the personal characteristics of the human individual. Three in One is the divine model offered

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<sup>1</sup> S.B. Ignatius IV, of Antioch, *op. cit.*, pp. 113-114.

to us. Unity in diversity. Each one with his or her own personal characteristics and all sharing the same human nature in respect and sanctity.

If our attitude before the Trinitarian persons is prayer, praise and adoration, our attitude towards one another as persons created in the image of the Tri-une God must be similar, only brought to the human level. That means love, praise and blessing. In other words, the Divine Trinity proves to be the most important reality for the future of humanity,<sup>1</sup> or to put it according to Paul Florensky's vision: Ultimately there will be no other choice for humanity but The Trinity or madness".

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<sup>1</sup> S.V. Ignatius IV of Antioch, *op. cit.*, p. 112.

## JUST WAR THEORY AND ORTHODOX CHRISTIANITY<sup>1</sup>

Marian Gh. SIMION\*

**Abstract.** The study investigates *the comprehensive theological opposition; Church-State relations; legislative jurisdiction; the influences of the Law of Jihad; the Slavic cultural influence; nationalism and patriotism; the Canon Law's Ambivalence on the Use of Force; the dilemma of Military Intervention, and the Feminine Defense Paradigm* illustrating the lack of consensus within Orthodox Christianity.

**Keywords:** Church, State, Byzantine Canon Law, theology, history, liturgy and ecclesiology

### Introduction

Christian theologians generally agree that the Orthodox Church does not share a Just War theory in the Western sense, drafted from the perspective of the decretist principles of *jus ad bellum* and *jus in bello*<sup>2</sup>. While abhorring war, historical records indicate that the Orthodox Christians have often been involved in brutal military enterprises, cases in which, on the public square, the Orthodox Church failed to remain loyal to the pacifist principles of the Gospel and early Christian martyrdom. Concerned both with preserving its reputation of a martyr church, as well as with the creation of a public image of an anticipatory Samaritan, the Orthodox Church made concessions to the State by occasionally endorsing its authority to use lethal force against internal and external aggression. These concessions were broad in nature and were only made out of a conscious strategic interest of both Church and State, as to protect the defenseless against any form of abuse.

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<sup>1</sup> This paper is a revised and significantly expanded version of "Seven Factors of Ambivalence in Defining a Just War Theory" published by the author in *Proceedings: The 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Congress of the American Romanian Academy of Arts and Sciences*, Polytechnic International Press: Montreal, 2008, 537-543.

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<sup>2</sup> Frederick H. Russell, *Just War in the Middle Ages*, Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 1975, p. 55-126.

The lack of consensus that Orthodox Christianity displays over the justifiable use of force emerges from several factors such as 1) *comprehensive theological opposition*, 2) *Church-State relations*, 3) *legislative jurisdiction*, 4) *influences of the Law of Jihad*, 5) *The Slavic cultural influence*, 6) *nationalism and patriotism*, and 7) *Canon Law's Ambivalence on the Use of Force*, 8) *The dilemma of Military Intervention*, and 9) *The Feminine Defense Paradigm*. As a result, in order to investigate how Orthodox Christianity reconciled the pacifist principle of the Gospel with its duty to protect the weak and the vulnerable in face of violent abuse, one must start by looking into the nature of Church-State relations, Byzantine Canon Law, as well as into factors of theological, historical, liturgical, and ecclesiological nature. This is because the Orthodox Church never governed in the public life, and, as a result, the Church was never in control of an army so as to draft and develop law enforcement policies, as it was the case with the Western Church following the fall of Rome under the Visigoths in A.D. 410.<sup>1</sup> These duties simply fell under the jurisdiction of the State, following a specific legislative procedure<sup>2</sup>. As a result, when dealing with the issue of internal or external use of force, the Orthodox Church acted exclusively from an advisory perspective<sup>3</sup>.

### 1. Comprehensive Theological Opposition

In its history, the Eastern Church offered a comprehensive theological opposition to war. Highly influential Greek and Latin Church Fathers, who lived and wrote during the formative years of Christianity, have strongly criticized military enterprises of the State, while trying to maintain the consciousness of guilt and penance for soldiers.

The most significant authors and theological works of Early Christianity which opposed war include Tatianus (*Oratio ad Graecos*), Athenagoras of Athens (*Πρεσβεία περί των Χριστιανών*) Tertullian (*De Idololatria*, XIX), Origen (*Contra Celsum* V, 33), Clement of Alexandria (*Παιδαγωγός* I, 12), Lactantius (*Divinae Institutiones* I, 48), Basil the Great (*Homily to Psalm LXI*, 4), Gregory of Nyssa (*On the Beatitudes*, *Homily VII*), John Chrysostom and others. Tatianus openly equated war with murder. Incriminating the Greek pagan religions as belligerent, he accuses Apollo's worshippers for entertaining this cruel behavior, while Apollo was called "The Symbol of murder" (Σύμβουλον τών φόνων)<sup>4</sup>. At the same time,

<sup>1</sup> *Ibidem*, 34-35, 316.

<sup>2</sup> George Mousourakis, *The Historical and Institutional Context of Roman Law*, Ashgate Publishing Company, Hampshire, 2003, 410ff.

<sup>3</sup> Timothy S. Miller and John Nesbitt *Peace and War in Byzantium: Essays in Honor of George T. Dennis, S.J.*, Catholic University of America: Washington, DC, 1995, 10.

<sup>4</sup> *Tatian Address to the Greeks* (Ch. 22) in Alexander Roberts & James Donaldson (Eds.) *ANF Vol. 2*, Hendrickson Publishers: Peabody, 2004, 50.



while Athenagoras of Athens maintained that “Christians cannot endure to see a man put to death even justly,”<sup>1</sup> Tertullian insisted that when Peter cut Malchus’ ear in Gethsemane, Jesus cursed the works of the sword for ever after<sup>2</sup>. Furthermore, the highly prominent work, *Didascalia Apostolorum* (Chapter XVIII), bans the Church from receiving donations “from any Roman officials, who are *defiled with wars and have shed innocent blood without trial* [my emphasis].”

Following a detailed literature review of the early Christian references to war, John C. Cadoux concludes that the early Christian writers clearly indicate, “how closely warfare and murder were connected in Christian thought by their possession of a common element – homicide. [...] The strong disapprobation felt by Christians for war was due to its close relationship with the deadly sin that sufficed to keep the man guilty of it permanently outside the Christian community.”<sup>3</sup>

In terms of relevance of these writings throughout the development of the early Church, another prominent church historian, Roland Bainton, concluded that, “the history of the Church is viewed by many as a progressive fall from a state of primitive purity, punctuated by reformations which seek a return to a pristine excellence. The first church fathers are thus held to have been the best commentators, and if the early Church was pacifist then pacifism is the Christian position”<sup>4</sup>. Such attitude towards the relevance of the Early Church Fathers is the norm in Eastern Christianity, where any acceptable theological work is expected to be consonant with these early precepts, so as to conform to this ‘primitive purity.’

Another significant aspect was the negative attitude towards the weakness of the human body, which was viewed as a source of spiritual failure. This attitude started during the period of anti-Christian persecutions, and grew within the monastic circles<sup>5</sup>. Thus, the “war” against the human passions had managed to transfer the concept of warfare from a real life situation to an internal human passion. As a result, one no longer had to wage war against the invader, but against his own passions stirred by the Devil, the true invisible enemy. This not only created disapproving attitudes towards the physical war, but led to an

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<sup>1</sup> Athenagoras of Athens *A Plea for the Christians* (Ch. 35) in Alexander Roberts & James Donaldson (Eds.) *ANF Vol. 2*, Hendrickson Publishers: Peabody, 2004, 147. See also John Cadoux *The Early Christian Attitude To War*, Headley Bros Publishers, LTD: London, 1919, 50.

<sup>2</sup> Tertullian *On Patience* (Ch. 3) in Alexander Roberts & James Donaldson (Eds.) *ANF Vol. 3* (Hendrickson Publishers: Peabody, 2004), 708. See also John Cadoux *The Early Christian Attitude To War* (Headley Bros Publishers, LTD: London, 1919), 51.

<sup>3</sup> John Cadoux *The Early Christian Attitude To War* (Headley Bros Publishers, LTD: London, 1919), 57.

<sup>4</sup> Roland H. Bainton *Christian Attitudes Toward War and Peace: A Historical Survey and Critical Reevaluation* ninth printing (Abingdon, Nashville, 1979), 66.

<sup>5</sup> Robert T. Meyer (tr.) *St Athanasius: The Life of Saint Antony* (The Newman Press: Westminster, MD, 1950), 5, 60-61.

increased miscommunication between real life situations, and spiritual goals. During the Ottoman period, Orthodox elders known as the *Kollyvades*<sup>1</sup>, revived in a way the early tradition of the Desert Fathers by collecting seminal spiritual works on prayer and later incorporated them into a large collection known as *Philokalia*<sup>2</sup>. *Philokalia*, in conjunction with the highly influential theological work of Lorenzo Scupoli, *The Unseen Warfare*<sup>3</sup> served as mechanisms of discouragement against any spirit of uprising against their Muslim oppressors.

## 2. Church-State Relations

In the history of Church-State relations, the Orthodox Church had been subject to a variety of governing systems which manifested attitudes ranging from persecution to power sharing<sup>4</sup>. While in the West, the destruction of Rome in 410 by the Visigoths left a Church immature and vulnerable to embracing claims for political governance, in the East, the Church faced this political vacuum only a thousand years later, when the Byzantine Empire fell under the Ottomans in 1453. As the Western Church took upon itself the duty of governance, it had no option but to accept the concept of Just War, for purpose of defending its community *externally* against the barbarians and *internally* against the lawbreakers<sup>5</sup>. Following Charlemagne's dramatic changes in the Western Roman Empire, the medieval *decretists* and *decretalists*<sup>6</sup> had been successful in drafting specific policies on conditions related to the use of force, as well as how and to what extent clergy ought to be active participants in military campaigns. For instance, as early medieval Christian wars were against the pagans, the Carolingian and Ottonian expansionism was accompanied by the conversion of conquered populations to Christianity. Consequently, any military success was ascribed into God's gratification in seeing the Church grow, while warfare became a Christian

<sup>1</sup> Timothy Ware *The Orthodox Church* (Penguin Books: London, 1993), 100.

<sup>2</sup> G.E.H. Palmer, Philip Sherrard and Kallistos Ware *Philokalia*, vol.1 (Faber and Faber: Boston, 1979), 1-18.

<sup>3</sup> E. Kadloubovsky, G.E.H. Palmer (tr.) *Unseen Warfare: being the Spiritual Combat and Path to Paradise of Lorenzo Scupoli as edited by Nicodemus of the Holy Mountain and revised by Theophan the Recluse* Faber and Faber Limited: London, 1952.

<sup>4</sup> Ioan N. Floca *Drept Canonic Ortodox, Legislație și Administrație Bisericească*, Vol. 2. (Editura Institutului Biblic și de Misiune al Bisericii Ortodoxe Române, București, 1990), 279-307. See also Teodor Baconsky „Decadența etatismului și renașterea ortodoxă” in Ioan Ică, Jr. and Germano Marani (Eds.) *Gândirea Socială a Bisericii: fundamente, documente, analize, perspective* (Deisis Press: Sibiu, 2002), 202, 354.

<sup>5</sup> Simon Corcoran *The Empire of the Tetrarchs, Imperial Pronouncements and Government AD 284-324*. (Oxford University Press: Oxford, New York, 2000), 284-324.

<sup>6</sup> Frederick H. Russell *Just War in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 1975), 55-212.

duty for bishops in Ottonian Germany<sup>1</sup>. The Eastern Church, on the other hand, disposed of its responsibilities for policing and defending the community because it never faced a vacuum of imperial power. As a result, the Church has generally dangled between imposing its moral will within the State – under permissible conditions – while being subjected to State oppression, whenever its principles posed a threat or discomfort to the policies of the State<sup>2</sup>.

In Eastern Christianity, during the first fifteen centuries, the Byzantine model of Church-State separation implied that each institution had specific responsibilities towards the public. While, according to the “principle of symphonia” coined by Emperor Justinian (527-565)<sup>3</sup> the Church was entrusted with the spiritual salvation of the community, the State was entrusted with its material well-being, including internal policing and external defense. As a result, while the Church never made any decision about war, theologians approached this from an advisory perspective, ensuring that the State, in its alleged concern with the defense of the community, does not overstate its role. Basically, the Church made it un-canonical for its clergy to take government jobs particularly in the military<sup>4</sup>, as their duty was to proclaim the Gospel. A wide range of canons impose deposition of clergy involved with “worldly affairs.” Three Canonical Collections (*Hippolytean Canons*, *Egyptian Church Order* and *The Testament of our Lord*) dating since about mid-fourth century had specific stipulation over military participation of the clergy. According to Cadoux, these canons “mark clearly and distinctly the views which prevailed in wide circles,” however “they possessed no generally binding power.”<sup>5</sup>

Additionally, the following *Apostolic Cannons* (Canon VI; Canon LXXXI; Canon LXXXIII); the canons adopted by the *First Ecumenical Council* (Canon XII), *Fourth Ecumenical Council* (Canon III, Canon VII – forbidding married clergy and monks to participate in public offices and military); *Local Council of Sardica*: Canon VIII (forbidding clergy to go before a civil magistrate), *Local Council of Constantinople* 861AD: Canon XI.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> James A. Brundage “Holy War and the Medieval Lawyers”, pp. 99-139 in Thomas Patrick Murphy (Ed.) *The Holy War* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1976), 99-139.

<sup>2</sup> Marian Gh. Simion “Beyond Huntington’s Gate: Orthodox Social Thinking for a Borderless Europe: Preliminary Reflections” in Daniel Jeyaraj, Robert Pazmino and Rodney Petersen *Antioch Agenda* (ISPSK: New Delhi, 2007), 93-95.

<sup>3</sup> David T. Koyzis “Imaging God and His Kingdom: Eastern Orthodoxy’s Iconic Political Ethic” in *The Review of Politics*, Vol. 55, No. 2/ Spring, 1993, 267-289.

<sup>4</sup> Grant White “Orthodox Christian Positions on War and Peace” in Semegnish Asfaw, Guillermo Kerber & Peter Weiderud (Eds.) *The Responsibility to Protect: Ethical and Theological Reflections* (WCC Publications: Geneva, 2005), 38.

<sup>5</sup> John Cadoux *The Early Christian Attitude To War* (Headley Bros Publishers, LTD: London, 1919), 127.

<sup>6</sup> D. Cummings (tr.) *The Rudder (Pedalion)* The Orthodox Christian Educational Society: Chicago, 1957.

### 3. Legislative Jurisdiction

In Eastern Christianity, the codification of Civil Law and Canon Law took place during the same period of time, and as parallel projects.<sup>1</sup>

Under the Byzantine State, the Canon Law was part of the Civil Law, and it incorporated into collections such as *Nomocanons*, *State Codex-es*, *Novelae* (laws regulating dogmatic decisions of the Church), *Institutiones*, *Ecloga*, *Prohiron*, *Epanagoga*, *Basilicalae*, *Hexabiblos*, etc.<sup>2</sup> With bishops acting as public judges<sup>3</sup>, the Church ruled over aspects of family law<sup>4</sup>, while the question of public defense was under the sole legislative jurisdiction of the State<sup>5</sup>. Although somewhat overstated, this model of legislative jurisdiction was also implemented by Prince Vladimir in Russia, following his conversion to Orthodox Christianity, as he established two courts, one religious and one secular. Based on this dual court system, a plaintiff or a defendant had the right to choose between a bishop as president of the court, or a lay presiding judge. As Dimitri Pospelovsky writes, “[t]he ecclesial court received jurisdiction over all moral transgressions of the laity: matrimonial and divorce matters, polygamy, blasphemy, foul language, matters related to dowry, kidnapping of brides, rape, property fights within families.”<sup>6</sup>

Under the Ottomans, the policy of *millet*<sup>7</sup> reduced the applicability of Canon Law to the Christian community, and it was maintained at the price of heavy taxation.<sup>8</sup> The legal jurisdiction over internal and external defense fell under the

<sup>1</sup> Philip Schaff “Excursus on the History of the Roman Law and its Relation to the Canon Law” in *The Seven Ecumenical Councils* in NPNF Second Series, Vol.14 (Hendrickson Publishers: Peabody, 2004), 24-35.

<sup>2</sup> Ioan N. Floca *Drept Canonic Ortodox, Legislație și Administrație Bisericească, Vol. 1.* (Editura Institutului Biblic și de Misiune al Bisericii Ortodoxe Române, București, 1990), 70-150.

<sup>3</sup> Ioan N. Floca *Drept Canonic Ortodox, Legislație și Administrație Bisericească, Vol. 2.* (Editura Institutului Biblic și de Misiune al Bisericii Ortodoxe Române, București, 1990), 299-300.

<sup>4</sup> D. Cummings (tr.) *The Rudder (Pedalion)* (The Orthodox Christian Educational Society: Chicago, 1957), 977-1007.

<sup>5</sup> Patrick Viscuso “Christian Participation in Warfare: A Byzantine View,” in Timothy S. Miller & John Nesbitt (Eds.) *Peace and War in Byzantium Essays in Honor of George T. Dennis, S.J.*, Catholic University of America Press: Washington, DC, 1995.

<sup>6</sup> Dimitri V. Pospelovsky *The Orthodox Church in the History of Russia* (St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press: Crestwood, NY, 1998), 25-26.

<sup>7</sup> Timothy Ware *The Orthodox Church* (Penguin Books: London, 1993), 89; Richard Clogg *A Concise History of Greece* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 1992), 10-11.

<sup>8</sup> Andrew Wheatcroft *The Ottomans: Dissolving Images* (Penguin Books, London, New York, 1995), 72-74; Steven Runciman *The Great Church in Captivity: A Study of the Patriarchate of Constantinople from the Eve of the Turkish Conquest to the Greek War of Independence* Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, UK, 1985; Timothy Ware *The Orthodox Church* (Penguin Books: London, 1993), 89.

Ottoman State.<sup>1</sup> The public law of most medieval semi-autonomous states subjected to the Ottoman rule included Canon Law as well, and was closer to the Byzantine model.<sup>2</sup> Some of the widely used collections included *Ton aghion Sinodon*, *Nea Sinatroisis* (1761), *Sillogi Pantou ton ieron ke tion kanonon* (1787); *Kontakion* (1798), *Pidalion* (1800); *Athenian Syntagma* (1852); *Canonical Regulations*, and others.<sup>3</sup> With the creation of nation states, and with the secularization process of the mid-nineteenth century, the public law eliminated completely the jurisdictional claims of the Canon Law in public life. Consequently, while Canon Law remained fundamental for the new statutes of national churches, in the public life, its weight was reduced to mere ethical guidelines. The Church lost its legislative power over issues of family law, and the quest of compliance with the stipulations of Canon Law largely became a matter of personal reputation in the community.<sup>4</sup>

#### 4. Influences of the Law of Jihad

With the Islamic military advances in the East, both the Church and the State had to join forces not only in fighting the aggressors, but also in learning the rules of the enemy, particularly when attempting to negotiate peace agreements.<sup>5</sup> As a result, it became mandatory for the Church to doctrinally engage its counterpart on the enemy's side, who, in terms of Saint John of Damascus, were nothing more than Christian heretics. For the Muslims such dialogue was acceptable only in contexts of truces permissible under the conditions imposed by *dar al sulh* (the house of treaty).<sup>6</sup>

Situated at the Arab-Byzantine frontier (*thughūr*), two of the eighth century Arab scholar-ascetics Abū Ishāq al-Fazārī and Abdallah al-Mubārak are amongst the earliest and perhaps the most influential Muslim scholars to debate the laws of

<sup>1</sup> Timothy Ware *The Orthodox Church* (Penguin Books: London, 1993), 88.

<sup>2</sup> Mircea Păcurariu *Istoria Bisericii Ortodoxe Române* (Editura Dacia: Cluj-Napoca, 2002), 78-189.

<sup>3</sup> Ioan N. Floca *Drept Canonic Ortodox, Legislație și Administrație Bisericească, Vol. 1.* (Editura Institutului Biblic și de Misiune al Bisericii Ortodoxe Române, București, 1990), 122-150. See also Ioan N. Floca *Drept Canonic Ortodox, Legislație și Administrație Bisericească, Vol. 2.* (Editura Institutului Biblic și de Misiune al Bisericii Ortodoxe Române, București, 1990), 304-305.

<sup>4</sup> Mircea Păcurariu *Istoria Bisericii Ortodoxe Române* (Editura Dacia: Cluj-Napoca, 2002), 97ff. See also Ioan N. Floca *Drept Canonic Ortodox, Legislație și Administrație Bisericească, Vol. 2.* (Editura Institutului Biblic și de Misiune al Bisericii Ortodoxe Române, București, 1990), 305-306.

<sup>5</sup> Michael Bonner "Some Observations Concerning the Early Development of Jihad on the Arab-Byzantine Frontier" in *Studia Islamica*, No.75 / 1992, 5-31.

<sup>6</sup> Majid Khadduri *War and Peace in the Law of Islam* The John Hopkins Press: Baltimore, London, 1969; John L. Esposito *Unholy War: Terror in the Name of Islam* Oxford University Press: Oxford, New York, 2002; Joseph Schacht *An Introduction to Islamic Law* (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1964), 148.

war in terms of *siyar* and *jihād*.<sup>1</sup> What is relevant in their debates is the role of the Savior. While in the Byzantine warfare, war was conducted on behalf of the community (Empire), and not on behalf of the leader (Jesus Christ), in the case of this emerging Islamic jurisprudence, war was to be conducted on behalf of the leader (Prophet Muhammad and his legitimate successor), case in which, the leader has an overriding authority over the community. Based on the imitation principle, both scholars agree to use Prophet Muhammad's authority and judgment as *typos* when faced with the dilemma of employing military force and verbal persuasion. Thus, Abū Ishāq al-Fazārī,<sup>2</sup> in his *Kitāb al-siyar* and Abdallah al-Mubārak in his *Kitāb al-jihād* debated whether it was the duty of the community *sīra*, where the dominant cognitive category is *ἐκκλησία*, or of the ruling authority, *sunnah*, where the dominant cognitive category is *νόμος*, to decide when to engage in a war.<sup>3</sup> While al-Fazārī pondered over *sīra*'s priority, al-Mubārak insisted over the issue of personal merit, meant to favor the leader's authority – a rather poignant reference to the emerging Sunni-Shia split over the laws of war.<sup>4</sup>

On the Russian front, during the Tatar/ Mongol yoke that lasted since 1238 until 1480,<sup>5</sup> the Russians often had to make war and peace with their Muslim enemies,<sup>6</sup> particularly due to the cruelty of the Tatar tax collectors, *baskaks*.<sup>7</sup>

A *first* concrete example that displays a possible influence of the law of jihad over Russian Orthodox justification of war is the alleged conversation that took place between Constantine-Cyril and Caliph Mutawakkil<sup>8</sup> in 851 in the context of a Christian diplomatic mission to the Saracenes.<sup>9</sup> A *second* case of suspected

<sup>1</sup> Rudolph Peters *Jihad in Classical and Modern Islam: A Reader* (Markus Wiener Publishers, Princeton), 1996.

<sup>2</sup> Michael Cook *Commanding Right and Forbidding Wrong in Islamic Thought* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 2000), 66. See also 'Das M. Muranyi *Kitāb al-Siyar* von Abū Ishāq al-Fazārī, *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* / 1985, 67-70.

<sup>3</sup> Michael Bonner "Some Observations Concerning the Early Development of Jihad on the Arab-Byzantine Frontier" in *Studia Islamica*, No.75 / 1992, 5-6.

<sup>4</sup> Michael Bonner "Some Observations Concerning the Early Development of Jihad on the Arab-Byzantine Frontier" in *Studia Islamica*, No.75 / 1992, 8ff.

<sup>5</sup> Dimitri V. Pospelovsky *The Orthodox Church in the History of Russia* (St. Vladimir's Seminary Press: Crestwood, NY, 1998), 15.

<sup>6</sup> John Meyendorff *The Orthodox* (Light and Life Publishing: Minneapolis, 1966), 23

<sup>7</sup> Dimitri V. Pospelovsky *The Orthodox Church in the History of Russia* (St. Vladimir's Seminary Press: Crestwood, NY, 1998), 37.

<sup>8</sup> Robert Browning "Byzantine Scholarship" in *Past and Present* No. 28 /July 1964.

<sup>9</sup> Francis Dvornik *Byzantine Missions among the Slavs: Saint Constantine-Cyril and Methodius* (Rutger University Press: New Brunswick, New Jersey, 1970), 286-87; David K. Goodin "Just War Theory and Eastern Orthodox Christianity: A Theological Perspective on the Doctrinal Legacy of Chrysostom and Constantine-Cyril" in *Theandros: An Online Journal of Orthodox Christian Theology and Philosophy* Vol. 2, No 3, Spring 2005; JBC: Jubilee Bishops' Council of the Russian Orthodox Church, *The Orthodox Church and Society: The Basis of the Social Concept of the Russian Orthodox Church* Belleville, Michigan: St. Innocent / Firebird Publishers, 2000.

influence of jihad was recorded in the mid-960s, in the context of a dispute between the Patriarch of Constantinople, Polyeukos, and Emperor Nikephoros Phokas. To further glorify his heroes, the emperor demanded to have his soldiers, who had been killed on the battlefield, canonized as martyrs and declared saints of the Church. The Patriarch successfully opposed him by citing Saint Basil's Canon 13, with the interpretation that the soldiers killed in the battle might have been guilty of violating the commandment 'Thy shall not kill' (Exodus 20: 13), and thus committed murder.<sup>1</sup>

While this example of jurisprudence relates more to the relationship between Church and State, it nevertheless reveals that this view of martyrdom was understood by the Byzantine emperor as an active path of defending faith through war rather than as a passive act specific to the first three centuries. As a result, the emperor's understanding of martyrdom was highly similar to the concept of martyrdom 'in the path of Allah,' whereby one sacrifices oneself for missionary purpose.<sup>2</sup> A *third* example of a possible influence of jihad over Eastern Christianity is the presence of the service of blessing soldiers and weapons in the Slavo-Byzantine rite, particularly in the context of the final blessing bestowed upon the soldier, which says, "Let the blessing of Triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, come down on and remain upon these weapons and those who carry them *for the protection of the truth of Christ* [emphasis added], Amen." From a historical perspective, it is only common sense to assume that this prayer must have been invoked for the purpose of protecting "the truth of Christ," in the context of Islamic practice of forced conversion of its subjects. Otherwise, the use of expression "truth of Christ" would be a plain cynical retaliation against the principle of turning the other cheek. A *fourth* possible case of mutual influence between jihad and Eastern Christianity is the concept of salvation through spiritual war. This is visible in the second millennium's literature of *Philokalia* as well as in the concept of "The Greater Jihad," manifested as an inner struggle for spiritual ascent.

## 5. The Slavic Cultural Influence

With the Christianization of the Slavs a new worldview started penetrating Eastern Christianity. In terms of doctrine of defense, the inherent dualistic culture of the Slavs, deriving perhaps from the *Belobog-Chernobog* antagonism,<sup>3</sup> has

<sup>1</sup> John H. Erickson "An Orthodox Peace Witness?" in Jeffrey Gros and John D. Rempel *The Fragmentation of the Church and Its Unity in Peacemaking* (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company: Grand Rapids, MI, Cambridge, 2001), 48-58

<sup>2</sup> Majid Khadduri *War and Peace in the Law of Islam* (The John Hopkins Press: Baltimore, London, 1969), 55-82.

<sup>3</sup> Pyotr Simonov *Essential Russian Mythology: Stories that Change the World* (Thorsons, An imprint of Harper Collins Publishers: San Francisco, 1997), 4.

unavoidably led to a dualistic Christian worldview, which in combination with Christian asceticism, saw good and evil as identifiable with spirit and mater. This dualistic worldview often emerged into heretical movements, which either viewed human body as evil, such as the Bogomils, the Khlystys, and the Skoptzys,<sup>1</sup> or simply demonized political establishments, as it is the case with the Bogomils<sup>2</sup> and the Raskol anarchists. Due to this inherent dualism, the Slavs seem to have left a hefty influence over the justification of war, which strongly contradicted the pacifistic nature of the Gospel.

In a sociological sense, dualism favored not only an *us-versus-them* attitude, but it proceeded to the demonization of adversaries and justification of violence. This affected the Orthodox Churches of Slavic tradition in the way that, at a doctrinal level, one could find quasi-orthodox 'conversations' such as the one between Constantine-Cyril and Caliph Mutawakkil,<sup>3</sup> while in terms of worship; one can find liturgical anomalies such as the wide use of the *Service for Blessing Weapons*.<sup>4</sup>

## 6. Nationalism and Patriotism

Challenging Christian universalism – whereby humanity is created in the image of God (Genesis 1:26-27), and that “there is neither Jew nor Greek” (Galatians 3:28) – nationalism came as a messianic political philosophy claiming that one can be ‘saved’ from the dangers of this world only if belonging to a nation organized itself into a state. Nationalism emerged as a political ideology in the aftermath of the Peace of Westphalia (1648), and was built on the statist model proposed by Hugo Grotius in his 1625 *De Jure Belli ac Pacis*, reaching its peak during the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries. By eliminating the authority of the Church of Rome, nationalism embraced patriotism as a new form of loyalty, this time to a political unit rather than to the Church.<sup>5</sup> As a sentiment of love and loyalty to the “fatherland”, patriotism was built on a philosophy of defense. Adopted by Christianity from the Roman culture which glorified those

<sup>1</sup> Petru I. David *Călăuză Creștină* (Editura Episcopiei Ortodoxe: Arad, 1987), 64-79.

<sup>2</sup> Obolensky: 1948.

<sup>3</sup> David K. Goodin “Just War Theory and Eastern Orthodox Christianity: A Theological Perspective on the Doctrinal Legacy of Chrysostom and Constantine-Cyril” in *Theandros: An Online Journal of Orthodox Christian Theology and Philosophy* Vol. 2, No 3, Spring 2005; JBC: Jubilee Bishops’ Council of the Russian Orthodox Church, *The Orthodox Church and Society: The Basis of the Social Concept of the Russian Orthodox Church* Belleville, Michigan: St. Innocent / Firebird Publishers, 2000.

<sup>4</sup> Hildo Bos & Jim Forest *For the Peace from Above: An Orthodox Resource Book on War, Peace and Nationalism* (Syndesmos Press: Athens, 1999), 120-121.

<sup>5</sup> Richard Falk *Religion and Humane Global Governance* (Palgrave Macmillan Press: New York, 2001), 37.



who died for the Roman *patria*<sup>1</sup> as well as in light of the "divinely endorsed" Old Testament wars<sup>2</sup>, patriotism was presented by Ambrosius of Milan as an argument of protecting orthodoxy against heresy. While Ambrosius saw the defense of patria as coinciding with the defense of the Christian faith<sup>3</sup>, Augustine claimed that the soldier who killed a combatant enemy did not violate the commandment 'shall not kill,' thus eliminating the sentiment of guilt for human slaughter.<sup>4</sup>

Created in Western Europe as limited to the political unit of nation-state, nationalism was soon exported into Eastern Europe where it developed new depths of political dualism, thus dividing the Orthodox Christians by lines of history, language and ascribed territories. If until then, the Ottoman Sharia law (under which most of the Orthodox Christians lived), offered an *a priori* ghetto recognition of a unified Christian community (*Rum millet* or "Roman Nation"),<sup>5</sup> nationalism divided this Christian community between smaller autonomous and autocephalous Orthodox Churches. During this time, the Orthodox theologians have generally been keen in trying to ensure that the mission of the Orthodox Church remained focused on the salvation of people of all nations and races.<sup>6</sup>

While selected Orthodox theologians expressed reluctance over nationalism for reasons emerging from the traditional Christian universalism, the strongest and yet ineffective opposition came from the Ecumenical Patriarchate, as numerous highranking Greek bishops and metropolitans lost significant administrative privileges in churches that became autocephalous. At the *Local Synod of Constantinople 1872* – a synod ignited by a unilateral establishment of a separate episcopate by the Bulgarian community in Constantinople<sup>7</sup> – both nationalism and racism were condemned in the strongest terms. This Synod condemned ethno-phyletism by stating, "We renounce, censure and condemn racism, that is racial discrimination, ethnic feuds, hatreds and dissensions within the Church of Christ, as contrary to the teaching of the Gospel and the holy canons of our blessed fathers which 'support the holy Church and the entire Christian world, embellish

<sup>1</sup> Frederick H. Russell *Just War in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 1975),

<sup>2</sup> John Cadoux *The Early Christian Attitude To War* (Headley Bros Publishers, LTD: London, 1919), 171.

<sup>3</sup> Roland H. Bainton *Christian Attitudes Toward War and Peace: A Historical Survey and Critical Reevaluation*, ninth printing (Abingdon, Nashville, 1979), 90.

<sup>4</sup> Augustine *City of God* (Ch. 22) in Philip Schaft (Ed.) *NPNF Vol.2* (Hendrickson Publishers, Peabody, MA 2004), 15.

<sup>5</sup> Victor Roudemotof *Nationalism, Globalization, and Orthodoxy: The Social Origins of Ethnic Conflict in the Balkans* (Greenwood Press: London, 2001), 68.

<sup>6</sup> Ghenadie Enăceanu "Biserica și Societatea" in *Biserica Ortodoxă Română Anul 3. No.11, 1877*, 487-501.

<sup>7</sup> Hildo Bos & Jim Forest *For the Peace from Above: An Orthodox Resource Book on War, Peace and Nationalism* (Syndesmos Press: Athens, 1999), 130

it and lead it to divine godliness.”<sup>1</sup> At the same synod, a special commission, set up to investigate nationalism and racism, concluded that, “in the Christian Church, which is a spiritual communion, predestined by its Leader and Founder to contain all nations in one brotherhood in Christ, racism is alien and quite unthinkable. Indeed, if it is taken to mean the formation of special racial churches, each accepting all the members of its particular race, excluding all aliens and governed exclusively by pastors of its own race, as its adherents demand, racism is unheard of and unprecedented. All the Christian churches founded in the early years of the faith were local and contained the Christians of a specific town or a specific locality, without racial distinction. They were thus usually named after the town or the country, not after the ethnic origin of their people.”<sup>2</sup>

### **7. Canon Law’s Ambivalence on the Use of Force**

In its legal tradition, the Orthodox Church had consistently used a canonical procedure which directly or indirectly raised the question of using defensive force. This canonical procedure defined the nature of offense, while serving as a jurisprudential basis for the ethics of law enforcement. As the canonical tradition of the Orthodox Church was based on compassion and adaptability rather than on penitence, the canons used in this procedure served largely as advisory guidelines, rather than as effective laws applicable in a society. (Yet, this was not the case with the clergy, who were much more scrutinized by the bishops or synods, case in which the canons related to the use of defensive force functioned as effective institutional policies, enforceable at the discretion of the ecclesiastical judicial process.)

From an institutional perspective, this canonical procedure refers to the *internal* self-defense of the members of a society against lawbreakers, and to the *external* self-defense of a State against a foreign invasion. In terms of *internal* self-defense, the Church favors a more penitential perspective due to the fact that the offender can be identified as an individual endangering the life of the community. As far as *external* self-defense is concerned, the Orthodox Church seems to be more restrictive in endorsing war for the very fact that in a war two allegedly innocent soldiers are forced into a situation of imposing death penalty over each other, even in the absence of guilt.

Never organized in a statist model, in its history, the Orthodox Church had to make concessions to the State for strategic and pastoral reasons. Acting on moral grounds, the procedure used by the local Orthodox Churches, when in limited situations they sanctioned the use of defensive force, was mainly *consultative* with a *concessional* component. The *concessional component* appeared mainly when

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., 130.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 130.

the State expected (even coerced) the Church to offer its endorsement for military action, and not when the Church enjoyed full freedom and autonomy, thus acting as a moral factor on the basis of pragmatism and ethics of non-violence. The *consultative* nature the canonical procedure is designed to maintain the influence of the Church within the State, serving as an interventional mechanism that appeals to the consciousness of the soldiers on the battlefield.<sup>1</sup> This procedure appears to have been followed at local councils, in pastoral decisions with canonical standing (e.g. canonical letters sent by local bishops), as well as in the jurisprudence offered by the canonists during times of war.<sup>2</sup>

This consultative procedure is *objective* and *subjective* in nature. The *objective* nature is reflected in the mutual interest of both Church and State, and it is visible in cases of defensive wars such as those fought by the Byzantines against the Arians, the Monophysites, and against the Muslims, as well as "defensive" wars fought by the religious nationalists. The *subjective* nature is reflected in cases of pastoral advice with canonical standing, as well as in writings of spiritual formation, when the Orthodox Church had to accept complete submission to the worldly sovereignty of the oppressor, refused to challenge its worldly authority, and fully embraced martyrdom. In this instance the oppressor represented 'the threatening other' – be it the State itself – which must be feared and obeyed (Romans 12). This subjective consultative procedure seems to have been used when the Church operated under oppressive regimes (Islam, totalitarianism), and it was based on the concepts of non-violent resistance and martyrdom. Therefore, this subjective approval of the oppressor's use of violence is only apparent,<sup>3</sup> and it is often used at the risk of demonizing the oppressor.

## 8. The Dilemma of Military Intervention

Two of the most widely cited canons on the use of military intervention, which had been universally adopted by the Orthodox Church include *Epistle of Saint Athanasius to Monk Ammun*, which favors the imposition of death penalty by the soldiers over their combatant enemies, and St. Basil's *Canon 13*, which forbids communion to soldiers who killed combatant enemies.

<sup>1</sup> David K. Goodin "Just War Theory and Eastern Orthodox Christianity: A Theological Perspective on the Doctrinal Legacy of Chrysostom and Constanine-Cyril" in *Theandros: An Online Journal of Orthodox Christian Theology and Philosophy* Vol. 2, No 3, Spring 2005.

<sup>2</sup> Leslie S. B. MacCoull "'When Justinian Was Upsetting the World': A Note on Soldiers and Religious Coercion in Sixth-Century Egypt" in Timothy S. Miller and John Nesbitt (Eds.) *Peace and War in Byzantium: Essays in Honor of George T. Dennis, S.J.* (The Catholic University of America Press: Washington, D.C., 1995), 106-113.

<sup>3</sup> H. H. Pope Shenouda III *Contemplations on the Ten Commandments" Vol.3 The Sixth Commandment* (Coptic Orthodox Patriarchate: Cairo, 1997), 14.

The *Epistle of Saint Athanasius to Monk Ammun* unambiguously states that, “...it is not right to kill, yet in war it is lawful and praiseworthy to destroy the enemy...”<sup>1</sup> This canon represents a clear illustration of an objective concession made by the Church in order to impose conformity with orthodoxy, as well as to sustain the morale of the Christians from North Africa, struggling to survive the forced conversion to Islam.

On the other hand, Saint Basil the Great's *Canon 13* states that, “*Our Fathers did not consider murders committed in the course of wars to be classifiable as murders at all, on the score, it seems to me, of allowing a pardon to men fighting in defense of sobriety and piety. Perhaps, though, it might be advisable to refuse them communion for three years, on the ground that they are not clean-handed.*”<sup>2</sup> In this canon, Saint Basil challenges an apparent status quo, whereby the Church, on the basis of Saint Athanasius' canonical letter, silently sanctioned the State's use of armed defensive violence. To keep the Church and the State aware of their moral responsibilities, Saint Basil considered war as a sinful act, even when conducted for defensive purpose. Therefore, the consciousness of sin and guilt remained a necessary process for the purpose of spiritual salvation of soldiers who killed combatant enemies.

Patrick Viscuso, in his study “Christian Participation in Warfare,” expands over the debate between Saint Athanasius' *Epistle of Saint Athanasius to Monk Ammun* and Saint Basil's *Canon 13*, in light of three prominent Byzantine canonists John Zonaras (12th century), Theodore Balsamon (c.1130-95), and Matthew Blastares (c.1335). What is interesting about this jurisprudence analyzed by Viscuso is its timing, as the Byzantine Empire was struggling to survive the Islamic aggression, the Crusades and the Slavic anarchy in the Balkans. Both John Zonaras and Theodore Balsamon counseled against enforcing Saint Basil's opinion to forbid communion by citing Saint Athanasius' canonical letter which approved (even praised) the killing of enemies during times of war.<sup>3</sup> While Zonaras stated that, “I think that this counsel of St. Basil never was in force,”<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> D. Cummings (tr.) *The Rudder (Pedalion)* (The Orthodox Christian Educational Society: Chicago, 1957).

<sup>2</sup> D. Cummings (tr.) *The Rudder (Pedalion)* (The Orthodox Christian Educational Society: Chicago, 1957; Hildo Bos & Jim Forest *For the Peace from Above: An Orthodox Resource Book on War, Peace and Nationalism* (Syndesmos Press: Athens, 1999); Patrick Viscuso “Christian Participation in Warfare: A Byzantine View,” in Timothy S. Miller & John Nesbitt (Eds.) *Peace and War in Byzantium Essays in Honor of George T. Dennis, S.J.*, Catholic University of America Press: Washington, DC, 1995.

<sup>3</sup> Georgios Rhalles, Michael Potles Σύνταγμα των θείων ἱερῶν κανόνων 4:132-133, as quoted by Patrick Viscuso “Christian Participation in Warfare: A Byzantine View” pp.33-40 in Timothy S. Miller & John Nesbitt (Eds.) *Peace and War in Byzantium Essays in Honor of George T. Dennis, S.J.* (Catholic University of America Press: Washington, DC, 1995) 4:132-133.

<sup>4</sup> Georgios Rhalles, Michael Potles Σύνταγμα των θείων ἱερῶν κανόνων 4:132-133, as quoted by Patrick Viscuso “Christian Participation in Warfare: A Byzantine View” pp.33-40 in Timothy S.

Balsamon commented that Canon 13 “is not in force, because, if it were established, soldiers, who are engrossed with successive wars and slaying the enemy, would never partake of the divine Sanctified Elements. Wherefore, it is unendurable.”<sup>1</sup>

Nevertheless, Matthew Blastares (c.1335), in his encyclopedic canonical work *The Alphabetical Collection*, argued that Saint Basil’s counsel for exclusion from communion was correct and should be enforced by using *theological*, *scriptural* and *historical* arguments. Blastares’ *theological* argument emerges from the idea that human violence occurs due to uncontrolled human passions which are of *necessity* and *choice*. While those passions united to nature and necessity do not involve choice, those passions supported by nature and deliberate choice imply the existence of human reasoning.

Therefore, when the passions of rational nature are subjected to the passions of irrational nature, both passions undermine spiritual salvation – hence the need for purification prior to receiving communion.<sup>2</sup> The *scriptural* argument used by Blastares against Zonaras and Balsamon is based on Luke 9:55, which refers to God’s refusal to allow David to build the temple because of his murder of his enemies. Even when in the Old Testament Israel conducted wars with a divine mandate, the soldiers who took part in killing were required to remain outside the camp for seven days to purify.<sup>3</sup>

To further contradict the opinion of his predecessors, Blastares uses a *historical* argument reflected in the case of a 10th century dispute between Emperor Nikephoros Phokas and Patriarch Polyeukos. As the Emperor attempted to persuade the Church to “establish a law that those who fell during wars be honored equally with the holy martyrs, and be celebrated with hymns and feastdays,”<sup>4</sup> the Church responded by saying, “how is it possible to number with the martyrs whose who fell during war, whom Basil the Great excluded from the Sanctified Elements for three years since their hands were not clean?”<sup>5</sup> In light of

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Miller & John Nesbitt (Eds.) *Peace and War in Byzantium Essays in Honor of George T. Dennis, S.J.* (Catholic University of America Press: Washington, DC, 1995), 4:132

<sup>1</sup> Georgios Rhalles, Michael Potles Σύνταγμα των θείων ιερών κανόνων 4:132-133, as quoted by Patrick Viscuso “Christian Participation in Warfare: A Byzantine View” pp.33-40 in Timothy S. Miller & John Nesbitt (Eds.) *Peace and War in Byzantium Essays in Honor of George T. Dennis, S.J.* (Catholic University of America Press: Washington, DC, 1995), 4:133

<sup>2</sup> Patrick Viscuso “Christian Participation in Warfare: A Byzantine View,” in Timothy S. Miller & John Nesbitt (Eds.) *Peace and War in Byzantium Essays in Honor of George T. Dennis, S.J.* (Catholic University of America Press: Washington, DC, 1995), 35-36.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 36-37.

<sup>4</sup> Georgios Rhalles, Michael Potles Σύνταγμα των θείων ιερών κανόνων 4:132-133, as quoted by Patrick Viscuso “Christian Participation in Warfare: A Byzantine View” pp.33-40 in Timothy S. Miller & John Nesbitt (Eds.) *Peace and War in Byzantium Essays in Honor of George T. Dennis, S.J.* (Catholic University of America Press: Washington, DC, 1995), 6:492

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 6:492

this event, Blastares mentions that at this synod there were several priests and bishops who “confessed... that they fought with the enemy and killed many of them,” and that the synod ordered them “to cease from the ministry.”<sup>1</sup>

## 9. The Feminine Defense Paradigm

The feminine defense paradigm had been a dominant motif in Orthodox Christianity, which deconstructed the masculinity of war and consistently skewed the meaning of violence away from an exclusive physical expression. This paradigm prevented the adoption of a Just War theory, due to structural and phenomenological implications. First, it affected the institutional self-perception of the Orthodox Church; secondly, it redefined human connectedness; and thirdly, it deeply influenced the spiritual life of the Orthodox Christians in terms of feminine protection, as expressed in the devotion to Virgin Mary.

### a) *Institutional Self-Perception*

In order to implement it in the sacramental life of the Church, Orthodox theologians expanded and applied the *theandric* doctrine (the union of the divine and human natures in Christ), to the relationship between Jesus Christ and the Church. One of the most remarkable venues is the metaphor of a mystical marriage, where the Church becomes a typology for the feminine, such as ‘the Bride of Christ.’<sup>2</sup> (Ephesians 5: 22-33). Although this metaphoric analogy is often an obscure component of dogmatic theology, this had been enforced in the liturgical life of the Orthodox Church via mnemotic associations with the family structure. Thus, the message expressed in Ephesians 5: 22-33 had been consistently reinforced through the homiletic tradition in the contexts of the sacrament of marriage. Another implicit consequence is that the gender motif affected the Church’s social self-perception in relation to the State. This self-perception stimulated the Church towards adopting social responsibilities fitting for the mother instincts. For instance, the Church’s jurisdiction over family law and inheritance ensured a more compassionate and distributive sense of justice –

<sup>1</sup> Georgios Rhalles, Michael Potles Σύνταγμα των θείων ἱερῶν κανόνων 4:132-133, as quoted by Patrick Viscuso “Christian Participation in Warfare: A Byzantine View” pp.33-40 in Timothy S. Miller & John Nesbitt (Eds.) *Peace and War in Byzantium Essays in Honor of George T. Dennis, S.J.* (Catholic University of America Press: Washington, DC, 1995), 6:492; Patrick Viscuso “Christian Participation in Warfare: A Byzantine View,” in Timothy S. Miller & John Nesbitt (Eds.) *Peace and War in Byzantium Essays in Honor of George T. Dennis, S.J.* (Catholic University of America Press: Washington, DC, 1995), 37-39.

<sup>2</sup> Dumitru Stăniloae *Teologia Dogmatică Ortodoxă vol. 2. ediția a III-a* (Editura Institutului Biblic și de Misiune al Bisericii Ortodoxe Române, București, 2003), 214-218. See also Isidor Todoran, Ioan Zăgrean, *Teologia Dogmatică, manual pentru seminariile teologice* (Editura Institutului Biblic și de Misiune al Bisericii Ortodoxe Române, București, 1991), 299-301.

as a definite alternative to an arguably retributive sense of justice implied by the masculine model.

b) *Redefining Human Connectedness*

The theandric doctrine also imported the feminine model as a creational and redemptive theme.<sup>1</sup> Here, the authoritative image of the *Theotokos* ('birth-giver of God'), which during the 5th century had received a meteoric rise in popular devotion, art and homiletics,<sup>2</sup> was implemented in the Orthodox spirituality through various motifs and mnemotic associations that appealed to the immediate social life. A prominent example is the portrayal of the *Theotokos* by Proclus of Constantinople.<sup>3</sup> In order to emphasize the redemptive role of the Theotokos in the history of salvation, Proclus uses various metaphors designed to illustrate the life-giving qualities, the maternal instincts, meekness and the celebration of life. Thus, for Proclus, Virgin Mary is "the spiritual garden of Eden in which dwells the second Adam," "the new Eve, whose obedience nullified the disobedience of her primal mother and fulfilled the saying 'Let us make woman as a helper to man.'" Virgin Mary is a harbor, a sea, a ship, a wall, a bridge, a city, a palace, a throne, a festival, a workshop, a forge, a book, a flower, a bridal chamber, the morning sky, heaven, etc.<sup>4</sup> One of the most distinctive portrayals of the Virgin's womb is the conventional image of the workshop (εργαστήριον) "in which the unity of the divine and human nature was fashioned."<sup>5</sup> The effect of such imagery and mnemotic analogies over the Orthodox society was that they contributed to a sense of social cohesion, which in essence had collectively celebrated meekness and life, rather than valor and sacrificial death – thus discouraging any rush to violence. Furthermore, such illustrations simply maintained that violence leads to alienation, destruction and death, and that it ultimately destroys and humiliates God's own creation.

<sup>1</sup> There are various studies which have elaborated on this subject. Yet, without offending the numerous remarkable reference works, one may quickly consult Jaroslav Pelikan *Mary Through the Centuries: Her Place in the History of Culture* (Yale University Press: Yale, CT, 1996), 39-65; as well as Kyriaki Karidoyanes FitzGerald "The Eve-Mary Typology" *Anglican Theological Review* LXXXIV: 3, 630ff.

<sup>2</sup> Brian E. Daley, S.J. "'At the Hour of our Death': Mary's Dormition and Christian Dying in Late Patristic and Early Byzantine Literature." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, Vol. 55 (2001), 72.

<sup>3</sup> A disciple of Saint John Chrysostom, Proclus of Constantinople served as Archbishop of Constantinople between from 434 until 446. He was an outstanding orator deeply involved in the controversy surrounding the Council of Ephesus in 431 which defined the role of Virgin Mary in the history of salvation, and adopted the term *Theotokos*, 'birth-giver of God,' as the official designation of Virgin Mary.

<sup>4</sup> Nicholas P. Constatas "Weaving the Body of God: Proclus of Constantinople, the Theotokos, and the Loom of Flesh." in *Journal of Early Christian Studies*. Vol. 3. No.2 Summer 1995, 169, 177-180.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 182.

c) *Virgin Mary as “Defender General”*

Apart from doctrinal and cultural elements designed to influence the collective consciousness, the feminine defense paradigm appears more overtly in the context of Orthodox hymnography, specifically in the Akathist Hymn.<sup>1</sup> As one of the most remarkable spiritual narratives, the Akathist Hymn evokes the miraculous intervention of Virgin Mary as a “defender general” (τή υπερμάχῳ στρατηγῳ) of the imperial City.

Based on accounts provided by the *Synaxarion* (account of the feast days) and the *Triodion* (liturgical collection with services customized for the Great Lent), in the summer of 626, the city of Constantinople came under a massive attack conducted simultaneously by the Persians and the Scythians (Avars and Slavs), while Emperor Heraclius was away with the army. Thus, on August 7, following processions led by Patriarch Sergius around the city, and persistent prayers conducted particularly at the great Church of the Theotokos at Blachernae (a church located by the Golden Horn), a hurricane sank the enemy ships and dispersed the enemy troops stationed on land. As this narrative was quickly absorbed by the large public, it became a model of faith to put one’s hope in the protective qualities of the Theotokos, even in military contexts. In fact, miraculous interventions were also reported for similar events in 677, 717-718, and 860, when the Theotokos maneuvered the forces of nature in order to defend the imperial City. As the *Akathist Hymn* introduces the Theotokos as “defender general of the winning” (Τή υπερμάχῳ στρατηγῳ τα νικητήρια), the logical implication is that the imperial City is dedicated to her (Αναγράφω σοι η πόλις σου Θεοτόκε), and she becomes the City’s most powerful protector.

The effect of Virgin Mary’s portrayal as a ‘defender general’ over the consciousness of war cannot be underestimated. In a historical sense, the remembrance of the siege of Constantinople of 626, as well as the miraculous intervention of Virgin Mary is often depicted on the outer walls of various churches in Moldova.<sup>2</sup> In a spiritual sense, this portrayal had refocused the public’s attention on the spiritual dimensions of war, once the ‘defender general’

<sup>1</sup> There is a vast bibliography provided by scholars such as Maas, Trypanis, Wellesz, Mitsakio, Caro, Holum, Limberis, Schwartz, Lampe, etc. For English translation see: G. G. Meerssemann, *The Acathistos Hymn* (Fribourg, 1958); on the origins, see C. Trypanis, *Fourteen Early Byzantine Cantica* (Vienna, 1966); J. Grosdidier de Matons, *Romanos le Milode et les origines de la poesie religieuse a Byzance* (Paris, 1977); Limberis *Divine Heiress*, 89-92. For the development and importance of Marian iconography in the 5th and 6th centuries, see Averil Cameron, “Images of Authority: Elites and Icons in Late Sixth-Century Byzantium,” in *Byzantium and the Classical Tradition*, ed. M. Mullett and R. Scott (Birmingham, U.K., 1981), 205-34. Furthermore, Leena Mari Peltomaa’s recent book *The Image of the Virgin Mary in the Akathist Hymn* (E.J. Brill, Leiden, 2001), makes some notable contribution, in spite some unfortunate mishaps that partially discredited Peltomaa’s work.

<sup>2</sup> Ene Braniște *Liturgica Generală* (Editura Institutului Biblic și de Misiune al Bisericii Ortodoxe Române, București, 1993), 555.



image made its way into the Divine Liturgy, where it was replicated on daily basis. Furthermore, while the “defender general” motif remained exclusively associated with Virgin Mary, the female defense paradigm was transferred to numerous female saints along with all instinctively peaceful qualities.<sup>1</sup>

Thus, within the spirituality of warfare, the feminine motif had been profound and complex enough to have influenced the attitudes towards war more directly. It is clear that such influences generated attitudes which often prevented wars of aggression,<sup>2</sup> while wars of defense had increasingly involved non-violent means. Moreover, with Virgin Mary’s patronage over the imperial City and civil society, the Orthodox Church advocates human interaction (including with enemies), based on sharing, reconciliation, maternal instincts, nurturing, restoration and recreation of relationships, social connectedness, forgiveness, meekness, etc.<sup>3</sup>

### Conclusion

In conclusion, one could argue that the Orthodox Church has a rather ambiguous record in its endorsement of defensive violence. In spite of terminological tensions, in the Orthodox spirituality the typical erudition and flair towards the meaning of death had been ambivalent in the sense that it projected a struggle between antique fatalism and Christian hope. At the same time, the most logical way to ensure that death occurs at the will of the Creator was to be passive about it, rather than dying in an active engagement even if in the defense of the weak and vulnerable. As one noteworthy phenomenological aspect (unevaluated here due to space restrictions), the paradox premise inherent in the meaning of death also alters the meaning of history from linearity (historic time) to circularity (liturgical time), thus undermining both the logic of causality (fundamental to the *Just War theory*), as well as the mimesis of conflict. At the spiritual level, this sense of ambivalence can only be clarified in light of the practice of spiritual exercise (ασκήσεις), whereby the members of the Church fail then rise again. By remaining loyal to the teachings on non-retaliation, inherent into the Gospel (Matthew 5:38-42), the Orthodox Church made strong efforts to resist temptations for unanimous justifications of violence, and an adoption of the Just War theory.

<sup>1</sup> Gerald A. Parsons “From Nationalism to Internationalism: Civil Religion and the Festival of Saint Catherine of Siena, 1940–2003.” *Journal of Church and State* 2004, 46/4, 861-885.

<sup>2</sup> Due to this attitude towards war and enemies, Emperor Leo VI often had difficulties getting the members of the society to share the war expenses, unlike the Arabs (their enemies), who gathered voluntarily, and all members of the society shared the expenses and the rewards of warfare. Cf. G. Dagron “Byzance et le modèle islamique au Xe siècle, à propos des *Constitutions tactiques* de l’empereur Léon VI” *Comptes rendus des séances de l’année de l’Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres* (Paris, 1983), 219-243.

<sup>3</sup> Elizabeth Behr-Sigel “Feminine Images and Orthodox Spirituality” in *The Ecumenical Review: Volume 60. No. 1-2, January-April, 2008*, 15

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## REVIEW OF A CONSTRUCT OF EMOTIONAL AWARENESS

Daniel T. DAMIAN\*

**Abstract.** In this paper, I will address the theoretical construct of emotional awareness, based on the model developed by Lane, R.D. and Schwartz, G.E. (1987). First I will describe the theoretical conceptualization of emotional awareness as well as the instrument used to measure the construct (ie: the Levels of Emotional Awareness Scale), then I will discuss some research-relevant issues pertaining to the construct and I will conclude with an overall critique of model.

**Key words:** emotional awareness, Levels of Emotional Awareness Scale, Lane, R.D. and Schwartz, G.E.

### The concept of emotional awareness

Lane & Schwartz (1987) view the overall domain of emotions as comprising the physiological, experiential and behavioral components. They view the experiential component of emotion as the most complex and critically important from a clinical perspective, yet the most difficult to research. The model of emotional awareness they developed addresses specifically the experiential (i.e., feeling) part of emotions. The authors use the words “emotional experience” and “emotional awareness” interchangeably, although they specify that the latter refers to the conscious part of emotional experience. The model was primarily developed in order to assess individual differences in the experience of emotion. The authors contend that, while a cognitive-developmental paradigm was used in various theories about ego development, object representations, self concept, moral reasoning, etc, no such paradigm has been applied yet to the domain of emotional experience.

The authors’ conceptualization of emotional awareness (Lane& Schwartz, 1987) is based on Piaget’s and Werner’s cognitive-developmental theories. Piaget identified four stages of cognitive development (i.e., sensory-motor, preoperational, concrete operational and formal operational) spanning the period from infancy to late adolescence. These cognitive stages represent structures that organize one’s knowledge about external world. Lane & Schwartz (1987) point out that Piaget was not so much interested in the content of one’s knowledge, but in the underlying mechanisms (i.e., structures) that enable one’s specific type of knowledge about the external world. Thus, in the authors’ view, Piaget’s stages of

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cognitive development provide a specific mode of knowledge, which accounts for various types/ levels of knowledge about the external world that can be acquired.

Werner (Lane & Schwartz, 1987) identified the “orthogenetic principle of development” according to which cognitive development proceeds from an undifferentiated, global state to a increasingly differentiated and integrated state.

Lane & Schwartz (1987) apply Piaget’s and Werner’s cognitive-developmental theories to the internal world of emotions. Emotional awareness (i.e., knowledge about one’s emotions) is anchored in the same mechanism (i.e., the cognitive-developmental stages) that structures and organizes one’s knowledge about the external world. One’s knowledge about emotions is determined and organized by the underlying cognitive-developmental structure. Therefore, there will be different modes and levels of knowledge of one’s emotions, based on the specific cognitive-developmental structure according to which the content of knowledge is organized.

Lane & Schwartz (1987) identify five levels of emotional awareness, which represent five different modes of knowing about emotions, each level being an organization, a structure in its own right.

The ability to become aware of one’s emotions entails in essence a mechanism of cognitive processing amenable to structural transformations, in accordance to the cognitive-developmental stages. Lane and Schwartz (1987) state that “our central thesis is that what is experienced as emotion is the consequence of a subsequent cognitive processing of emotional arousal and that the cognitive process itself undergoes a sequence of structural transformations during development” (p. 134). Ultimately, it is the underlying cognitive-developmental structure that enables a specific mode of cognitive processing which informs the overall quality and structure of emotional experience. Lane & Schwartz (1987) state that “it is the structural organization of the of cognitive processing which determines the structure of the individual’s (emotional) experience” (p. 134) and “emotional arousal constitutes an internal world about which one has knowledge and it is the structural organization of this knowledge that determines that determines how the internal world of emotion is experienced” (p. 135).

Emotional awareness begins fundamentally with an awareness of physiological arousal and the cognitive processing refers primarily to the processing of the emotional arousal. Emotional arousal provides the basic information upon which the process of emotional awareness takes shape. Lane& Schwartz (1987) identify one’s progressively more complex schemata by which emotional information (in the form of arousal) is assimilated and understood in more complex ways.

The levels of emotional awareness are hierarchical structures, each level evidencing greater emotional complexity (i.e., differentiation and integration of emotion) than the previous one. Overall, the model described above focuses on the structural organization of emotional experience and highlights the structural characteristics of emotional awareness in terms of varying degrees (i.e., levels) of emotional differentiation and integration. The overall experience of emotion is

“hypothesized to undergo structural transformation in a hierarchical developmental sequence of progressive differentiation and integration” (Lane, Quinlan, Schwartz, Walker, and Zeitlin, 1990, p. 125).

Lane & Schwartz (1987) provide an overview of the salient characteristics of each level of emotional awareness. The first level is sensorimotor reflexive (i.e., awareness of bodily sensations), whereby the conscious experience of emotion consists of bodily sensations only (i.e., “I feel sick”) on the backdrop of a global arousal state. At this level, there are reflexive (i.e., involuntary) responses in reaction to emotional arousal, such as internal autonomic changes and automatic facial expression. The awareness of the separate existence of the other is nonexistent or minimal and there is no awareness of the other’s emotional states.

The second level of emotional awareness is sensorimotor enactive (i.e., awareness of the body in action) and the emotion is experienced as a global hedonic state (i.e., “I feel bad”) and/or an action tendency that aims at minimizing emotional distress or maximizing pleasure (i.e., I feel like kicking a wall”). The awareness of the other as a separate individual is minimal and the experience of the other is represented enactively (i.e., doing things the way the other is doing), but there is no proper awareness of the other’s emotional experience.

The third level of emotional awareness is preoperational (i.e., awareness of individual feelings), whereby the representation of emotion as a conscious feeling state becomes for the first time possible. Emotional states tend to be pervasive and have an “either/or” quality (i.e., one is either happy or sad), but the capacity to experience multiple emotions as part of a single emotional reaction has not yet developed. The awareness of another person’s experience is inconsistent and is based on responding to a particular aspect of the other’s behavior rather than multiple aspects of the behavior. While others are experienced as separate from the self, they are seen primarily in terms of their external characteristics rather than internal attributes.

The fourth level of emotional awareness is concrete operational (i.e., awareness of blends of feelings) and the emotional experience of the self consists of differentiated feelings (i.e., feeling sad and angry) and blends of opposite emotions. Others are now recognized as different on the basis of internal as well as external attributes, but the awareness of the others’ emotional experience is unidimensional (i.e., others are not experienced as having differentiated feeling states).

The fifth level of emotional awareness is formal operational (i.e., awareness of highly differentiated blends of feelings for self as well as others). At this level, one’s emotional experience consists of highly differentiated and integrated feelings and subtle distinctions between nuances of emotion can be made. Compared to the previous level, greater differentiations of the quality and intensity of emotions becomes possible. One also becomes aware now of the multifaceted, differentiated emotional experience of others.

### **The measure of emotional awareness**

The Level of Emotional Awareness Scale (i.e., LEAS) (Lane et al., 1990) was designed to capture the individual differences in one's structural organization of emotional experience (i.e., the degree of differentiation and integration of emotional states in self and others). Lane & Schwartz (1987) view the quality of verbal representations as reflecting the degree of emotional awareness and "the greater degree of organization of the inner world will be reflected in the structure of the verbal descriptions of emotion" (p.137).

The LEAS (Lane et. al., 1990) is a performance-based, observer-rated measure. It consists of 20 hypothetical scenes, each described in two to four sentences and each involving two persons. The scenes are intended to elicit four types of emotions: anger, fear, happiness and sadness, at five levels of increasing complexity. Each scene is presented on a separate page, followed by two questions: "How would you feel?" and "How would the other person feel?" Subjects write their responses on the remainder of each page. The scoring system for LEAS protocols is fairly complex and the authors developed a specific scoring manual that includes a glossary of emotion-relevant words and outlines the scoring criteria. Each scene receives a final score ranging from 0 to 5 corresponding to the five levels of emotional awareness. Each subject receives a separate score for the "self" response and for the "other" response, ranging from 0 to 4. In addition, a third "total" score is assigned, equal to the higher of these two (i.e., self and other) scores.

The lowest score (i.e., level 0) is given for non-emotion responses where the word "feel" is used to describe a thought rather than feeling. Level 1 scores are given for responses that describe emotional states as bodily sensations (i.e., "I would feel tired"). Level 2 scores are given for descriptions of action tendencies (i.e., "I would feel like punching a wall") or undifferentiated emotion states (i.e., "I would feel bad"). Level 3 scores are given for descriptions of single and specific emotional states (i.e., "I would feel happy"). Level 4 scores are given for responses that describe a differentiated emotional experience which typically involves the use of two or more Level 3 words (i.e., "I would feel happy and relieved"). Finally, Level 5 scores are given for responses in which the description of emotional experiences regarding both self and others receive a Level 4 score (i.e., both self and others are described in highly differentiated and complex terms from an emotional perspective). The maximum score on LEAS is 100 and only the final scores (i.e., the "total" scores) are reported.

### **Research studies using LEAS**

Although the LEAS was not used extensively in research, it has still been employed in a variety of research studies. Lane et al. (1990) report significant positive correlations between LEAS and two cognitive-developmental measures:



the Sentence Completion test of Ego Development (i.e., a measure of cognitive complexity) and the Parental Descriptions Scale (i.e., a measure of the complexity of representations of others) ( $r=.40$  and  $r=.35$ , respectively). The authors interpret the significant correlations as providing further support for the cognitive-developmental paradigm underlying the LEAS.

One study (Lane, Sechrest & Riedel, 1998) found that LEAS correlates significantly yet modestly with demographic variables, such as age, education, gender and SES, correlations ranging from  $r=-.26$  for gender (i.e., LEAS correlates negatively with male gender) to  $r=.28$  for education (i.e., LEAS correlates positively with more years of education). Lane et al., (1998) reported the results of a previous study that found a positive correlation between LEAS and emotion perception, as measured by the Perception of Affect Task.

R. Lane and his research team have been interested in identifying possible neurological correlates underlying the process of emotional awareness. One study (Lane, Reiman, Axelrod, Yun, Holmes and Schwartz, 1998) sought to investigate whether or not the activation of particular brain areas during emotional arousal is also associated with the conscious experience of emotion. Using PET scans, the researchers manipulated the film-induced and recall-induced emotional arousal of the subjects and then sought to find out if the changes in the subjects' emotional arousal (in the two emotion-inducing versus two emotion-neutral conditions) varied with their performance on LEAS. Using a conjunction analysis, a positive association was found between subjects' cerebral blood flow (CBF) increase in an area of the Anterior Cingulate Cortex (ACC) and their greater level emotional awareness, as assessed by the LEAS scores. In other words, subjects who showed greater emotional awareness also demonstrated an increased activity in the ACC during the two emotional arousal conditions. When interpreting the results, the researchers contended that ACC activity increases as the conscious ability to process emotional information (i.e., greater emotional awareness) during states of emotional arousal is increased, as well.

Another study (Lane, Kevley, Dubois, Shamasundara, and Schwartz, 1994) examined whether or not individual differences in emotional awareness, as measured by LEAS, are related to the degree of right hemispheric dominance in the perception of facial emotions, as measured by Levy Chimeric Faces Test. The latter measure involves a task of identifying emotions (i.e., happiness) in 36 pairs of chimeric face photographs (i.e., each pair being a combination of half-smiling and half-neutral facial expressions) presented to the subjects as slides on a projector screen. From a neuropsychological perspective, the performance on this task shows evidence of lateralized brain function, specifically a degree of the right hemisphere dominance over the left hemisphere. The subjects' scores on LEAS were significantly correlated with Laterality scores on LCFT ( $r=.35$ ). Therefore, the study suggests the existence of a relationship

between greater emotional awareness and greater lateralization to the right hemisphere in the identification of facial emotions.

Several studies have shown that LEAS is not strongly correlated with most other measures of emotional functioning. One such study (Lumley, Gustavson, Partridge & Labouvie-Vief, 2005), investigated the interrelationships among several measures of emotional ability such as Toronto Alexithymia Scale (TAS-20), Beth Israel Hospital Psychosomatic Questionnaire (BIQ), Observer Alexithymia Scale (OAS), Emotional Approach Coping Scale (EAC), Trait Meta-Mood Scale (TMMS) and LEAS. The results showed that LEAS was significantly correlated only with the External-Oriented Thinking subscale of the TAS-20 ( $r = -.30$ ), Attention to Mood subscale of the TMMS ( $r = .22$ ) and Interpersonally Distant subscale of the OAS ( $r = -.20$ ).

Another study (Lundth, Johnson, Sundqvist, & Olsson, 2002), sought to examine the relation between TAS-20 (a measure of alexithymia) and LEAS in a Swedish sample, along with other self-report measures of negative affect: Beck Anxiety Inventory (BAI), Anxiety Sensitivity Index (ASI), Beck Depression Inventory (BDI) and Karolinska Scales of Personality, Anxiety and Social Desirability Scales (KSP). The study found that LEAS did not correlate significantly with any measure of negative affectivity and was positively correlated with TAS-20 ( $r = .24$ ). However, the authors explain the positive correlation between these two measures as a result of inconsistent patterns of scores due to subjects' response bias.

Another study (Ciarrochi, Caputi & Mayer, 2003) examined the relationship between LEAS and a measure of emotional intelligence (Multifactor Emotional Intelligence Scale, MEIS) as well as LEAS and a measure of alexithymia (TAS-20). The study found that LEAS correlates with two subscales of MEIS (ie; perceiving emotions in stories subscale,  $r = .20$ ; and relativity subscale,  $r = .21$ ), while not being significantly correlated with the composite score of MEIS. No significant correlation was found between LEAS and TAS-20 scores.

Lane et al., (1998) found a weak negative correlation between LEAS and overall TAS-20 scores ( $r = -.19$ ), while LEAS was found to be significantly correlated only with the Externally-Oriented Thinking subscale ( $r = -.27$ ) of the TAS-20 measure.

The results of these studies made the researchers conclude that LEAS taps a different aspect of emotional functioning, compared to most other measures. For instance, Ciarrochi et al. (2003), attempting to account for the weak correlations found between LEAS and MEIS, suggests that the two measures assess two distinctive domains of emotions. LEAS can be best understood as a measure of processing style, because it measures developmentally relevant style of processing emotions; thus, higher scores on the scale do not reflect the accuracy of responses, but a more complex and sophisticated style of responding. On the other hand,

MEIS is a measure of emotional ability and higher scores on this scale indicate more accurate responses.

### Critique

The model of emotional awareness developed by Lane and Schwartz (1987) primarily addresses the experiential (i.e., feeling states) component of emotions. Emotional awareness is conceptualized from a structural perspective, in terms of one's ability to experience increasingly complex, meaning progressively more differentiated and integrated) emotional states in self and others.

A strong cognitive dimension is embedded in this model of emotional awareness, although the cognitive part does not refer to the process of cognitive appraisal. Instead, the cognitive component becomes evident in Lane & Schwartz's view (1987) that emotional awareness entails in essence a mechanism of cognitive processing of emotional arousal. Also, the cognitive dimension becomes apparent in the authors' view that the structural organization of the emotional experience (i.e., various levels of emotional differentiation and integration) is made possible by the underlying cognitive-developmental structures which are derived from Piaget's theory of cognitive development. Each level of emotional awareness is rooted in a specific cognitive-developmental stage and the overall experience of emotion undergoes structural transformations in accordance with Piaget's stages.

The physiological component of emotion (i.e., emotional arousal) plays an important role in Lane and Schwartz' model, given that the emotional arousal, as a result of internal or external stimulation, provides the necessary emotional information that will be cognitively processed in varying levels of complexity. The interest in the neurological correlates of emotional awareness, as reflected by several research studies conducted in this area, suggests the important role given to the physiological aspect of emotion. The findings of some of the studies (i.e., higher level of emotional awareness is associated with increased activity of the Anterior Cingulate Cortex and greater predominance of right hemispheric activity in the perception of facial emotions) are highly interesting and facilitate a better understanding of the still little understood domain that links emotions and physiology.

Lane & Schwartz's model gives little attention to the behavioral/expressive component of emotions. To my knowledge, the authors do not conceptualize or describe this component at all.

In my opinion, the levels of emotional awareness constitute a manner of symbolizing emotional states and the higher levels of awareness reflect one's greater ability to represent emotional states symbolically, in a more differentiated, integrated and complex manner. In the therapeutic process, one's ability for

symbolic representation of various affective experiences plays a critical role in the self-regulation of emotions and the development of more integrated self-experiences. Thus, Lane & Schwartz's model seems to have an utmost significance from a clinical perspective.

In my opinion, when viewed from the perspective of the symbolization of emotional experience, the emotional awareness model seems to have something in common with mentalization theory (Allen, Fonagy, & Bateman, 2008). The latter construct focuses on one's ability to be aware of, reflect on and describe own's and others' mental states, including feelings, in a meaningful way. The capacity to mentalize, as assessed by the Adult Attachment Interview (i.e., AAI), follows a hierarchical model and various levels of reflective functioning, ranging from negative RF to exceptional RF, can be identified. Therefore, both the emotional awareness and mentalization constructs appear to share some common characteristics, such as a focus on one's ability to be aware of and symbolize (through verbal representations) the emotional states in self and others. Also, both constructs view such capacity as involving multiple levels of increasing complexity. However, there are also important differences between the emotional awareness and mentalization constructs. The latter takes into account not only feelings, but overall mental states of the self and others (i.e., desires, intentions, thoughts, etc), so it is broader in scope than emotional awareness model. The AAI assesses one's capacity to mentalize in regards to actual experiences (i.e., early attachment experiences) whereas LEAS assesses one's level of emotional awareness by using hypothetical scenarios, with no basis in the subject's actual reality.

In my opinion, the model of emotional awareness developed by Lane & Schwartz seems to have some common characteristics with another model of emotional development, advanced by Sroufe, L.A. (Sroufe, 1996). Both models suggest that emotions begin as undifferentiated and global arousal states. Lane & Schwartz's (1987) description of the emotional experience at the sensorimotor reflexive stage seems related to Sroufe's (1996) description of physiological prototypes, because, in both instances, the experience of emotions entails reflexive reactions to internal arousal states. Lane & Schwartz's description of the global hedonic states specific to the sensory motor enactive stage appears to be related to Sroufe's emotional precursors, such as generalized states of pleasure, frustration, etc. Sroufe views the development of proper emotions as contingent on the achievement of a sense of separation between self and others. In the same vein, for Lane & Schwartz, the experience of emotion as a conscious feeling state first occurs only at the preoperational stage (ie: Level 3), when one begins for the first time to experience others as being separate from self.

There are certain limitations pertaining to the model of emotional awareness and the LEAS measure. For instance, one's emotional awareness is assessed on LEAS by the degree of complexity demonstrated in describing emotional states in

self and others based on hypothetical scenes, and not actual situations. However, one could show a high level of emotional awareness in regards to LEAS's hypothetical situations, but experience a lower degree of emotional awareness pertaining to his/her own actual, real-life situations and circumstances. Basically, there is no guarantee that one's level of emotional complexity as measured by LEAS remains the same when it comes to one's actual, real-life situations or events.

One's performance on the LEAS depends on his/her verbal skills and thus, one who is not entirely fluent in English may have difficulties capturing in words the more complex emotional states in self and others.

The hypothetical scenes from LEAS are intended to elicit only four types of emotions (ie: anger, fear, happiness and sadness). Thus, the measure appears to be somewhat restrictive in regards to the range of emotions it intends to assess.

Some researchers (Lane et al., 1998) identified certain response biases pertaining to the use of LEAS in research work: some subjects may report feelings that they wouldn't really have (i.e., false positives) or they may not take the time and energy to express the full complexity of their feelings (i.e., false negatives).

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## ORTHODOXY AND CULTURE

J. A. MCGUCKIN\*

**Abstract.** The theological imagination investigates what society and social theology might mean and it is deeply imprinted now on American consciousness far beyond its original Puritan founders. This was also stretched out into a subconscious axiom for many thinkers, even Christian theorists. Therefore, in that light to ask what would be the premisses of an Orthodox theological consideration of the Social issue? How does Orthodoxy, on its own terms, stand in relation to the question of the Church's relation to the issue of society and civilisation building? It has never believed that Church is merely an apocalyptic reality, or that it is a hopelessly corrupted concept. It has never thought that the Gospel is not a power to rebuild society, or the core of the issue of forming a civilisation. It could not imagine ( if left to itself) the wisdom of building a wall between Church and State. Does this mean it is necessarily left to the vagaries of theocracy?

**Key words:** theological imagination, the Puritan founders, Orthodoxy, society and civilisation

Many aspects of contemporary American culture are imbued with a deep Protestant sense, prevalent in the founders of the Constitution, that not only should there be 'no law passed regarding an establishment of Religion' (First Amendment) but even that a 'wall of separation' between church and state should be built and maintained. It was not only the fear of wars of religion, or persecutions of supposed sectaries, that gave rise to that lively awareness of the 'problem' of religion in the minds of the American Protestant foundation, but at a deeper and more psychically primed level, the rooted Puritan sense that somehow or other society and the Christian religion are meant to be concepts at variance with one another. Protestantism's intimate foundation myths imagined the Church of the Empire (whether Constantinian, Byzantine or Papal) as one of the most profound 'corruptions' that the Reformation was meant to correct. It nailed its colours to the wall in the form of a straightforward belief that its own polity was that of a return to New Testament simplicities where 'the world' on the one side, and 'the kingdom' on the other were deeply at variance. And in such a dichotomous structure of thought, even the idea of 'Church' itself, was dubiously placed: many preferring to afford it no solid earthly validity, only an apocalyptic or eschatological significance ('Church' could only exist here among us as part of the corruptible realities of the world that needed constant reformation). In the light of this metaphysics of polity, it is hardly surprising that Protestantism, by and

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large, had little room for any ‘theology of society’, and still struggles with the very notion (as can be seen even in large-scale thinkers such as Karl Barth). This view, this theological imagination, of what society and social theology might mean, is deeply imprinted now on American consciousness far beyond its original Puritan founders. It has stretched out into a subconscious axiom for many thinkers, even Christian theorists. It is interesting, therefore, in that light to ask what would be the premisses of an Orthodox theological consideration of the Social issue? How does Orthodoxy, on its own terms, stand in relation to the question of the Church’s relation to the issue of society and civilisation building? It has never believed that Church is merely an apocalyptic reality, or that it is a hopelessly corrupted concept. It has never thought that the Gospel is not a power to rebuild society, or the core of the issue of forming a civilisation. It could not imagine (if left to itself) the wisdom of building a wall between Church and State. Does this mean it is necessarily left to the vagaries of theocracy? Let us consider some of the issues.

The Orthodox church has a long history, and a memory even longer than its history, for it wove the fabric of the ancient scriptures into its own robe of experience, thereby enriching its psychic perception with a prophetic acuity that was steeped in deepest antiquity, yet ever looking to a radiant future of the age-to-come that stands in judgement on present conditions. It has come through the fires of political opposition, often bloody and totalitarian, as well as times of establishment support. The bane of the one, through many tears, often became a blessing for it. The blessing of the other, even in much apparent self-congratulation, often proved its bane. Over many centuries it has seen the profound courage and faithfulness of men and women in relation to the defence of the faith (their names are recorded in thick and heavy Synaxaria), as well as observing an all too human weakness and unreliability in times of stress and crisis (though it has generally passed over the names of the lapsed and the apostates in a charitable silence, recording only the martyrs). It has learned from the Lord himself that there is an evil force abroad in the world<sup>1</sup>, a spirit that can even pass as an ‘angel of light’<sup>2</sup> and which will offer, to those susceptible, the kingdoms of the world if only for the price of falling down and worshipping it<sup>3</sup>. It has received as a warning from the same Lord the intelligence that the world will never love it, just as it has never really loved the King of Glory.<sup>4</sup> Indeed it has been told that the world will always tend to hate it<sup>5</sup>, precisely because of its constitutional spiritual oppositional stance

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<sup>1</sup> Jn 12.31; Jn 14.30.

<sup>2</sup> 2 Cor. 11.14.

<sup>3</sup> Mt. 4. 8-10.

<sup>4</sup> Jn. 15:18 ‘If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you.’

<sup>5</sup> Jn. 15:19. ‘If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.’ Also see Jn. 16.33.



to the *Kosmos*<sup>1</sup>, its character of always being ‘unknown’ and unmanageable to the powers that attempt to rule the world’s affairs.<sup>2</sup>

The Apostle has also confirmed for it that the Church has to maintain, as a primary duty, this sense of careful distancing from the world. It must always be on its guard that the world does not form its mentality (the élan of its imagination, its ethos, its *nous* or *phronema*<sup>3</sup>) but that on the contrary it struggles to conform the world always to its fundamental charter and inspiration, the Gospel that will save it. This is the burden of the apostle’s own warning to the Church: ‘Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may prove what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.’<sup>4</sup> The Church has seen the rise and fall of empires and ideologies as vast and antique as those of Persia and Rome, as all-embracing as those of Lenin and Mao. It has witnessed the vigorous flourishing of heresies that once seemed so trend-setting, so elegant, and persuasive, but are now no more than foolish whispers in the dust. It has lived and experienced the perennial grace of the Spirit so long now as no longer to be excited and led away by the promises afforded by theories of ‘theological enculturation’ or ‘acculturation’. It has sufficient wisdom to ask: What culture? Whose theology? and ever seeks to discern the spirit and rationale behind what is fundamentally a term of description for the way the Church exists within the world until the time of the Kingdom.

Equally foreign to the Orthodox Church, then, are the concepts that the Church must abhor and turn away from human culture; or that the Church must seek to embrace it. Both positions have been sustained in recent times, and in past times, but not by the Orthodox Church. The first shamefully neglects the missionary imperative of the Church of Christ in the world<sup>5</sup>, and the obvious corollaries, first that the Church’s members are necessarily in dialogue with the culture with which they seek to share the good news; and secondly, that the world as the created order (*Ktisis*) established by God is good and holy and beautiful, and not always, in an indiscriminate way, to be identified with the *Kosmos* spoken of in the Gospel of John, that spirit of rebellion that exists within the beautiful world-order of the Pantokrator. This simple and foolish mistake in theology is often to be found behind certain sectarian attitudes within Orthodoxy, noticeable since the collapse of Byzantium, that call for the abhorring of the ‘world’ by the

<sup>1</sup> Jn.16:20 Truly, truly, I say to you, you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice.

<sup>2</sup> Jn. 17:14, ‘I have given them thy word; and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.’ Again: Jn 14:17: ‘Even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him; you know him, for he dwells with you, and will be in you.’

<sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. 2.16; Phil. 2.5.

<sup>4</sup> Rom. 12.2; also see: Rom. 8.6-7.

<sup>5</sup> Mt. 28. 19-20

‘church’, applying both mysterious and sacred terms in a monochromatic and unreflective way.

The Church’s true position in regard to human culture, with the latter being understood as a complex extension of the human person in society,<sup>1</sup> is exactly what its position is towards the human person itself: that all stands under the light of God’s glory: a light that is joy for the righteous elect, and yet judgement over all wickedness. Human culture in Orthodox thought, therefore, is not a univocal concept. But if the Church cannot endorse any aspect of culture unambiguously (not even its own ecclesiastical sub-culture, or any periods of so-called establishment ‘Golden Age’, be it that of a Justinian or a Romanov), then neither is it positioned in such a way that the entirety of human culture is so compromised that the Church must separate itself out, stand apart from it, seek to dominate it. Culture is part of the God-given call of human beings to serve as priests of the cosmos, as the Byzantine fathers expressed it; priests whose spiritual task is to assist in the transfiguration of the world into a sacrament of divine glory. It is part of human race’s innate gift from God, therefore, to wish in the deepest aspirations of its being to make of the world a better place, more elegant and wondrous, than the one they found. This theo-drama is written into the charter of humanity’s making. This is partly why the term for Spirit (*Ruah*) in the Old Testament is so often associated with the artistic skillfulness of the craftsmen who fashion the vessels for the sacred worship of the Israelites<sup>2</sup>, or with the wisdom and intelligent rhetoric of the teachers of the Law in the Wisdom literature. Wisdom and craft are proposed as inherently holy things. These are precisely the things, intelligence and craft, that comprise most human definitions of culture and civilization. To pretend that the Church can stand apart from them, or should be innately hostile to them, is as misguided an exercise as arguing that it stands apart from world history in so far as it is eschatological, or is itself excused all moral and spiritual criticism in so far as it is the immaculate Bride of the Lamb. This gift of the Spirit and this Icon of the Christ as woven into the soul of the race, is also why the Orthodox church finds the theological sub-text (it is, sadly, more than a theologoumenon now) of humanity and human culture as a *massa damnata* to be a shocking thing, seriously misguided, if not downright sacrilegious. What this theme signified in the Blessed Augustine was certainly not the role it has come to play in his later commentators.

The Church, therefore, occupies a tentative space, as the writer of the ancient *Letter to Diognetus* said, in the world but not of it, yet occupying a place in the world as the very soul of the world’s finest aspirations, and thus, certainly, in a way in which “not of it” never means “apart from it”. Even those ascetic zealot

<sup>1</sup> Human culture as the refined extension of human effort and aspiration: ‘culture building’ as that which rises beyond subsistence existence, into a concern for art, literature, complex human and material constructs for the building of human agencies; all the varied enterprises and activities that go to make the record of civilization.

<sup>2</sup> Ex.35.31; Num.24.2; Deut.34.9; Sirach. 39.6-7;

Christians who fled the cities to inhabit the deserts, knew that this fundamental duty of being church in the world had priority over their (equally valid) search for solitude; and this is why the monks have always recognized the duties of hospitality, missionary witness, and spiritual guidance, as fundamentally related even to the ministries of the most dedicated solitaries.

Orthodoxy occupies a more complex and ambiguous position in relation to the notion of 'a theology of culture' than can be seen in the writings of several different types of contemporary theologians (mainly 'first-world' Western Protestant) who demonstrate a certain fault-line in the western Christian experience between those who affirm the significance of theological enculturation<sup>1</sup>, and those who seem decisively to equate human culture with what the Lord spoke of in the Gospel as 'the Kosmos' which is hostile to the Spirit. Neither position seems to the Orthodox to be correct.

In its own journey through human history and culture, Orthodoxy has refined central aspects of human culture in decisive ways that in turn have shaped and altered the face of civilization. It has made, on its journey, monuments of enduring culture that speak to the world of the power and spirit of the Christian imagination and passion. From the simple rock cut cells of the Cappadocian or Coptic monks, so redolent of simplicity and modesty, to the cathedrals of Constantinople or Moscow, so filled with dignity and elevation of soul, it is unarguable that Orthodoxy has a certain culture and ethos that marks it. It is distinctly *sui generis* from that which characterises the Protestant or Catholic worlds. This is not to say that it has a monopoly on Christian culture, of course, but its cultural presence has been immense, and immensely formative.

All the architectural proto-structure of the church's historical presence, its polity and praxis, was formed and shaped in the Orthodox East<sup>2</sup>: one need only mention briefly in support of this the fact that the Church's Gospels are Greek, its Creeds are Greek, its liturgy is Syro-Greek; its major spiritual writings are Greek, its foundational music and hymnography is Greek, the form of its Rhetoric is Greek. It was the Orthodox East which took the extensive culture of Roman Law, and Roman Empire (often at variance with one another in the uneasily juxtaposed aspirations of equity and dominance) and attempted to refashion them both: now with Law understood as a spirit of Justice, and with Empire reinvented as a system of God-founded stability and human concord. Whether or not it extensively succeeded in that task of 'Christianizing Hellenism' (a task and *telos* that remains at the heart of the Orthodox attitude to culture) it is the case that in its

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<sup>1</sup> We may assert Paul Tillich as a case in point. Niebuhr is also an important aspect of this. Barth at first stood against the trend, though some have seen his late treatise *The Humanity of God*, as a signalled change of direction.

<sup>2</sup> Rome itself, we may recall, that vastly formative capital, before the 4<sup>th</sup> century was also fundamentally a Greek church, extensively worshipping in Greek until the time of Damasus.

Byzantine ascendancy the Church certainly brought to the Roman Law which undergirded all ancient societal values, the re-pristinating charter of the Gospel; and decidedly brought to the Hellenistic concept of sacral and absolute Kingship, the biblical notion of the monarch as God's anointed servant, whose right to rule depended on his sustenance of covenant values for God's poor.

These are lofty matters that have not yet attracted the critical attention and study that they deserve. The refashioning of the ancient world's soul and values through the Byzantine synthesis has all too often been dismissed by scholars; either ignored, or caricatured on the basis of minimal contact with the primary texts. Fortunately the study of the real political, theological, and societal genius of Byzantine multi-culturalism has in recent decades begun in earnest. Even in the Eastern Christian world the sources for such a study were not readily available (with the exception of Russia before the 20<sup>th</sup> century) because of the socio-economic hardships concomitant with the fall of Byzantine civilization, and the loss of two progressive forces in the historical process of Orthodox cultural refashioning, firstly the patronage of the Emperor and that of an extensive class of aristocracy, and secondly the existence of higher centres of learning and the arts as sponsored and sustained as part of the central forms of self-expression of the Orthodox imperial state. Other centuries, many of them dreary and oppressive, have taken away the cultural artifacts enduring from another age of the Orthodox church, and have placed a somnolent veil over much of contemporary Orthodoxy's imagination as it is concerned with socio-political involvement, or even in regard to the Church's engagement in the central processes of healing, educational, artistic and cultural institutions; many of which (take healing and higher education as examples) are now regarded as purely the concern of a secularized state, and no longer a 'proper domain' of the church. New vistas emerging from the realignment of Eastern Europe after the demise (dare we hope?) of totalitarian politics, have already dawned, and will continue to stimulate world Orthodoxy to 'think again'.

In this light it is of crucial importance, in the interim era, as it were, to avoid the easy temptation to allow the church's imagination as to how to relate its mission to the condition of the world's present culture to be conditioned by immediately preceding models. It is, for example, the time to celebrate the saintliness of the Romanovs who faced the mystery of their deaths with such Christian gentleness, but it is not the time to advance Nicholas II as a model for how the Church should negotiate politics. What is at stake is not the recreation of old models, but the witnessing of the same spirit that was bold enough to see the demands of the Gospel and wise enough to recognize how they could be used as a leaven in the dough of contemporary culture. This prophetic insight was what energized the ancient church, the church of the fathers, and the church of the medieval byzantines. It is this spirit that must again be brought forward in the

contemporary Orthodox church, the heir of all these ages, but an heir that is not enslaved to those cultural answers they gave in their own times. In proving it has both prophetic insight and wisdom in applying the Gospel, the Orthodox church in the present century will prove that it is truly, and effectively, Christ's church alive in the world as its sacrament of healing. Taking the step to think through, deeply and collegially, in all the parts of the Orthodox world, how the ancient Christian traditions of wisdom can be orchestrated to effect, transform and redeem contemporary human culture is an absolutely pressing *prolegomenon* to action that falls to this generation.

In an enduringly significant part of his *opus* Archpriest Georges Florovsky was once asked to deal with this issue of Faith and Culture. It is an essay that first appeared in *St. Vladimir's Quarterly* and is now accessible also in his *Collected Works*.<sup>1</sup> Florovsky recognized, in the mid fifties of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, that a great crisis of culture was upon them, and he defined it in terms of a crisis of faith: 'The major tension is not so much', he said, 'between belief and unbelief, as precisely between rival beliefs. Too many 'strange Gospels'<sup>2</sup> are preached, and each of them claims total obedience.' Florovsky did not think that the Church's answer to the problem of culture, was to argue for greater spirituality, or for more religion, in a renewed society. He states clearly that it would be disastrous in his view if society, turning away from secular disbelief should come to a position where: 'It rallied around a false banner and pledged allegiance to a wrong faith.'<sup>3</sup> He puts his finger on it, unerringly from an Orthodox perspective, when he makes his final diagnosis of the crisis of contemporary culture: 'The real root of the modern tragedy does not lie only in the fact that people lost convictions, but that they deserted Christ.'

His analysis of the problem of Faith and Culture attempts several definitions of what culture might mean, not all of them leading to a single common answer. But he marks out human culture essentially as that which separates civilization from primitivism:

When we speak of a crisis of culture what do we actually mean? The word culture is used in various senses, and there is no commonly accepted definition. On the one hand culture is a specific attitude or orientation of individuals, and of human groups, by which we distinguish the civilized society from the primitive. It is at once a system of aims and concerns, and a system of habits. On the other hand culture is a system of values, produced and accumulated in the creative process of history, and tending to obtain a semi-independent existence (that is, independent of that creative endeavour which originated or discovered these

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<sup>1</sup> 'Faith and Culture', *St. Vladimir's Quarterly*. vol.4. nos. 1-2. 1955, pp. 29-44; repr. in: *Christianity and Culture*. Collected works, vol.2. Nordland. Belmont. Mass. 1974. pp. 9-30.

<sup>2</sup> Gal. 1. 6-9.

<sup>3</sup> 'Faith and Culture'. p. 11.

values) ... Thus, when we speak of the crisis of culture we usually imply a disintegration in one of these two different, if related, systems, or rather in both of them.<sup>1</sup>

What seems to be the operative model here is a set of communal spiritual values that are so enshrined in a human social collective, that almost as a natural law of growth, the values seek to embody themselves, or incarnate their spiritual ethos, in a set of habits, customs, institutions. The institutions (take for example the way in which a society's religious ideals will reflect themselves – inevitably so – in the Law) may at some stage dissociate themselves from the élan of the spirit that first gave rise to them. So, for example, pagan Roman Law which began as part of the system of the priestly veneration of the old gods, was radically secularized by the time of the Principate, and reworked by the Christian empire as a new form of secular *pro-paideusis*. This time round, Byzantium's sense of the 'secularity' of civil law was applied as a way of ensuring the adherence of large imperial populations to a form of ethical and equitable behaviour that was consciously parallel to the legal system of the Church Canons. Byzantine Christian theorists made the Christian civil law come onto a course parallel to the canons, but not subject to them, for the latter only were the proper domain of the bishops<sup>2</sup> whereas communal legal rights were the domain of lay magistrates. The subtle and fluid movement of law within a society (law which changes so slowly and led by its own conservative priesthood as much as by societal pressures) can bear witness to the way the spiritual ethos of different ages has passed under the shadow of the Gospel, or has passed out of the shadow of the Gospel. The long arduous struggle the church had, for example, legally to protect the life of the unborn, has been unravelled by many contemporary societies today which have pushed the frontier back to pagan times: applying new technological facilities to effect abortion as (apparently) a preferential contraceptive method; the figures here no longer supporting the argument that it was a measure of last resort. Here is a case in hand of how a cultural institution (the law on this or that aspect of behaviour) rises out of a 'spirit abroad'. It is an example how an ethos, or set of values, can be incarnated in specific instances (culture is nothing and means nothing if it is not constantly grounded in a local human environment), can lose the élan that once embodied itself in a societal structure, and may often fail before the pressures of other movements.

In this sense the Church's attitude to culture seems to be a critical one: a matter of assessing how much the structures of a given society work, or fail to work, incardinating within its core the values that the Church collectively celebrates in its mystical, liturgical, and moral life. It will know, from the outset,

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<sup>1</sup> 'Faith and Culture'. pp. 11-12.

<sup>2</sup> Who were also given a distinct legal status in the Christian empire, but not legal authority over the 'secular' domain of Christian laity's affairs.

that the structures of the wider society, will not be ones that will be easily surrendered to those it would itself prefer and wish to embody in its own domain (the Church considered mystically as the society of God's elect in the world). This gives us to understand immediately that the Church's own culture must always be far ahead of that of society as a whole. Its 'churchly' culture (since the words ecclesiastical and churchy have been too debased to have any utility any longer) is meant to be no less than paradisaical, the eschatological hope for all that the world looks for in its healing. This is why, essentially speaking, the ultimate 'culture of the Church' is love and mercy and reconciliation: the quintessential marks of the presence of its Lord among it. When these charisms flourish all will be well. But the Church has to resist the temptation to play at being an alternative culture, inhabited by the pious, a culture which is 'cute, or 'exotic (good for tourist value), but not one that can be taken seriously by the intelligentsia, who are the critical factor in times of reorientating cultural institutions and elaborating principles of cultural ethos. The Church, if it is serious in leading the movement to a renewal of culture, must require of all its leaders (it is already the case in relation to all of its significant theologians) the minimum 'normally applicable' requirement in the present era of a doctorate in a higher institution of learning. It has already laid down stringent requirements ethically and ascetically for its leaders. Now it has to repristinate the episcopate by henceforward only admitting to its ranks monastics of the highest intellectual capacity, allied with the deep spirituality we customarily expect.

Florovsky's essay on Faith and Culture raises many concerns of enduring significance. He had read his Barth, and knew him closely. His essay resonates with some of the style of the Swiss theologian, especially when Fr. George warns the reader that culture in decline can collapse into mere civilization. His own sense seems to resonate empathetically with that cautious reserve:

Culture is not an unconditional good. Rather it is a sphere of unavoidable ambiguity and involvement. It tends to degenerate into civilization... Culture is human achievement, is man's own deliberate creation, but an accomplished civilization is so often inimical to human creativity. ...In civilization man is, as it were, detached from the very roots of his existence, from his very self, or from nature, or from God. This alienation of man can be described and defined in a number of ways ... but in all cases culture would appear not only to be in predicament, but to be predicament itself.<sup>1</sup>

And yet he insists, soon after this, that an overall negative view of culture is not appropriate for Orthodoxy at large. Florovsky's essay then takes a turn (its originating context in all probability) from theology of culture into Ecumenics. He begins, in his customary style of drawing large intellectual typologies, to diagnose various (Protestant) attitudes of hostility towards a theology of culture characterising

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<sup>1</sup> 'Faith and Culture.' p. 14.

them in broad strokes according to four prototypes.<sup>1</sup> He laments this western theological tendency towards cultural ‘iconoclasm’, and in the course of that argument proposes one his most famous ideas: the notion that Protestantism should not shy away from culture because it fears it as a form of ‘Hellenization of Christianity’<sup>2</sup> in the sense of a ‘paganization’ of the Gospel. Rather, he argued, the Church’s involvement with Hellenistic civilization, in the manner of an engagement that sought constantly to turn the Hellenistic spirit of human development and intellectual curiosity into something that was baptized in Christ, and put to the service of the Gospel,<sup>3</sup> was part and parcel of its evangelical mission to bring the Good News of Christ to the world, and to fashion a Christian civilization which would be the destiny of the ages. ‘Cultural concerns’, Florovsky concludes in that study, ‘Are an integral part of actual human existence and, for that reason, cannot be excluded from the Christian historical endeavour.’<sup>4</sup> His overall conclusion is that human culture always needs to stand under the scrutiny of the Gospel. The church is not committed to the denial of it, any more than it is able to endorse it without further qualification.

What is thus required for an authentic Orthodox theology of culture, would seem to be fundamentally an act of spiritual discernment based upon the concrete and specific realities appropriate in each case; each instancing of cultural formation. In this light, and given the previous observation how cultural practices inevitably institute systems of habituated behaviour which then accumulate towards long-term cultural identities, it becomes apparent why the Church needs to be in constant dialogue with the movers and shapers of ‘cultural epicentres’: the poets, artists, intellectuals, political leaders, scientists and philanthropists of each and every generation. This is the way in which the leaders of the Christian Church from century to century can play their part in the shaping of the cultural reflection that will go on to form the institutional values of the following generation. There is never a guarantee that the secular cultural leaders of any age will look upon the Church’s leaders with anything other than disdain. In many generations past the cultural leaders have deliberately sought to mock and marginalize the Church’s vast cultural experience and its deep ethical and wisdom traditions. On many occasions their response has been the even cruder answer of a bullet. It does not matter. The Church needs to be ready to offer its wisdom tradition to those who will not necessarily hear it preached from the Ambo each Sunday. It needs to be as prepared to navigate those rhetorical arenas as much as it is familiar with

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<sup>1</sup> The ‘Pietistic’ aversion to cultural theology, the ‘Puritan’ aversion, the ‘Existentialist’ aversion, and the ‘Plain Man’s’ aversion.

<sup>2</sup> He has Harnack in mind mainly, who uses this term pejoratively, to explain most of the development of early Christian theology.

<sup>3</sup> In short his favoured phrase: ‘the Christianization of Hellenism’.

<sup>4</sup> ‘Faith and Culture’. p. 26.



addressing its own faithful: and perhaps in reflecting on the syntax necessary to communicate faithfully with the un-churched, it may discover a renewal of methods of evangelising the church at the same time.

This vocation to address the leaders and shapers of the cultural ethos in successive generations has, perhaps, been more faithfully addressed in times past than in the present era, when it has to be admitted Orthodoxy is only just emerging from the shadow of totalitarian oppressions of frightening intensity. But it is a task of pressing importance in the world of the 21<sup>st</sup> century where access to, and command of, the skills necessary to flourish in the world of high-tech media have become increasingly and imperatively important. This is a vocational challenge that falls to our bishops and other Church leaders in the Orthodox world today; and one where they have the duty to organize, and encourage the laity, more than a need to engage in the work directly themselves. The tools of the new evangelism to the unchurched will be music, video-film, radio, instantaneous electronic exchange. These are the contemporary equivalents of the rhetoric once used by the patristic giants of our past to such monumental effect in transmitting the Christian culture across Antiquity. It is creativity here and now, that will smooth the path for building a new cultural platform where the Church's witness can shine in what will surely continue to be a swiftly evolving human society in the century to come.



## **REFLECTIONS ON THE SPIRITUAL RENAISSANCE IN POST-COMMUNIST ROMANIA**

Alina N. FELD\*

**Abstract.** The present essay is a speculative attempt to draw a profile of the Romanian spiritual inscape which became visible in the years following the 89 Revolution. Both the spiritual effervescence and the spiritual disenchantment are symptoms of a metaphysics which has constituted an underlying structure of mainline culture and which has surfaced in prominent works of the spirit or in historical events. The tree of life which polarizes the Romanian spiritual inscape is sacralization of history. With the help of three Romanian thinkers, Eliade, Staniloae and Cioran, I will make an attempt to find the meaning of the present phenomenon. Eliade will provide the theoretical frame of the inquiry. Staniloae will confirm my interpretation based on Eliade. Cioran comes last as a paradox and enfant terrible. The paper ends with an invitation to further reflection.

**Key words:** Romanian spiritual profile, sacralization of history, Eliade, Staniloae and Cioran

### **The Romanian Revolution or Christmas-New Year Eschato-Cosmogony**

The Romanian revolution happened in December 1989. I use the verb happen because at least for the majority of Romanians the revolution was a spontaneous, unplanned event. It was a happening which turned the celebration of the victory of Ceausescu's communism into a popular uprising. The decor and participants remained the same. Only the text changed from one of praise into one of judgment. The aspect of an art performance was supported by two peculiar circumstances: the revolution was broadcast on the national TV network and its first, though temporary, leader was a well-known actor in the Bucharest National Theatre. But this art performance effect can be subordinated to that of a ritual performance. There are several elements in the unfolding of the Romanian revolution which invite such an interpretation. The time of the revolution was the interval between Christmas and New Year; the place was the centre of Bucharest and the presidential Palace; during the revolution the president was submitted to an ad hoc trial and killed; the entire population participated directly or indirectly by watching the uninterrupted broadcasting. Certainly, any revolution enacts this ritual pattern which is more or less internalized by its participants: the

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reactualization of primordial chaos, the ritual combat, the expulsion of the demon, the mood of extreme excitement ranging from terror to exhilaration. The peculiarity of the Romanian revolution consists in the accidental (was it really accidental?) coincidence and instant homologization of historical event with *historia sacra* due to the time period – between Christmas and New Year's Eve; the place – the Palace at the center of the capital city – and the participation – the entire nation. By the overlapping of the revolution's time, space and mode of unfolding with the sacred time and space, the Romanian revolution became a paradigmatic enactment of the New Year's eschato-cosmogonic ritual.

As Mircea Eliade maintains in *The Myth of the Eternal Return*, the homologization of profane and sacred history within the economy of the ritual is the essential expression of archaic consciousness. For archaic consciousness participation in a transcendent reality, the reality of *illo tempore*, the archetypal beginning, means participation in Being. This participation is ensured by the ritual repetition and reactualization of the cosmogonic act. The ritual thus confers upon historical time a transhistorical meaning. Ritual repetition of archetypal ontology annuls the unreality of the profane through sacralization.

The televised revolution was an occasion for nation-wide participation in archetypal, sacred time. Nevertheless, this participation was only mediated. Subsequent unfolding of events deepened the split between the active and the passive element in the population. Demographically the division between actors and spectators corresponded to divisions between young and old, intellectual and non-intellectual, urban and rural, white collar and blue collar. This division indicates the ways in which the two groups, broadly speaking, received and continued to live in the sacred time of the revolution.

Rigidity developed by age and lack of intellectual training fostered conservative attitudes. This type of consciousness failed to internalize revolution. The fictional pattern that has been systematically imposed on it was too strong to be annulled; confronted by demands of self-revaluation, the victims of communist ideology withdrew into the old fictions of self and world. Desire for peace and order in the country, fear of conflict, preference for paternalistic governmental care, mistrust of the other – intellectual or foreigner – skepticism toward the importance of personal engagement in change and the future, taking past – Medieval or even pre-Roman – historical heroes for political models, regret for former regime, fatalism – all these attitudes translate into an withdrawal from historical Becoming and can be viewed as a *sui generis* nihilism (Munciu: 103-201).

On the other hand, the active sector of the population, the performers in the revolutionary event, identified as the young and the intellectuals, became the ferment of a spiritual effervescence. The young did not have the time to get eroded by the communist fiction; the intellectuals, versed in self-reflection escaped the stereotyped ideology. These two categories were the bearers of an

awakening consciousness whose symbol and ground was the revolution. They were the dynamic element for whom the revolution was turning into an inner event and whose spirit had been unchained.

The Church is one of the loci in which spiritual freedom could express itself. Though Romania is a country with a variety of ethnic cultures and Christian traditions, nearly all ethnic Romanians are Orthodox/Byzantine Christians. That means that out of a population of 22.8 million the Orthodox make up 20.3 million or about 90 per cent (Bria: vii). Nevertheless, the Orthodox Church is not the only leader or beneficiary of the spiritual liberation. Once freed, the spirit could not be contained within the confines of Orthodoxy, nor within those of Ecclesia itself. Indeed, the freed spirit manifests itself in different ways:

1. First in the ample effort of the Church to re-christianize consciousness. The vast program for re-christianization takes numberless forms: religion is introduced in schools, new theological institutes are founded, churches which had been dismantled or pulled down are rebuilt, new churches are built, women have access to theological higher education, the monastic movement is strong, Christian artistic and philosophical self-expression is open to all, newspaper articles and televised debates on spiritual issues are regular and frequent, Christian publishing houses are founded and active.

2. Second, the door to religious interdenominational dialogue has been opened. The Orthodox Church is challenged to reformulate and restructure itself in confrontation with the Greek Catholic, Lutheran and Reformed Churches, as well as with foreign evangelical groups which made their presence felt in the country after the revolution (Bria: vii-ix). If the predominant mood of Romanian Orthodoxy is one of utopia and jubilation (Bria: 50), it ranges from enthusiasm to anxiety, from joy to sorrow, as in all real remaking;

3. Third, the Church is confronted with the problem of interfaith debate. Alternative spiritual movements are recruiting thousands especially among the young whose roots during the communist regime have been only nominally Christian. In spite of often conflictual relations with the Church, these movements cannot be contained. 20, 000 Yoga practitioners gather periodically in meditation and prayer at Sarmizegetusa, Romania's pre-Christian historically acknowledged spiritual site of worship, with the specific purpose of reawakening the spirit of Romanians.

Thus, after a revolutionary event which was a paradigm of a cosmogonic ritual, the map of post-revolutionary spirituality has spread out between the two poles of hope, faith, religious fervor, on the one hand, and disappointment, skepticism and spiritual sterility, on the other. There are two questions I am posing, 1. Do these two forms of post-revolutionary reactions point to different metaphysics? and 2. are they transitional, circumstantial phenomena? Or do they manifest spiritual attitudes inherent to Romanian spirituality?

1. In answering the first question I maintain that the two seemingly opposed forms of engagement and disengagement with history, namely, the disappointed retreat into fatalistic attitudes and the spiritual effervescence of a belief in the restructuring of Romanian life on a spiritual foundation, be it Christian or not, are symptoms of a common metaphysics which is that of archaic cultures;

2. Referring to the second question I opine that Romania has preserved this metaphysical posture throughout its spiritual history to the present day.

To support these claims I will make recourse to Eliade's texts, *The Myth of the Eternal Return* and *Zalmoxis, a Vanishing God*.

Eliade's schema of contrasting the archaic and modern hermeneutics of history has become too familiar to need detailed exposition. I will only point out those articulations of his study which are pertinent to the present attempt at interpretation.

Eliade acknowledges the survival of archaic ontology in Southeastern Europe, precisely in agricultural societies such as Romania where out of the 22 million 47 per cent live in rural areas. Eliade notes:

A very considerable fraction of the population of Europe lives today by the light of the traditional anti-historicistic viewpoints (1974:152).

He views the persistence of this ontology as a form of resistance to the terror of history to which these societies have been exposed.

How justify for example the fact that southeastern Europe had to suffer for centuries and hence renounce any impulse toward a higher historical existence, toward spiritual creation on the universal plane for the sole reason that it happened to be on the road of the Asiatic invaders and later the neighbor of the Ottoman Empire? (1974: 151)

In rural Southeastern Europe the persistence of archaic consciousness is seen as an adequate metaphysical response to the meaninglessness and terror of history.

His conclusion justifies the archaic metaphysics as a remedy to the nihilism and despair that befall modern profane historical consciousness. This conclusion sounds prophetic:

It is not inadmissible to think of an epoch and an epoch not too far distant when humanity to ensure its survival will find itself desisting from any further making of history... will confine itself to repeating prescribed archetypal gestures, and will strive to forget as meaningless and dangerous any spontaneous gesture which might entail historical consequences (1974:154).

Returning to our topic we can see both the post-revolutionary disenchantment and the spiritual enthusiasm as forms of rejecting an engagement with history as history, disrupted from a trans-historical meaning. This hesitation before profane history continues and fulfills the revolutionary event. As Eliade notes, in the aftermath of the ritual performing there is a reluctance to resume profane time. The consequence of this reluctance manifested itself both as a sterile

withdrawal from active personal engagement and as an attempt to actualize the sacralization of history originated in the ritual. Thus the two attitudes can be circumscribed by the archaic horror of history deprived of trans-historical ground. Absurd or childish as they might often appear, the value of these symptoms of archaic consciousness resides, Eliade believes, in what they reveal: the belief in an absolute reality opposed to the profane world of unrealities, the desperate effort not to lose contact with Being (1974:92).

It becomes clear, then, that this archaic metaphysics is not only transitional, circumstantial; rather, it is embedded in a pervasive crypto-metaphysics. To further substantiate this permanence, I will point out the main metaphysical articulations of Romanian spiritual history unveiled by Eliade in Zalmoxis, a Vanishing God in which he presents the essentials of the religion of the Geto-Dacians and the most important mythological traditions and folkloric creations of the Romanians (1986:vii).

I will limit my observations to three of Eliade's essays in this collection, namely, Zalmoxis, Master Manole and The Clairvoyant Lamb or Mioritza.

### **Zalmoxis: Romanian Modern Re-appropriation of Mythical Imagination**

Using the references found in Herodotus, Strabo and Plato's Charmides, Eliade reconstitutes the mythicized identity of Zalmoxis, the god of the Geto-Dacians, the autochthonous population, the almost mythical ancestors of the Romanians who conquered in 106 by the Romans (75). To summarize: Zalmoxis is a daimon or a theos who inaugurates a new epoch in the eschatological terms of a mythico-ritual scenario of death as katabasis, descensus ad inferos (occultation) and return to earth (epiphany) (30). The cult instituted by Zalmoxis assures the initiate a blissful post-existence in a paradisiacal beyond (44).

Eliade mentions two peculiar phenomena in the life of this myth: the disappearance of Zalmoxis and his cult after the early (before 270 A.D.) assimilation of Christianity in Dacia, and its reappearance in modern Romanian culture. The vanishing of the god, he suggests, was due to its absorption by Christianity, since all the aspects of the religion of Zalmoxis – eschatology, initiation, Pythagoreanism, asceticism, mystical erudition (astrology, healing, theurgy) encouraged a comparison with Christianity and thus lent themselves to an almost total Christianization (69).

The second event in the life of the myth is the modern recovery of its primordial religious prestige. This recovery of the myth indicates, Eliade believes, a modern renewal of the mythical consciousness of Romanians. This mythical renewal appealed to Zalmoxis as an incarnation of the religious genius of the Geto-Dacians. The interest in a myth of profound spiritual origins – Zalmoxis is

related in several ways to Pythagoras and also to Orpheus and Dionysius – indicates the Romanian propensity for an archaic, traditional metaphysics which will be further detected in their identification with similar folkloric motifs.

*Master Manole and Mioritza: Death as Rebirth in the Spirit*

If the myth of Zalmoxis as such disappeared in the premodern cultural consciousness of Romanians, the eschatological myth continued to emerge in numerous folkloric metamorphoses.

The ballad of Manole and that of Mioritza are two masterful illustrations of the continuity and coherence of the mythical preferences. The fact that both ballads whose common motif is a violent death serenely accepted represent the high point of Romanian folk poetry (189-90) is not accidental. The immediate and spontaneous adherence of a people – both the folk and the intellectuals – to these mythical scenarios reveals, Eliade considers, its deeper soul more than many of its historical accomplishments (189).

*Master Manole: Sacrifice, a Prerequisite of Lasting Construction*

Present in different variations in the whole Balkanic space, the Romanian version of Manole is a myth of sacrifice and cosmogony. Eliade prefers a prose translation to the existing rhymed ones.

The ballad tells of a prince and ten builder companions in search of a proper site to erect a monastery. Once they found it, they start working. But the walls built during the day are collapsing at night. The prince threatens to wall the builders in alive. Manole, one of the builders, is told in a dream the condition for construction: the wife or sister first to arrive in the morning with food and drink for the builders shall be walled in. The following morning Manole sees his own wife, Ana, approaching. He weeps and prays for a strong rain, then a strong wind to stop her. Neither can stop Ana. He walls her in while she is expressing her growing pain. The monastery is built. Asked by the prince if they could build another one, the masons say yes.

To ensure the uniqueness of the monastery and prevent its reproduction, the prince takes the ladder away leaving the masons on the roof of the monastery. The masons build themselves shingle wings but the wings give way and the masons fall and die.

In the ballad the myth of eschatology is combined with the myth of construction of a monastery as the privileged locus of communication with god. The presence of the monastery fuses the archaic myth of the center and axis mundi with the Christian motif of celestial Jerusalem. Eliade explains the convergence of pre-Christian and Christian elements. Thus:



Until the most recent times the peoples of the Balkano-Danubian area were conscious that a Church or a monastery represented both the Cosmos and the Heavenly Jerusalem or Paradise (178)

Master Manole is an instance of the survival of archaic mythical thought and of the pagan-Christian synthesis in what he calls eminently conservative parts of Europe among which Romania and the Balkans must be reckoned (188). He also notes the archaism of the mythical idea of the sacrifice indispensable to ensure the historical longevity of a construction, be it technical accomplishment or spiritual undertaking (182-3).

*Mioritza, the Clairvoyant Lamb*

Mioritza has enjoyed the total and spontaneous adherence of the Romanian people, both at the level of the folk and at that of the intellectuals. Eliade mentions both its wide, though controversial, reception by Romanian historians, folklorists, philosophers and poets on the one hand, and the appearance of new variants, on the other. This exceptional status is indicative of a creation which is still living in the consciousness of Romanians and makes it the *ô* archetype of Romanian folk spirituality (241). Eliade offers as in Master Manole's case a prose translation. I will approximate it.

In a paradisiacal setting, the threshold of paradise, heavenly gardens, there come three shepherds and their flocks of sheep, one Moldavian, the other two Wallachians. The two Wallachians plot the murder of the Moldavian for his courage and richness. The Moldavian is warned of the plot by his lamb. In response he asks the lamb to show his murderers the place he wishes to be buried. He continues with a grand vision of cosmic wedding. He also asks the lamb to tell his mother that he married a peerless queen, the bride of the world, in a beautiful land, a corner of paradise without mentioning the cosmic participation which would reveal his death.

Eliade discusses three elements in the constitution of this ballad. The first is the presence of pagan, archaic, sometimes scarcely Christianized religious elements (251). They form a new religious creation which Eliade terms cosmic Christianity. Cosmic Christianity is identified as a feature of peasant Christianity in Romania and Eastern Europe. It projects the Christological mystery upon the whole of nature and neglects historical elements of Christianity only to dwell instead on the liturgical dimension of man's existence in the world (251).

Elements of this cosmic Christianity are implicit in Mioritza in the transfiguration of the cosmos, death as cosmic nuptials, mystical solidarity between man and nature (251). These elements do not indicate pantheism, Eliade notes, since nature is not ontologically sacred but transfigured through participation in mystical union through sacrifice. They point to Christian mysticism.

The second element to be mentioned is Eliade's interpretation of the message of Mioritza. He departs from the theorists who see in it an epitome of passivity and pessimism (255) and reads the message of the ballad as a triumph over the terror of history (254) through the transmutation of an historical event into a sacramental mystery (254).

The third and last remark is Eliade's explicit affirmation of the relation of mythic imagination to historical destiny. The Romanians' wide adherence to Mioritza is an expression of their recognition in this mythical solution of the most effective response they can make to destiny when as so often in the past it proves to be hostile and tragic. And this response each time constitutes a new spiritual creation. (256)

*Eliade's Vision of Romanian Spirituality  
and its Post-revolutionary Relevance*

Eliade provides several nodes of articulating a spiritual history of the Romanians which are relevant in mapping post-revolutionary spirituality in Romania. I will make note of two of them.

1. Romania has preserved forms of mythical thought and behavioral pattern camouflaged in a Christian form; this form of archaic Christianity is a cosmic Christianity which expresses itself as a form of Christian mysticism beyond and above Ecclesia; its most pertinent and peculiarly Romanian expression is the acceptance of eschatological extinction as a condition for the return to paradise.

2. The terror of history is annulled by the mythicization of historical events. Thus historical events are homologized with the sacralized history of the ancestors.

As a conclusion to Eliade's study on Romanian mythography one can say that Romanian mythical imagination is that of a traditional religious society which lives in the strong time of a *historia sacra*. The flight from historical becoming is operated through myths of sacrificial death and rebirth into the totality and beatitude of the beginnings. Through the fusion of pagan and Christian myths, cosmic Christianity has formed the ground of a metaphysical consciousness. Through this pneumatic Christianity Romanian spirituality is potentially receptive to other spiritual mystical traditions.

Eliade's trajectory as a thinker can thus be viewed as an enactment of his vision of Romanian spirituality itself. This vision situates Romanian spirituality and Eliade himself in an ambiguous position toward normative theology.

*Dumitru Staniloae: Orthodox Idealization*

This Romanian archaic metaphysics proves its vitality in Staniloae's Orthodox assessment of Romanian spirituality. Dumitru Staniloae, the major contemporary Romanian theologian, follows a traditional Orthodox line of

thought. In the years after the revolution, Staniloae renewed his efforts at interpreting Romanian spirituality. In his 1992 book, *Reflections on the Spirituality of Romanians*, Staniloae presents Romanian spirituality as an exemplary form of Christian orthodoxy. He argues that, ontologically, the essential formative dimension of the Romanian spirit is balance, equilibrium. In contrast to Western individualism and pantheism, Romanian culture expresses a metaphysics of interpersonal communion, a metaphysics of relatedness as a generic feature of the spiritual and geographical space and one that is instinctively Orthodox. Staniloae draws an idyllic spiritual map of an archaic universe in harmony with itself and with its natural and cosmic environment; conflict and contradiction are smoothed and transcended; a complex harmony of grace and seriousness, softness and lucidity, nostalgia and humor, in which the human and the divine, the living and the dead are engaged in a natural, loving dialogue.

Staniloae's picture of Romanian spirituality is a dream of Edenic existence. Although presented as a realistic assessment, it has all the marks of an ideal projection. As such it is a mythical construction as if patterned on the co-ordinates established by Eliade's mythography. Hence Staniloae bears witness to Romania's imagining itself as participating in its own myth of return to paradise, in *historia sacra*. Staniloae's Romania is an actualization of its mythical metaphysics. Romanians seem to have brought the kingdom of God on earth. Staniloae, as a Romanian Orthodox theologian could not escape the power of the archaic, pre-Christian myth of origins in spite of an Orthodox theological rhetoric.

### *Emil Cioran: Romania's Judgment and Transfiguration*

The power and vitality of Romania's mythical imagination becomes even more spectacular in the case of Emil Cioran, a Romanian exile and nihilistic thinker. In counter-distinction to both Staniloae and Eliade, Cioran attempts to distance himself from archaic Romania. In his first book published in 1939, *Romania's Transfiguration*, Cioran reverses the evaluation of the rhapsodic portrait of Romania. He adopts the Nietzschean suspicion to unmask the origin of the Romanian mythical Imagination as an ontological lack, a new coinage for the slave ontology. A slave himself by birth, Cioran is merciless in his debunking of Romania's fictional idols worshipped in self-delusion.

Romanians live like plants – Passivity, self-depreciation, sterile lucidity, reflexivity in excess, wisdom preventing spontaneity, luke-warmness, somnolence, inertia, lyrical intimacy with Being, resignation in front of death, fate, history, fatalism – all these features, present in the image lovingly drawn by Staniloae's idealism and forgiving Orthodoxy as well as that fostered by Eliade's fascination with the archaic, acquire a negative connotation.

The young Cioran speaks from the positions of what Eliade calls modern, historical consciousness. He dismantles the idyllic and justificatory discourse of

Staniloae's and, respectively, Eliade. Identifying Romania as a minor nation which has been unable to impose itself historically, to live in time, Cioran brings under judgment its unconscious, therefore pernicious, adherence to self-defeating and self-justificatory myths.

His evaluation of archaic culture is at odds with Eliade's. Cioran considers the mythical thought characteristic to agricultural societies responsible for having created and deepened the structural deficiency, the ontological lack () of Romanian spirit. This ontological lack has prevented it from historical actualization for two thousand years. He writes:

Popular cultures are breathing in myth, in presentiments of history. They conceive Becoming substantially and dispense with history through eternity. They do not progress, they only change. Only the primordial has value, the sum of telluric and chthonic elements in the aura of a people. Popular cultures are primitive and reactionary. They remain locked in themselves (63)

He sees historical Becoming and cultural articulation as a salvific liberation from the attachment to cosmos present in precultural elements, from the uncritical attachment to a spiritual sense (55). Orthodoxy and Byzantinism did not compensate for this ahistoricism; on the contrary they encouraged it. The result was Romania's impotence to generate itself in time.

Cioran does not forgive any of the mythical images relevant for defining the Romanian. He mentions Mioritza only to lament its destructive influence. For Cioran, Mioritza is a poetic and national curse (66) which has carved an open wound in the Romanian soul. Mioritza he writes reveals the Romanian telluric and subterranean skepticism, the resignation in front of fate and death, disbelief in the efficiency of individuality and power, distance from all aspects of the world. (66)

After this total condemnation of Romania, Cioran has the vision of Romania's salvation as a Transfiguration. What does this theologically loaded term mean for Cioran? In what relation does it stand to the myths which brought Romania under judgment? For Cioran Romania's Transfiguration does not mean abolishing its archaic metaphysics, its mythical imagination, since a nation's myths are its truths (). Transfiguration means bringing it into the light of collective consciousness. He believes that this leap in the consciousness of the nation can be brought about by ô developing our tendencies to a maximum in order to discover ourselves (), by living religiously our drama in order to be saved (), by exacerbating it through awareness thus converting the negative into the positiveö (). The conscious unveiling and acknowledgement of its ontological lack will bring about Romania's salvation. Transfigured Bucharest [will] be [a] New Constantinople (204). In his later work, Cioran will not clarify the contents of his early prophecy, nor will he ever refer to it unless to recant it. Romania's Transfiguration is heralded in an early writing which has never been translated into English. In a note added to the 1990 edition Cioran detaches himself from his

early text which he views as the most passionate but the most alien to me. I cannot find myself in it, although I can easily perceive my hysteria ().

Nevertheless, one can read the mature Cioran as wrestling to fulfill this early prophecy. His later work exacerbates and gives expression to the agony of living in the limbo between time and eternity, skepticism and mysticism, between the nothingness of before and after history on the one hand between the precreational nothingness as plenitude and the nothingness as falling out of history on the other.

Cioran's poetico-philosophical ontology is that of a double failure, of an exile from Paradise and an exile from history.

A mystic manque is a mystic exiled to history, unable to forget Paradise, one who cannot cast off all temporal ties, caught between mysticism and history, he wanders in the no-man's land (1995:67)

An exile from eternity as well as from time, he lives in the in-betweenness which brought about the stasis, the paralysis of Romania's spirit. The heterogeneous elements, the mystical and the historical do not harmonize as in Staniloae's idyllic vision.

We are constituted of elements that all unite to make us rebels divided between a mystic summons which has no link with history and a bloodthirsty dream which is history's symbol and nimbus (1956:41).

Cioran never tires of asking himself the question whether *ô* we must take history seriously or stand on the sidelines as a spectator (1975:116), whether we should resist the *ô* temptation to exist (1968:206-22) in time or not. He laments the Adamic preference for the Tree of Knowledge over the Tree of Life which struck humanity with a wound that could not be healed, alienating consciousness from the unreflective totality of life (1970:33-53). As a failed mystic, trapped in history, Cioran's obsession remains the primordial silence, beatitude and totality of precreational existence. Circumscribed within the archaic myth of origins, his metaphysics is mystical. He confesses:

It is not of God that I dream; it is of the deity of the immutable essence which does not deign to create or even exist... (1970:172)

I dream of the depths of the Ungrund, the reality anterior to the corruptions of time and whose solitude is superior to God (1956:144). I dream of a golden moment outside of Becoming, a sunlit moment... (1975:67)

Cioran's God is the Godhead of the mystics, and of archaic consciousness, for that matter, the Ungrund, the pleromatic nothingness prior to creation

If in his early writing he lamented the Romanians exist like plants () let's hear him now:

The regret of not being plants brings us closer to paradise than any religion (1995:115).

To recover Paradise one must undergo death. Eschatology is the prerequisite of cosmogony. If he lamented Mioritza's resignation to and unhealthy enjoyment

of death, Cioran sings now a hymn to extinction whose cosmic amplitude echoes the condemned poem:

The dawn of death breaks within us cosmic trance, the bursting of spheres, a thousand voices! (1956:217)

Since this cosmic dissolution implies the dissolution of word and consciousness, Cioran has a vision of linguistic apocalypse, of a book whose syllables...would suppress literature and readers alike... would be both carnival and apocalypse of letters... (1956:112), of a great autodafe of all things and names (1975:121). Silent contemplation will recover primordial nothingness pregnant with being since only the illiterate [Carpathian shepherds] have given me the frisson of being which indicates the presence of truth (1956:136)

If the nothingness of precreation is fullness, the true nothingness is that of time identified with duality, the devil, hell, the non-divine dimension of divinity (). In this perspective Romania which he calls *o* a country without history () logically becomes a locus of Paradise and of mystical beatitude. Or, on the contrary, a locus of the second and deeper hell, that of the second fall. Following the first Fall out of eternity into time, the second Fall is the Fall out of time into the nothingness of sheer void, the infra-eternity of absolute doubt and insomnia.

We will stop here. Cioran's questions, anxieties and longings come together to forge the blueprint for the present Romanian spiritual inscape. Should Cioran's agony be viewed as that of the Romanian spirit caught between its archaic mythical metaphysics and the challenge of modern historical consciousness? And if so, is such a revelation transfiguring? These questions are no more than an invitation to reflection. I will not venture an answer.

We have enough evidence to prove that Cioran's recurring motifs are precisely the myths that Eliade showed to be constitutive of Romanian spirituality. The myth of origins, eschatology and cosmogony, cosmic and mystical Christianity. They all circumscribe a propensity for the sacred and a pronounced eschatological sensitivity. Hence a hesitation toward Becoming, a shyness toward history. Also the belief in the transfiguring power of the spirit.

Archaic metaphysics as reaction to the terror of history, Orthodox harmony as divine gift or ontological lack – post-revolutionary Romanians are validating all three definitions. Spiritual effervescence and spiritual paralysis today are faces of one coin. Both manifest the refusal to live in profane time. Both indicate the belief that the terror of history needs to be exorcized by a transhistorical meaningfulness, that renewal in spirit is the only guarantee of renewal in body. The difference is that the latter remains trapped in the empty carcass of a cosmogony which has not been internally reactualized through direct and continued participation.

Eliade would see the spiritual effervescence as a symptom of Joachim de Fiore's pneumatic age. How would Cioran see it? As spiritual confusion and

hesitation? As fear of history transposed into intellectual garrulity? As naivete, an expression of lack of self-understanding? Maybe. But he also believed that only such a collective self-confrontation and self-questioning can be salvific. By bringing Romania to self-knowledge and maturity, it can push it into history and thus into its own Transfiguration, enthroning Bucharest as the New Constantinople.

A grandiose vision, valid only inside the circle of faith, ultimately unconvincing. But if nothing else it proves the living power of the nostalgia, archaic or Christian, for Paradise of a country which has lived in the shadows of history.

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## ON GOD INDETERMINISM AND NONLOCALITY

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**Abstract.** Since centuries, men have been “hunting” God. Questions as “which came first, God or the brain?” or “which came first: Religion or the brain?” are revealing a part of the human and universe drama concerning the consciousness and the belief. In this paper, I argue that an account of consciousness will involve both local indeterminism and nonlocality. I conclude by outlining the relevance of quantum mechanics to consciousness.

**Key words:** superconsciousness, neuro-theology, HVN, quantum coherence, bicameral mind, nonlocality

1. Since centuries, men have been “hunting” God. In other words, since some seconds in universe history, *id est* from a God perspective. It is unknown when the concept of God or gods was first developed, but it was likely recent in human history (10-50,000 years), as evidenced by the development of ritualistic behavior, construction of temples, etc. Questions as “which came first, God or the brain?” or “which came first: Religion or the brain?” are revealing a part of the human and universe drama concerning the consciousness and the belief. Most specific theories of consciousness – whether cognitive, neural or quantum mechanical – aim to explain or model consciousness as a natural feature of the physical world. David Chalmers (1996)<sup>1</sup> has promoted a version of panpsychism which appeals to the notion of information not only to explain psycho-physical invariances between phenomenal and physically realized information spaces but also to possibly explain the ontology of the physical as itself derived from the informational. Gregg Rosenberg (2004)<sup>2</sup> has offered an account of consciousness that simultaneously addresses the ultimate categorical basis of causal relations: in both the causal case and the conscious case, his theory argues the relational-functional facts must ultimately depend upon a categorical non-relational base.

1.1. The “traps” for capturing God are spreaded across the world. It was the the first (semi)virtual net, envisioned by humanity: rites, rituals, myths, religions,

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<sup>1</sup> Chalmers, D. 1996. *The Conscious Mind*. Oxford: Oxford University Press; *Idem*, 2002. In T. Gendler and J. Hawthorne eds. *Conceivability and Possibility*. Oxford: Oxford University Press; *Idem*, 2003. “The content and epistemology of phenomenal belief.” In A. Jokic and Q. Smith eds. *Consciousness: New Philosophical Perspectives*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

<sup>2</sup> Rosenberg, G. 2004. *A Place for Consciousness: Probing the Deep Structure of the Natural World*. New York: Oxford University Press.

temples, churches. The first globalization. The laboratory of Michael Persinger is one of the most recent “traps”. This is the Persinger's quest for the God spot. For him, the Almighty isn't dead, he's an energy field. And the human mind is an electromagnetic map to the soul. The cognitive neuroscience researcher has tickled the temporal lobes of more than 900 people and has concluded that different subjects label this ghostly perception with the names that their cultures have trained them to use: Elijah, Jesus, the Virgin Mary, Mohammed, the Sky Spirit. But Persinger is not the first to theorize that the Creator exists only in the brain. In his 1976 book, *The Origin of Consciousness in the Breakdown of the Bicameral Mind*<sup>1</sup> Julian Jaynes argued that the brain activity of ancient people would have resembled that of modern schizophrenics (for the psycho-mechanism see Fig. 1, infra).

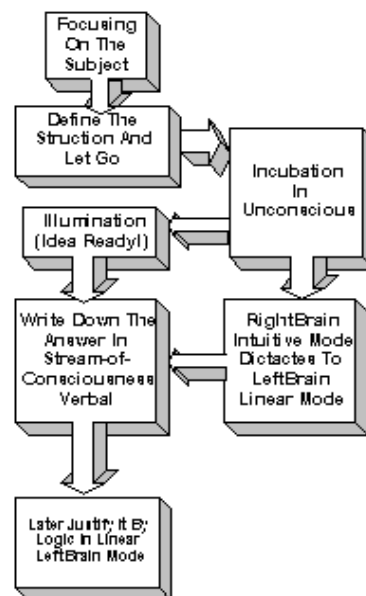


Fig. 1

He proposed that man had no consciousness until 1000 BC. According to the Jaynes' hypothesis, between 10 000 and 1000 BC the bicameral mind operated in humans. The left hemisphere was the site for speech, and the right hemisphere was the site for hallucinations that expressed voices and commands of gods and demons. Hallucinations were a normal phenomenon. The end of the dominance of the bicameral mind and the beginning of modern consciousness were caused by “the weakening of the auditory by the advent of writing, the inherent fragility of hallucinating control, the unworkableness of gods in the chaos of historic upheaval,

<sup>1</sup> Jaynes J. 1976. *The origin of consciousness in the breakdown of the bicameral mind*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.

the positing of internal cause in the observation of differences in others (...) and a modicum of natural selection.”<sup>1</sup> Contemporary regressions to the bicameral mind include schizophrenia, possession states, religious prophecy, hypnosis and some other phenomena. In other words, Jaynes proposed that there are 3 forms of human awareness: the bicameral or god-run man; the modern or problem-solving man; and contemporary forms of throwbacks to bicamerality.<sup>2</sup>

Finally, according to Jaynes, it is a 'mental tool box' largely based on metaphor, and the 'invention' of subjective consciousness took shape in the course of centuries, thereby replacing the former mentality. This old mental make-up was what Jaynes calls the *bicameral mind*: a mind that was occupied by so-called gods, who directly spoke to man. Jaynes insists that these 'gods' were in no sense 'a way of speaking': «The gods were in no sense 'figments of the imagination' of anyone. They *were* man's volition»<sup>3</sup>. Jaynes inferred that these *voices* came from the right brain counterparts of the left brain language centres (cf. Wernicke's and Broca's area). These regions are dormant in the right brains of most modern humans, but some studies (Daniel Smith) show that auditory hallucinations correspond to increased activity in these areas of the brain.<sup>4</sup> Smith describes the *Hearing Voices Network*, an advocacy group based in Great Britain.<sup>5</sup> Building in part on the work of Marius Romme and Sandra Escher's *Accepting Voices* (1993) and Ivan Leuder and Philip Thomas's *Voices of Reason, Voices of Insanity* (2000), books that critique traditional psychiatric responses to voices, the Hearing Voices Network (HVN) offers support groups where people who hear voices can talk openly about their experiences. HVN is a radical departure from most modern psychiatric approaches, which generally view auditory hallucinations as mere symptoms of mental illness best treated with psychiatric pharmaceuticals.

1.2. Jaynes maintained that, like schizophrenics, the ancients heard voices, summoned up visions, and lacked the sense of metaphor and individual identity that characterizes a more advanced mind. He said that some of these ancestral synaptic leftovers are buried deep in the modern brain, which would explain many of our present-day sensations of God or spirituality. So, God could be defining as a stage of archaic and mythical consciousness or just as the human consciousness.

<sup>1</sup> Jaynes, *op. cit.*, p. 186.

<sup>2</sup> Lennox BR, Bert S, Park G, Jones PB, Morris PG. 1999. *Spatial and temporal mapping of neural activity associated with auditory hallucinations. Lancet*; **353**: 644.

<sup>3</sup> Jaynes, *op. cit.*, p. 202.

<sup>4</sup> Smith, Daniel. 2007. *Muses, Madmen, and Prophets: Rethinking the History, Science, and Meaning of Auditory Hallucination*. New York: Penguin. See too: "Janssen's A Virtual Hallucination: MINDSTORM". 1 December 2007. 24 August 2007. [http://www.janssen.com/janssen/news\\_mindstorm.html](http://www.janssen.com/janssen/news_mindstorm.html).

<sup>5</sup> See Smith, Daniel. 2007. "Can You Live with the Voices in Your Head?," in *The New York Times*. 25 March 2007. <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/03/25/magazine/25voices.t.html>.

1.3. A number of thinkers have attempted to define the next step in the evolution of human consciousness: Sri Aurobindo (the emergence of *superconsciousness*), Jean Gebser (the coming of *four-dimensional integral consciousness*), rising from the prior. Richard Bucke portrayed cosmic consciousness as the next evolutionary stage of human consciousness, following the simple consciousness of animals and the self-consciousness of contemporary humans. Ken Wilber's six-level evolutionary process leads from physical consciousness pertaining to nonliving matter through biological consciousness assort and with animals and mental consciousness characteristic of humans to subtle consciousness, which is archetypal, transindividual, and intuitive. It leads in turn to causal consciousness and, in the final step, to the ultimate consciousness called *Consciousness as Such*. Chris Cowan and Don Beck's colorful theory of spiral dynamics sees contemporary consciousness evolving from the strategic *orange* stage, which is materialistic, consumerist, and success-, image-, status-, and growth-oriented; to the consensual *green* stage of egalitarianism and orientation toward feelings, authenticity, sharing, caring, and community; heading toward the ecological *yellow* stage focused on natural systems, self-organization, multiple realities, and knowledge; and culminating in the holistic *turquoise* stage of collective individualism, cosmic spirituality, and Earth changes.

2. The study of consciousness as an object of scientific study is connected to the cognitive neurosciences, new methods of cerebral mapping (*imagerie*), for studying the living brain directly in humans and to have access to the neuronal correlates. There are essentially three methods.

The newest is *Magnetic Resonance Imaging* (MRI), and in particular functional MRI, which allows to measure the changes in haemodynamic alimentation of the different parts of the brain which become activated when a task is performed. In this way the images that the public has already been able to see are obtained: a brain with little patches of color.

The second method, *Positron Emission Tomography* (PET) resembles a scanner, such as those used for clinical analysis, producing slightly heavier images than in MRI.

The study of the brain's surface activity uses apparatuses for performing magneto-encephalograms, which makes it possible to measure the minute magnetic fields found on the surface of the head. These extremely precise magnetic fields, by means of mathematical elaboration of the data, supply a dynamic image of cerebral processes which can thus be observed from a new angle. The combination of these three systems--magneto-encephalography, PET (Positron Emission Tomography) and MRI (Magnetic Resonance Imaging) constitute the techniques which make the new cerebral mapping (*imagerie*) possible.

2.1. Francis Crick, a Nobel prize winner who together with Watson discovered the structure of DNA, has dedicated his life to the study of the brain, and is convinced of having identified the circuits responsible for the phenomena of consciousness. In his book, *Astonishing Hypothesis: The Scientific Search for the Soul*, Crick conclude that the human being with his joys and sorrows, his memories and ambitions, his sense of personal identity and free will, are in fact no more than the behavior of a vast assembly of nerve cells and their associated molecules.<sup>1</sup> As Lewis Carroll's Alice might have phrased it: "you're nothing but a pack of neurons". Answering the question *Why Neuroscience May Be Able to Explain Consciousness* Crick and Koch affirmed: "We believe that at the moment the best approach to the problem of explaining consciousness is to concentrate on finding what is known as the neural correlates of consciousness the processes in the brain that are most directly responsible for consciousness. By locating the neurons in the cerebral cortex that correlate best with consciousness, and figuring out how they link to neurons elsewhere in the brain, we may come across key insights into what David J. Chalmers calls the hard problem: a full accounting of the manner in which subjective experience arises from these cerebral processes."<sup>2</sup>

2.2. Consequently to the progress made by Neurosciences in the study of consciousness, a Copernican movement arose to solve the problem of how neural matter translates into a psychic experience (Edelman, 1992<sup>3</sup>; Edelman & Tononi, 2000<sup>4</sup>; Damasio, 1994<sup>5</sup>; Solms & Turnbull, 2002<sup>6</sup>; Richerson & Boyd, 2005<sup>7</sup>; Siegel, 1999<sup>8</sup>; Ridley, 2003<sup>9</sup>).

2.3. In order to explain the brain's craftsmanship in composing the notion of God<sup>10</sup>, it is useful to rely on the brain's recognized potential to unconsciously

<sup>1</sup> Crick FC. 1994. *The Astonishing hypothesis*. New York: Scribners.

<sup>2</sup> Chalmers, David J. "The Puzzle of Conscious Experience" in *Scientific American*, December 1995, pp. 62-68.

<sup>3</sup> Edelman G. Bright. 1992. *Air, Brilliant Fire: On the Matter of the Mind*. New York, Basic Books.

<sup>4</sup> Edelman G, Tononi. 2000. *A Universe of Consciousness: How Matter Becomes Imagination*. New York, Basic Books.

<sup>5</sup> Damasio A. 1994. *Descartes' Error: Emotion, Reason and the Human Brain*. London, Putnam' Sons, Penguin Books.

<sup>6</sup> Solms M, Turnbull O. 2002. *The Brain and the Inner World. An Introduction to the Neuroscience of Subjective Experience*. New York, Other Press.

<sup>7</sup> Richerson P, Boyd R. 2005. *Not by Genes Alone. How Culture Transformed Human Evolution*. New York, Other Press.

<sup>8</sup> Siegel D. 1999. *The Developing Mind*. New York, Guilford Press.

<sup>9</sup> Ridley M. 2003. *The agile gene. How nature turns on nurture*. New York, Harper Perennial.

<sup>10</sup> Bartocci G. 2000. "The Cultural Construction of the Western Conception of the Realm of the Sacred: Co-existence, Clash and Interbreeding of Magic and Sacred Thinking in Fifth and Sixth Century". *Umbria. Anthropology and Medicine*, 7: 373-388; Bartocci G, Dein S. 2005. "Detachment: Gateway to the World of Spirituality". *Transcultural Psychiatry*, 42: 545-569.

recompose perceptions, stimuli, symbols and intuitions, converting them into images through a process connecting proto-images and protomeanings named by Crick and Koch *filling-in*<sup>1</sup>. The filling-in process explains how experiential units of consciousness construct a complex “cultural” sensation. So, when there is an insufficient amount of visual information, the cortical networks *fill-in* the incomplete interpretation from the external environment, in order to provide significant correlations in their inputs: “In other words, the brain is very good at detecting apparent causation”. Crick and Koch to conclude: “Such filling-in is likely to happen in many places in the brain” until it is led to “jumping to conclusions”<sup>2</sup>.

3. The split between mind and body or brain and consciousness or brain and God is equivalent to the split between religion and science.

3.1. According Francisco Varela, the problem of the *neuronal correlate of consciousness* is badly presented because consciousness is not in the head.<sup>3</sup> Basically, consciousness is an emergence which requires the existence of these three phenomena or cycles: with the body, with the world and with others. So, the global consciousness is an effect of the global brain, the quasi-neural energy – and information – processing network created by six and a half billion humans on the planet, interacting in many ways, private as well as public, and on many levels, local as well as global. A quantum shift in the global brain is a fundamental transformation in the relations of a significant segment of the six and a half billion humans.

3.2. Advanced physical models are based on higher mathematics. For example, Andrei Linde at Stanford calls the cosmological model of a multiverse the «self-reproducing inflationary universe.» Based on advanced principles of quantum physics and on Alan Guth's inflation model, Linde's model includes multiple universes woven together in some kind of spacetime foam. Each universe exists in a closed volume of space and time. The quantum fluctuations in the universe's inflationary expansion period have a wavelike character that can create disruptions in scalar fields. The multiverse is like a growing fractal. Actually, his theory is based on two ancient religious and philosophical ideas about the universe: (1) it had a definite beginning, and (2) it had existed forever. Presently, on the other hand, it is not known whether quarks and leptons are elementary or

<sup>1</sup> Crick F, Koch C. 2003. “A Framework for Consciousness”. *Nature Neuroscience*, 6: 119-126.

<sup>2</sup> Crick F, Koch C. *op.cit.*

<sup>3</sup> Van den Heuvel, M.P. et al. 2009. “Efficiency of functional brain networks and intellectual performance”. *The Journal of Neuroscience*, 29 (23), 7619-7624; Robinson, R. 2009. “Exploring the ‘global workspace’ of consciousness”. *PloS Biology*, 7 (3), 0415.

compound particles. Scientist are asking: Are quarks and leptons fundamental, or are they made up of even more fundamental particles? Poets or philosophers could answer: *Yes. There are even more fundamental particles: the Godons, from God.*

3.3. LeDoux proceeds to discuss affective phenomena: “Emotional feelings result when we become consciously aware that an emotion system of the brain is active. Any organism that has consciousness also has feelings. However, feelings will be different in a brain that can classify the world linguistically and categorize experiences in words than in a brain that cannot. The difference between fear, anxiety, terror, apprehension, and the like would not be possible without language. At the same time, none of these words would have any point if it were not for the existence of an underlying emotion system that generates the brain states and bodily expressions to which these words apply. Emotions evolved not as conscious feelings, linguistically differentiated or otherwise, but as brain states and bodily responses. The brain states and bodily responses are the fundamental facts of an emotion, and the conscious feelings are the frills that have added icing to the emotional cake.”<sup>1</sup>

4. The scientists have not found yet the answer to the question: where is God living? In heavens? In tempels? In the hearts of believers? In laboratories? Could the Divinity be a magnetic field of 40 Hz<sup>2</sup> or 10<sup>30</sup> Hz, the highest frequency of gamma rays that have been detected? Between the Big Emptiness, across and beyond the boundaries of the universe, in temporal lobes, God(s) is /are continuing his /their contradicted and eternally-ephemeral existence. As Muhyiddin Ibn 'Arabi says in *The Wisdom of the Prophets (Fusus al-Hikam)*: “Since the ephemeral being manifests the 'form' of the eternal, it is by the contemplation of the ephemeral that God communicates to us the knowledge of Himself: ‘He says to us (in the *Koran*) that He shows us His 'signs' in the ephemeral: 'We will show them Our signs to the horizons and in themselves...' (XLI, 53).”<sup>3</sup> The Eternal is ephemeral and vice versa: “Adam is, then, at the same time, God and creature. And thou hast understood that which is his (cosmic) rank that is to say the synthesis (of all the cosmic qualities), synthesis by virtue of which he is the Representative of God. Adam is the 'unique Spirit' (*an-nafs al-wâhidah*) from which was created the human species according to the Divine

<sup>1</sup> LeDoux, Joseph. 1996. *The Emotional Brain: The Mysterious Underpinnings of Emotional Life*, New York. Simon & Schuster. 302; Changeux, Jean-Pierre. 2004. *The Physiology of Truth: Neuroscience and Human Knowledge* [trans. M.B. DeBevoise], Cambridge. Harvard University Press. 81-82.

<sup>2</sup> Llin s, R. and Ribary, U. 1993. “Coherent 40-Hz oscillation characterizes dream state in humans”. *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA*, 90. 2078-2081.

<sup>3</sup> Muhyiddin Ibn 'Arabi, *The Wisdom of the Prophets, Fusus al-Hikam*, translated from Arabic to French by Titus Burkhardt and from French to English by Angela Culme-Seymour.

Word.”<sup>1</sup> For the *Ecclesiastes*, God “...has put eternity into the hearts of men, yet so that no man can find out what God has done from the beginning to the end.” (3:11). In the Kabbala, particularly in the *Zohar*, the two symbolical hands of God (eternity and ephemerality) are compared to the Heaven and the Earth in so far as the active and passive principles of the manifestation.

4.1. Quantum investigators have offered up proof which maintains that in the quantum realm space between two particles is inconsequential. Einstein postulated that “hidden variables” could account for nonlocal interaction. Despite the apparent impossibility of nonlocality, Alain Aspect and John Clauser proved that nonlocality must actually exist in the real world.<sup>2</sup> This meant that in order to have reality, it must be interconnected throughout, “If you want to believe in a real world out there, you cannot do without nonlocality; if you want to believe that no form of communication can take place faster than the speed of light, you cannot have a real world, independent of the observer.”<sup>3</sup> Essentially, the universe is interconnected, for that which comprises all physical matter is subject to quantum nonlocality. This affirmation is similar to the teachings of many religions and the words of the mystic.

4.2. According to Roger Penrose, emergent theories, such as Hameroffs, maintain consciousness appears only in brains, due to the brain's subtle and complex organization- this, he says, “is not a sufficient explanation.”<sup>4</sup> In *Quantum Coherence of Microtubules*, Hameroff takes the position that consciousness emerges at a *critical* amount of nonlocal quantum processing relating to neural structure; and contends that the microtubules are the most likely place for this to occur. So, *nonlocality* opens a new perspective in to study the God's consciousness and the consciousness of God, maybe a new dimension of the next neuro-theology.

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<sup>1</sup> *Idem, ibidem.*

<sup>2</sup> Herbert, N. 1993. *Elemental Mind: Human Consciousness and the New Physics*. New York. Penguin.

<sup>3</sup> Gribben, J. 1995. *Schrodinger's Kittens and the Search for Reality*. New York. Little, Brown, and Co. 159.

<sup>4</sup> Scott, A. 1996. *Stairway to the Mind: The Controversial New Science of Consciousness*. New York. Copernicus. 127.



## THE DOCTRINE OF CREATION IN PSEUDO-DIONYSIUS AREOPAGITE'S THEOLOGY

Theodor DAMIAN\*

**Abstract.** For Dionysius, the world is a theurgy; therefore, the world belongs to God. The cosmos in its reality is a hierarchic and triadic order. This order is a sacred one. Its essential function is of mediation for deification. The whole creation reveals God although God cannot be seen.<sup>1</sup> The universe as theophany and place of God's manifestations, silently and mystically speaks of the divine majesty, sovereignty and glory and by its very existence is a praise of God. All divine attributes: Cause, Source, One, Beauty, Good, Power, Love, Measure, etc. are related to creation. It is in relation to cosmology that he develops his doctrine of God.

**Keywords:** Creation, God, man, Cause, Good, Theosis, cosmology, being, soteriology

*"Silence is the language of the coming ages."*

St. Isac the Syrian

*"Limba nu e aceea care-o faci*

*Singura limbă, limba ta deplină*

*Stăpână peste ape și lumină*

*Este aceea-n care știi să taci!"*

*"Language is not that which one creates*

*The only language, one's own total language*

*Dominating over waters and light*

*Is the language in which one knows to be silent."*

Lucian Blaga

### 1. Preliminaries

#### 1.1. *The Man*

Dionysius is a controversial personality both in respect to his biography and to his thought. He lived during the end of the fifth century and the beginning of the sixth. It is not clear why he wanted to have an apostolic authority in his writings choosing the name of the supposed disciple of St. Paul; some scholars think that because of his modesty, of his meekness; others think that he was

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<sup>1</sup> R. Roques, "Preface" to *Pseudo-Dionysius; The Complete Works...*, p. 6.

conscious of the novelty and the boldness of his teaching and with this pseudo-name, he wanted to prevent a marginalization of his writings or even a condemnation. Whatever the reason, he was very inspired in choosing the pseudo-name.

Here we have one of the explanations for the reason of his pseudonymity: it is said that he was "un de ces chrétiens platonisants, un élève, peut-être un ami de Proclus, aussi fervent dans sa croyance religieuse que fidèle à ses doctrines philosophiques, excité par le désir de pacifier son âme en mettant d'accord sa foi et sa raison, conçu la pensée chimérique, mais noble dans sa naïveté, de pacifier du même coup le monde intellectuel de son temps, et il écrivit les livres que nous avons étudiés."<sup>1</sup>

It was the medieval humanist Lorenzo Valla who first raised the problem of the authenticity of Dionysius' name. Valla was followed in his affirmations by Erasmus of Rotterdam and other scholars, especially from the Protestant Tradition. An important point that leads to the denial of his identity is the fact that Dionysius and his works were not mentioned by the Early Church Fathers, theologians or historians.

There were many attempts to identify Dionysius with several authors of the first christian centuries. Perhaps the most recent one is that of Gh. Dragulin and Augustin Gh. Dragulin who, on the basis of a comparative theological and historical study, thinks that Dionysius Pseudo-Areopagite was, in fact, Dionysius Exiguus.<sup>2</sup>

There is no doubt about the Platonic and neoplatonic influences in Dionysius' writings. As the quotation from L. Montet indicates, Dionysius is supposed to have been a friend or disciple of Proclus. The philosophical influences he received from outside the Church are most visible in the general pattern of his understanding of creation and existence as descent and return. However, he was not the only Christian writer influenced by the Greek philosophy. Origen himself was considered to be even a founder of neoplatonism.<sup>3</sup>

Dionysius had other influences from the Christian theology that preceded him. D. Rutledge, at this point, mentions especially St. Gregory of Nyssa.<sup>4</sup>

As for those who succeeded him, the Areopagite had the chance to be believed in his assumed identity and to enjoy a great authority and credit in the Church. An important, rather decisive contribution in his accreditation as a

<sup>1</sup> R. Roques quotes L. Montet in his article on Pseudo-Dionysius in "Dictionnaire de Spiritualité ascétique et mystique", Vol. III, Beauchesne, Paris, 1957, col. 246.

<sup>2</sup> Pr. Dr. Gheorghe Drăgulin and Prof. Augustin Gh. Drăgulin, "Cercetări asupra operei lui Dionisie Exiguul și îndeosebi asupra celei necunoscute până acum" ("Researches on the work of Dionysius Exiguus and especially on that unknown until now"), in *Mitropolia Olteniei*, Nr. 5, 1988, Craiova, pp. 24-68.

<sup>3</sup> See R.A. Greer in *Origen*, transl. and introd. by R.A. Greer, Preface by H.U. von Balthasar, Paulist Press, New York, 1979, p. 5.

<sup>4</sup> Dom Denys Rutledge, *Cosmic Theology, The Ecclesiastical Hierarchy of Pseudo-Denys: An Introduction*, Rutledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1964, p. 13.

theological authority had Maximus the Confessor who, as Olivier Clément says, "a su l' équilibrer par une tradition plus ancienne, progrement existentielle et par un sens aigu de la liberté personnelle et de sa tragédie."<sup>1</sup>

Although it is said that he lacked greater accent on Christology and on the theology of love, these fields may not be the most developed by him but they are not marginal in his theological system. J. Leclercq says that "Dionysius' ideas were frequently abstract and had little basis in Sacred Scriptures"<sup>2</sup>; however, Dionysius' writings contain not less than 1000 Scriptural quotations or references. For the amount of work we have from him, this is not little.

In order just to mention the great influence, at times overwhelming, Dionysius had on the Theology of the Church, I just reiterate J. Pelikan's information who said that only St. Thomas Aquinas quoted Dionysius 1700 times!<sup>3</sup>

## 1.2. Method

The Cosmology of Dionysius encompasses a wealth of concepts. It refers to the divine paradigms, to the invisible and visible world, to the continuous creation of the world by its renewal in the framework of the divine Providence, it refers also to its final reintegration in the mystical communion with God.

In this paper, my focus will be on the visible world although I will have to make several references to the invisible world.

I will develop my presentation in the general framework of the Protology, Soteriology and Eschatology of Dionysius. These three general headings will relate to the Dionysian main cosmological structure, the Procession and the Return (through Purification, Illumination and Union). The Procession comes in the line of Protology and the Return in the lines of soteriology and Eschatology of Dionysius. The three general headings will be developed in sub-chapters and will give the structure to this paper.

As I mentioned above, Dionysius' thought often seems to be contradictory. Although I will make a few comments from time to time on that, however, it is not the purpose of this presentation to enter this domain. I will finish it with a few general conclusions.

<sup>1</sup> O. Clément, "Situation de la Parole Théologique selon la Tradition Orthodoxe", as a preface to the book of Christoas Yannaras, *De l'absence et de l'inconnaissance de Dieu*, Ed. du Cerf, Paris, 1971, p. 20.

<sup>2</sup> See his introduction to *Pseudo-Dionysius, the Complete Works*, transl. by Colm Luibheid, foreword, notes, and translation collaboration by Paul Rorem, Preface by René Roques, introductions by Jaroslav Pelikan, Jean Leclercq and Karlfried Froelich, Paulist Press, New York, 1987, p. 31.

This is the book that I will use for this presentation in relation to Dionysius' works. My references to these works will be made under the following abbreviations: DN = *The Divine Names*; MT = *The Mystical Theology*; CH = *The Celestial Hierarchy*; EC = *The Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*; Ep. = *The Letters*.

<sup>3</sup> J. Pelikan, see his *Introduction to Pseudo-Dionysius, The Complete Works...*, p. 21.

### 1.3. Dionysius' apophatism

One of the most well-known characteristics of Dionysius' theology is its apophatism. It does not mean, however, that he is not kataphatic in the development of his thought. Nevertheless, the *via negativa* is his way of doing theology. For Dionysius, no words can reach or express the inexpressible Good, the One, the unapproachable Light, the Light, the Source of all unity, the Supra-existent Being, the Mind beyond Mind.<sup>1</sup>

God, the supreme Cause, the Areopagite says, "is not soul or mind...nor is it speech or understanding...it is not number or order, not immovable, moving or at rest... it has not power, it is not power or...life...or light...or substance... or eternity or time... It is neither one nor oneness, divinity nor goodness... It falls neither under the predicate of nonbeing nor of being...It is beyond assertion and denial. We make assertions and denials of what is next to it, but never of it, for it is both beyond every assertion...it is also beyond every denial."<sup>2</sup>

The ineffability of God is visible throughout the dionysian works even from the style of the writings. The repetitions, the pleonasms and the tautologies present everywhere stress, in fact, the apophatic character of theology, of the speech or God; they are the sign of the impossibility of finding the right word, the sign of weakness of expression, of the humility of the word, they are the sign of the consciousness of lack of means, of the inadequacy of the language in presenting the reality of God. That is why the highest level of knowledge is the denial of any knowledge; as he speaks of Moses: "But then he (Moses) breaks free of them, away from what sees and is seen, and he plunges into the truly mysterious darkness of unknowing. Here, renouncing all that the mind may conceive, wrapped entirely in the intangible and the invisible, he belongs completely to him who is beyond everything. Here, being neither oneself nor someone else, one is supremely united by a completely unknowing inactivity of all knowledge, and knows beyond the mind by knowing nothing."<sup>3</sup>

## 2. Dionysius' Cosmology

For Dionysius the Areopagite, the universe is a Theurgy, the work of God, this is why the world belongs to God.<sup>4</sup> The universe in its totality is a sacred order

<sup>1</sup> *DN*, p. 50.

<sup>2</sup> *MT*, p. 141.

<sup>3</sup> *MT*, p. 137.

<sup>4</sup> This is the leitmotif of W.C.C. draft document in preparation for the next General Assembly in Canberra, Australia, 1992, entitled: *Towards an Ecumenical Theological Affirmation on Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation*, First Draft for the World Convocation on Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation of the World Council of Churches, Genève, 6-12 March 1990.

In my footnotes, I will make a few references to this document in order to signal the surprising actuality of the dionysian cosmology, the coincidence between the way he understood it and the way in which the churches today express their need for an adequate theological concept

ruled by hierarchical triadic<sup>1</sup> mediations both in the sense of *descent* of the divine illumination and *ascent* for deification.<sup>2</sup> His cosmology is on the line of the Greek philosophical understanding but without being tributary specifically to a certain philosopher; on the contrary, his cosmology is an attempt to harmonize the Greek philosophical vision on the world with the Biblical concept of creation; he anchors this harmonization on the ground of the sacramental life of the Church. Harmony, order and measure are key-words in Dionysius thought, as R. Roques notices: "Unité sans confusion, dans l'ordre, dans la mesure et dans l'harmonie: telles sont déjà les caractéristiques fondamentales du monde dionysien."<sup>3</sup>

As I mentioned above, in Dionysius, Cosmology includes Protology, Soteriology and Eschatology. The act of creation, for him, is not limited only to the created universe but is extended to its destiny in time and to its final eschatological accomplishment, because for Dionysius, God is not only Creator but Saviour, at the same time.<sup>4</sup>

## 2.1. Protology

In this part of the paper, through the sub-chapters, the presentation of Dionysius' thought will include his doctrine of procession of all things from God.

### 2.1.1. What does the World tells us about God?

For Dionysius the Areopagite, the world is *locus Dei*, it is as well a *locus teologicus*, a place that speaks about God. From the beauty of all created things, he deduces that the Creator is Beauty; in the same way, God is Light, Good, Life, etc. Also, Dionysius speaks about the harmony of creation and as the ultimate cause of every thing is invisible and beyond the caused thing, he deduces that God is the cause of the harmony and the splendor of everything.<sup>5</sup> As he says: "The ordered arrangement of the whole visible realm makes known the invisible things of God."<sup>6</sup> God is "the foundation of everything, he preserves and embraces all the world, he founds it, he makes it secure, he holds it together, he binds the whole universe totally to himself."<sup>7</sup> Because of this, God is omnipotent and this omnipotence is here kataphatically understandable. Starting from this premise, the

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concerning the cosmos, the world, in our contemporary situation. This may suggest a special extensive work on precisely this subject: the value and the actuality of Dionysius' understanding on the cosmos for our world today.

<sup>1</sup> R. Roques, "Preface" to *Pseudo-Dionysius, The Complete Works...*, p. 5.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>3</sup> Idem, *L'Univers Dionysien; Structure hiérarchique du monde selon le Pseudo-Denys*, Ed. Montaigne, Aubier, 1954, p. 67.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 54.

<sup>5</sup> *DN*, p. 76.

<sup>6</sup> *Ep.* 9, p. 284.

<sup>7</sup> *DN*, p. 119.

Areopagite progresses in deductions in order to emphasize God's "almightiness": God "generates everything as from some omnipotent root and returns everything back to himself like to some omnipotent storehouse."<sup>1</sup> As Cause and as omnipotent God has the power to summon all things into being.<sup>2</sup> As holding the Irenaean concept of Recapitulation, Dionysius understands God as the almighty Cause not only because he brings forth everything that exists but also because he has the power of recapitulating everything, of bringing everything back to him; he does this through the Word. Since all things came into being by Word, through God's Command, the Word, at some degree, remains in them and it becomes the basis, the ground, of their reintegration in God's final communion.

Recognizing Him as the creative Source and Providence, with all the names fittingly derived from all things he brought into being, the entire creation elevates songs of praise to God.<sup>3</sup>

### 2.1.2. *The nonbeing*

Trying to explain the absolute inexpressible preeminence of God, when he speaks about the Good and the Beautiful, Dionysius says that the Good that is unconfined by any form but the creator of all forms, transcends everything to such an extent that in it, nonbeing is an excess of being and "one might even say that nonbeing itself longs for the Good which is above all being."<sup>4</sup>

The nonbeing, as J. Jones reads Dionysius, is exactly the extension of the Good/Beautiful to non be-ing and in that, the Good establishes its priority over being.<sup>5</sup> In this sense, one can say that the nonbeing is potentially implied in the Good or in the being of the Good.<sup>6</sup> Also, in this sense, Dionysius speaks of the nonbeing as the transcendence of being: "Even that which is not wishes for a place in it,"<sup>7</sup> in the Good and the Beautiful,<sup>8</sup> "nonbeing is said to be transcendently in it."<sup>9</sup>

Indeed, the problem of non be-ing in Dionysius' works is a frustrating one because, as J. Jones observes, we are "never given any systematic discussion of the various senses that this phrase has" and he finds five senses in which

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 51.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 56.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 73.

<sup>5</sup> Pseudo-Dionysius Areopagite, *The Divine Names and Mystical Theology*, transl. from the Greek with an Introductory study by John D. Jones, Marquette Univ. Press, Milwaukee, WI, 1980, p. 60.

<sup>6</sup> With respect to this distinction, Dionysius seems to be ambiguous because, at times, he understands the Good as Being or the Being as the Good and at times, he speaks of these two divine realities apart as if Good and Being are not one and the same reality but as if they are united together in the same reality.

<sup>7</sup> *DN*, p. 84.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 79.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 84.

Dionysius uses the concept of nonbeing: being in no manner whatsoever, or simply the lack of being;<sup>1</sup> the evil in beings; that which comes to be (which in Dionysius has two meanings: in some way this is be-ing and in some other way it is non be-ing); the divinity itself as beyond beingly be-ing; the denial of the beyond beingly being, or the denial of causality.<sup>2</sup>

In the sense in which the nonbeing is ready for being, even longs for it, one can say that in the dionysian thought there is a creative collaboration between being and nonbeing.<sup>3</sup>

When, in the context of his assertions on nonbeing, the Areopagite speaks on the denial of divinity itself, he refers to the divinity as it can be understood in our categories; through this denial, Dionysius, in fact, wants to establish an uncategorizable preeminence of divinity over everything, and this is precisely what he means when teaching on the meonic character of God, especially in his *Mystical Theology*.

### 2.1.3. *The invisible cosmogony*

As I specified in the beginning of the paper, although I will not discuss the invisible world, however, I have to make a few references to it, not only because it is a part of God's creation, but also because its hierarchical order is the general model of the hierarchical order of the visible world.

Indeed, there is an intrinsic relationship between the two worlds,<sup>4</sup> or as Rutledge writes, in Dionysius' thought, the visible and the invisible interpret each other; they are inextricably united.<sup>5</sup>

J. Vanneste understands the dionysion invisible world even as "this world". There is no dualism, there is just one world, one creation that contains, first of all, the Ideas, and then the angels, the human beings, the sensible world.<sup>6</sup>

For Dionysius, the heavenly beings, as having a thinking process, "imitate

<sup>1</sup> D. Rutledge, *op. cit.*, p. 61.

<sup>2</sup> J. Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 61.

<sup>3</sup> Nicolas Berdyaev seems to have been much influenced not only by Jacob Boehme, but also (or through Boehme) by Dionysius. Developing his concept of meonic freedom, Berdyaev, as Dionysius does as well, speaks of nonbeing as if it would be a reality but only of an opposite order from that of being. That is how Berdyaev writes of a meonic freedom which does not depend on God and which consents freely to the creation of the world; meonic freedom, although belonging to nonbeing, freely accepted the being (Nicolas Berdyaev, *The Destiny of Man*, Geoffrey Bles, London, 1937, pp. 24-29.) That is why for him real freedom is creativeness (*Ibid.*, pp. 147-148) and this is its cosmogonic fundamental implication. This is the sense in which A. Mallet speaks of freedom commenting on Bultmann: "Seule la liberté a d'histoire; elle est capable d'un changement radical, elle peut être ce qu'elle n'est pas." (André Malet, *Mythos et Logos: La Pensée de R. Bultmann*, Labor et Fides, Genève, 1962, p. 9.)

<sup>4</sup> R. Roques, *L'Univers Dionysien...*, p. 54.

<sup>5</sup> D. Rutledge, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

<sup>6</sup> J. Vanneste, *Le mystère de Dieu*, Desclée de Brouwer, Paris, 1959, p. 25.

the divine. They look of the divine likeness with a transcendent eye. They model their intellect after him. Being so close to him, they receive an undiluted enlightenment in order to have a life of total intelligence."<sup>1</sup> It is interesting that Dionysius believes that the angels are immortal, they receive immortality and incorruptibility from God; however, they are not immortal. More precisely, he introduces a distinction in the concept of immortality. For him, the real immortality belongs to God because God has it by himself; the angels are immortal but this quality in their case belongs to another category because their immortality was given to them, they do not have it, like God, by themselves.<sup>2</sup> The heavenly beings are not separated from the visible world, not only in that they represent a model for the sensible world by their hierarchical order, but they come in touch with this world, and they have different functions in it, especially in the framework of their mediation between God and our world.

#### **2.1.4. *The origin of creation***

The world has a temporal and an atemporal dimension in the Dionysian cosmology. As temporal, it is properly called creation and the Areopagite presents in his writings a doctrine of creation, but as atemporal, the world seems to be spoken in terms of emanation, too. It is not surprising to find in Dionysius these emanationist tendencies, taking into consideration his philosophical influences. However, what he called an emanationist theory in his cosmogony is not incompatible with the doctrine of creation because when he uses emanationist language he does not refer to the material level but to the spiritual one.

For instance, he teaches that God anticipates all things in himself, embracing everything in his transcendent infinity.<sup>3</sup> The real factor of creation is yearning; it creates all the goodness of the world. This yearning "pre-existed superabundantly within the Good and did not allow it to remain without issue. It stirred him to use the abundance of his powers in the production of the world."<sup>4</sup> It is not clear here if Dionysius associates this yearning with the divine energies or if the yearning is the power of God itself, or something distinct from it. Moreover, it seems that Dionysius distinguishes in the Good, the yearning, its object and the Good itself, while in other places he only distinguishes the yearning and the Good: "Both", he says, "the yearning and the object of that yearning belong to the Beautiful and the Good. They preexist in it and because of it, they exist and came to be".<sup>5</sup>

J. Vanneste reads Dionysius in emanationist terms: "Il est (God) la cause

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<sup>1</sup> *CH*, pp. 156-157.

<sup>2</sup> *DN*, p. 103.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 102.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 80.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 83.



universelle; tout *émane* (my underlining) de Lui et tout se ramène à Lui."<sup>1</sup> And again: "L' émanation apparaît ainsi, si l' on identifie le Bien et L' Un, comme une ramification ontologique en plusieurs espèces d'êtres, mais unifiés à mesure qu'ils s' éloignent davantage de leur source."<sup>2</sup>

However, R. Roques defends Dionysius of any accusation of emanationism while acknowledging ambiguities in the Dionysian thought in this respect: "Malgré quelques équivaques dans ses métaphores (surtout DN 4, 693 B), on ne peut pas accuser Denys d'émanatisme, quelle que soit la nuance que l'on attache à ce term."<sup>3</sup> The same thing can be said of Ch. Yannaras. He does not read Dionysius in emanationist terms at all: "Le monde créé", he says, "n'est pas une émanation, ni une effusion, ni une projection de l' Essence divine; les êtres, comme résultat de la volonté divine, sont donc quelque chose de séparé, de différent, *defini* par rapport à l' Etre...ne provenant ni de la nature divine, ni de rien qui soit hors de la nature divine."<sup>4</sup> Ch. Yannaras wants to accent the idea of creation and of the creation of something new, as reflected in Dionysius' works, although even Yannaras does not explain exactly the meaning of his words with respect to the dionysian specific context to which they refer.<sup>5</sup>

### 2.1.5. *The all-transcending Cause*

For Dionysius, the cause and the Good and the Source are sometimes synonymous and sometimes not. He can speak of the transcending Cause *as* (my underlining) source and destiny of all things,<sup>6</sup> or that "the Good *is* (my underlining) the cause even for the sources and the frontiers of the heavens."<sup>7</sup> The Good as Cause "brought into being *the silent and circular movements of the vast heavens*, (my underlining) the fixed order of starry lights decorating the sky, and those special wandering stars, particularly those *two rotating sources of Light*" (my underlining).<sup>8</sup> But he also can speak of the Pre-existent as the Source *and* the Cause<sup>9</sup> of all things.

The Good is the only truly existence that gives being to everything;<sup>10</sup> as it was in the case of identity and distinction between Good and Cause,<sup>11</sup> so is the

<sup>1</sup> J. Vanneste, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 26.

<sup>3</sup> *Se Dictionnaire de Spiritualité...*, col. 251.

<sup>4</sup> Christos Yannaras, *D l'absence et de l'inconnaissance de Dieu...*, p. 100.

<sup>5</sup> In trying to establish whether Dionysius is or is not an emanationist, one should have necessarily in view the way in which Dionysius uses the concept of connaturality, between creation and God.

<sup>6</sup> DN, p. 56.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 73.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 74.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 102.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 98.

<sup>11</sup> Of a good help in the problem of vocabulary in Dionysius' works is *Dionysiaca, Recueil donnant l'ensemble des traductions latines des ouvrages attribués au Denys de l'Aréopage*, Tome I, II,

case of identity or, in the following example, distinction between Good and Being: The Good is Source of everything and "from it came Being itself and every kind of being."<sup>1</sup>

The divine causality, as eternally generator of being, is erotic and ecstatic,<sup>2</sup> it is the "life of the living, the being of beings, the source and cause of all life and of all beings; it *commends* (my underlining) all things to be and it keeps them going."<sup>3</sup> Here in this text, Dionysius seems to imply the creation by Word and the work of the Providence in creation.

"It *commends*" implies a rational mind and therefore, a rational commend with rational effects, a fact that makes the whole creation able of God's communion at God's level. This is compatible with the dionysian theology of freedom of creation and love. As R. Roques notices, for Dionysius, the freedom and the order in creation are not contradictory; one can say they are complementary: "Bien que présenté surtout sous le signe de l'ordre, l'univers dionysien se conquiert et s'unifie en permanence sous le signe de la liberté."<sup>4</sup>

Love, for Dionysius, is implied in the act of creation. According to his theology, man and the whole creation are not cast into being, as Heidegger would say, or cast into time as in E. Cioran's skeptical Anthropology, but through Providence, God is a loving and caring presence in the world that belongs to him.

In this respect, O. Clement said that God as "créateur et re-créateur devient volontairement cette ouverture où le céleste et le terrestre se déploient et se symbolisent l'un l'autre, il se fait donation aimante d'être et de sens."<sup>5</sup>

#### 2.1.6. *The Beautiful*

The Good and the Beautiful are synonymous for Dionysius. Therefore, Beauty is also the origin of creation, the cause of harmony, sympathy, communion. As Cause, the Beauty has a protological meaning, it refers to "from out of which" in J. Jones' terms:<sup>6</sup> "Beauty unites all things and is the source of all things," Dionysius writes; "it is the great creating cause which bestirs the world and holds all things in existence by the longing inside them to have beauty."<sup>7</sup> But Beauty is also the Goal of everything. In this sense, it has an eschatological meaning, it refers to "in which". Dionysius again: "Beauty is Goal as the Beloved, as the Cause *toward which* (my underlining) all things move since it is the longing

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Desclée de Brouwer, Paris, 1937.

<sup>1</sup> *DN*, p. 100.

<sup>2</sup> J. Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 59.

<sup>3</sup> *DN*, p. 51.

<sup>4</sup> R. Roques, *L'Univers Dionysien...*, pp. 54-68.

<sup>5</sup> O. Clément, *op. cit.*, p. 25.

<sup>6</sup> J. Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 57.

<sup>7</sup> *DN*, p. 77.

for beauty that actually brings them into being."<sup>1</sup>(!)

Besides the fact of being Source and Goal, the Beautiful is equaled with Providence; it is for the sake of the Beauty that things came to be and it is in it that they continue to exist. All these three aspects of the Beauty are mentioned in one phrase: "All being drives from, exists in, and is returned toward the Beautiful and the Good; all things look at it."<sup>2</sup>

### 2.1.7. *The Creative Power*

What has been said about the Good and the Beautiful in relation to the created order, can be said about the Power of God, too. Although Dionysius has different slight nuances to emphasize these divine attributes, even if not always, generally they can be understood in the same way.

The power of God makes fashions, keeps things into existence. The divine power is ubiquitous: "Nothing in the world lacks the power of God because what lacks this power has no existence, no individuality nor a place in the world."<sup>3</sup> The power has a providential role, as in the case of Beauty. Dionysius expresses that in wonderful words. He says that the divine power "fashions the unquenchability of fire and the ceaseless moisture of water.(!) It keeps the atmosphere fluid, founds the earth upon the void making its labors endlessly fruitful. It *preserves the shared harmony of linked elements* (my underlining) in their distinctiveness and their separateness, it keeps each creature in being."<sup>4</sup>

In relation to the divine power, as another providential means for creation, Dionysius speaks of measure. Therefore, God is One, Cause, Source, Beauty, Good, Power, Love, Measure. He is Source and measure of the ages<sup>5</sup> and of all things.<sup>6</sup> But because God is one and he is measure for the whole plurality of things, he is their common measure, *sýmetria*.<sup>7</sup> In that, the measure, the symmetry is a principle of order and harmony in creation.

### 2.1.8. *The coming into being*

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.* Here Dionysius does not explain: the longing for Beauty brings the things from nonbeing to being. What kind of nonbeing is that in which there is a longing and things and in which the longing, as a dynamic reality, reaches the things and brings them out into being as if from a state into another state? Or, if there is nonbeing, can there be a longing or whatsoever in the nonbeing? This question appears out of an attempt to understand the mystical theology of Dionysius logically; however, it is possible to understand that if one adopts the dionysian language. With respect to nonbeing, Dionysius does not speak logically but paradoxically, mystically, imaginatively. (DN, p. 73).

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 79.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 112.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 98.

<sup>6</sup> R. Roques, *op. cit.*, p. 59.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 60-61.

As a transcendent deity, out of Goodness, God brought everything into being.<sup>1</sup> Once the world was created, it was endowed with the laws and possibilities that allowed it to evolve and develop itself: "the single existence is said to be manifold by virtue of the fact that it brings so many things to being from itself."<sup>2</sup> But this is not without God's will as principle of unity, harmony and subsistence. "The One," Dionysius teaches, "if you take it away, the creation would collapse, nothing would survive, neither whole nor part."<sup>3</sup> In that, the sovereignty of God is incontestably stated.<sup>4</sup>

But being *brought into* existence, the creation was endowed with all it has. The being itself, for creation, is a gift. The being and the having are not the same but, by the fact of being brought into existence, the creatures were at the same time endowed with gifts: "No creature has anything that it has not received through the line of communication, and this includes, startling as it may seem, its whole being in all its aspects, its actions, its whole history, its life with all its details."<sup>5</sup> By opposition to the concept of connaturality, present in various ways in in Dionysius' thought, Ch. Yannaras understands Dionysius' cosmogony in no relation to the divine nature. He says: "God appelle à l'existence des êtres qui sont *en dehors* de Sa nature. En ce sens, l'existence du monde et de l'homme émerge du chaos, de l'inexistence, du néant; les êtres existent, non comme essences ou comme existences, mais seulement comme vérité, - a-lèthéia - ils ex-istent, et leur existence implique la distance, l'*endehors* de l'essence divine."<sup>6</sup>

Here is strongly emphasized the creatural aspect of the world, by opposition to any emanationist understanding of creation. However, the creatural dimension of the universe does not exclude a true relationship between creator and creature. But this is not ontologique, not on the basis of connaturality, but it is an anagogical relationship: "Il y a donc une relation analogique entre le Dieu Créateur et les créatures, mais cette relation suscite une représentation par l'image et non une définition."<sup>7</sup> The image relation between creation and Creator does not exclude the possibility of communion. As R. Roques mentions, the universe of Dionysius is a spiritual one, where the rational beings can unify themselves with God. The image relation supposes not only the possibility of a cosmic progression towards God in

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<sup>1</sup> CH, p. 156.

<sup>2</sup> DN, p. 66.

<sup>3</sup> DN, p. 129.

<sup>4</sup> This is exactly what the churches today want to emphasize in their effort for and as part of a new model of society: "We affirm God as the true sovereign over every human form of power." (*Towards an Ecumenical...*, Part II, 115, p. 25); and again: "We affirm that the creation belongs to God (Ps. 24). Not humanity but God is the source, the centre and the culmination of all creation. The whole of creation is ordered to the glory of God" (Rev. 1:18), (*Ibidem* Part II, 122, p. 27).

<sup>5</sup> D. Rutledge, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

<sup>6</sup> Ch. Yannaras, *op. cit.*, pp. 100-101.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 82. In relation to this text, it would be necessary to see in detail the meaning of "Image" in Dionysius' thought.

a unilateral way, but also God's presence in the world. In this sense, as J. Vanneste says, "Toute la création est une théophanie."<sup>1</sup>

### 2.1.9. *The Light*

Pseudo-Dionysius is not very clear and systematic when he speaks about light. For him, at times, Light is equaled to and functions like the Good or the Power, at times, it is just the image of the Archetype, it only comes from the Good.<sup>2</sup> Sometimes the light is the *unshaped* (m.u.) light of the first three days of creation and this one is the measure and enumerator of all our hours, days, of all our time. Other times, the light is that of the sun which is a distant image or echo of the Good.<sup>3</sup> He says also that God is the time in which things happen; in this quality, God does not cease to be eternity beyond being. God is time, eternity, essence, being light, etc. but at the same time, he is the source of all these.<sup>4</sup> As a Source of Light, he gives light to everything that is *capable of receiving it* (my underlining).<sup>5</sup> Dionysius writes that the light is the visible image of God that draws and returns all things to itself,<sup>6</sup> that means "all things that see, that have motion that are receptive of illumination and warmth, that are held together by the spreading rays. Thus, it is the *sun* for it makes all things a *sum* and gathers together the scattered."<sup>7</sup>

### 2.1.10. *The unity of creation*

In Dionysius' thought, the unity of creation has a protological character but

<sup>1</sup> J. Vanneste, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

<sup>2</sup> *DN*, p. 74.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibidem*.

Speaking of the *unshaped* light, Dionysius does not explain not only *HOW* the *unshaped* light is measure of time but he does not explain how the light – shaped or unshaped – is measure of time. Was there one kind of time before the fourth day of creation and another type of time after that?

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 98.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 74.

I underlined the expression that is one of the stereotypes of Dionysius' style and a leit-motive of his care not to commit any crime against the majesty of God; this as well as guard to make sure that the creation will always be interpreted and understood as creature and not more than that. The expression was used by Origen and St. Gregory of Nyssa, too.

<sup>6</sup> This means that in this context Light is identical with God, otherwise, it would bring all things not to itself but to God.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 75.

It is implied in the text that all things long for light but not all are capable of receiving it; and if it is received differently according to the capacity of things, can there be things of such a low level that would not be able at all of receiving light? In this case, who is responsible for the lesser capacity or total incapacity – which is supposable in a hierarchical order of creation – of some things for receiving light? Also, it is said that God gives light to all things.

Then, how is light compatible with the supposed existence of *some* beings incapable of receiving the light? If they do not participate in being, then, are they out of being or are they just illusory? Or what kind of being would they have?

also the unity can be seen from the soteriological and eschatological point of view. The unity is protological in the sense that by the fact of creation itself, the universe relays its existence on the unifying power of the One. Along the line of St. Gregory of Nyssa's understanding of the unifying power of God, Dionysius also sees the unifying presence of God in all creation. Gregory said that "une solide liaison entre les choses ainsi créées fut instituée dans la nature par l'industrie et la puissance divines qui tenaient les rênes de l'univers."<sup>1</sup> And Dionysius writes: "the transcendent God *reaches* (m.u.) from the highest and most perfect forms of beings to the very lowest."<sup>2</sup> This protologic and ontologic unity is not uniformity. Dionysius stresses in a special way the positive character of distinctiveness of things. The hierarchical structure of the universe is not incompatible with the unity. There is even a longing of God for unity, as the Areopagite shows: "The divine longing is *Good seeking good for the sake of the Good*" (my underlining).<sup>3</sup>

In making this bold affirmation, Dionysius does not mean that the universe has a mechanical order where reified things with a suppressed freedom are manipulated by God for God's own sake or interest. Dionysius affirms clearly the freedom of creation and the love of God for his creation; this is a superabundant love out of the divine goodness that holds all things together for the perspective of the final communion, as they are already together on the basis of their common source.<sup>4</sup> Although the Areopagite speaks of scattered things, it is implied in his affirmations that they have in themselves the principle of unity. As it will be seen again later, the world of Dionysius is not an isolated one but a world in which the dialogue between things and that of all things with God is essential and saving relationship.<sup>5</sup> This dialogue is made possible and necessary by the specificity of every created thing, by their gifts and qualities given by God. Here again Dionysius is along the line of St. Gregory of Nyssa. Gregory teaches that "tout est possible à la puissance divine, aussi bien de donner l'existence à ce qui n'existe pas, que de donner à l'être des qualités convenables."<sup>6</sup> Dionysius holds the same idea: "The righteousness of God is truly righteousness in that it gives the appropriate and deserved qualities to everything and that it preserves the nature of

<sup>1</sup> Grégoire de Nysse, *La Création de l'homme*, Introd. par Jean-Yves Guilleumin et A.G. Hamman, trad. par Jean-Yves Guilleumin, col. "Les Peuples dans la Foi", Desclée de Brouwer, Paris, 1982, p. 35.

<sup>2</sup> *DN*, p. 74.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 79.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> This is another desideratum of our churches today. Conscious that we live in the crisis of an irrational exploitation of nature, the churches call people for a new understanding of the relationship man-cosmos in which neither one be humiliated: "Christians need a recovery of their faith in God as Creator, in the world as belonging to God, and in a reconciled relationship, through Christ, between humanity and the created world" (*Towards an Ecumenical...*, Part I, 53, p. 13).

<sup>6</sup> Grégoire de Nysse, *La Creation de l'homme...*, p. 127.

each being in its due order and power."<sup>1</sup>

For Dionysius, the Incarnation of the Logos in Jesus Christ is the supreme sign of the creative power of God as a unifying providential presence in creation. The Incarnation as theurgy is something totally new<sup>2</sup> in the universe. It is compatible with the creation because, for Dionysius, as J. Jones shows, the nature of things is understood as logos: "the nature or the logos of a being is what determines the being to be what it is."<sup>3</sup> The Incarnation of the Logos as unifying power and love in the world, expresses the radical character of God's care for the world, in the fact that Incarnation is understood as the most radical and complete divine ecstasis.<sup>4</sup>

## 2.2. Soteriology

In the general framework of soteriology, I will present Dionysius' doctrine on the return of all things to their Creator through purification and illumination. Union, the last stage of the ascent, will be presented in the framework of eschatology. The three stages of the ascent as return will be implied in the material which follows about various dionysian cosmological concepts.

### 2.2.1. The divine Providence

Although I related here the Providence as that which leads things to their final accomplishment in God, to the soteriology, in Dionysius' thought the Providence has a much larger understanding. Generally speaking, it includes not only the return but the procession too.<sup>5</sup> First, we have the definition: Providence is "something in something but in a transcendent way; in no way is it nothing in nothing."<sup>6</sup>(!)

D. Rutledge says that Dionysian cosmology does not refer only to origination of the world through the divine power, but also it refers to the achievement of the world's purpose and its final destiny in God's communion.<sup>7</sup> In this sense, Providence is related to all creation in all its aspects and dimensions. It is the center of everything, everything has it for destiny; Providence proceeded the creation and, as he said about Logos and Good and Beautiful, etc., Dionysius asserts that it is in Providence that things hold together. "Because the Providence is there, the world has come to be and exists."<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *DH*, p. 113.

<sup>2</sup> *Ep.* 4, p. 265.

<sup>3</sup> J. Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 63.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 59.

<sup>5</sup> *DN*, p. 83.

<sup>6</sup> *Ep.* 9, p. 286.

<sup>7</sup> D. Rutledge, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

<sup>8</sup> *DH*, p. 54.

If in St. Justin the Martyr's theology the *Logos spermatikos* can be understood as having a providential function, in Dionysius' theology, the Providence as Logos functions too; One can see

Providence for Dionysius implies divine care for creation, for the spiritual growth of everything. This caring character of the Providence is stressed analogically by Dionysius when, giving an answer in a conflictual situation, he says: "Those who do not know must be taught, not punished. We do not hit the blind. We lead them by the hand."<sup>1</sup>

In the sense in which all creation is summoned up in the communion with its primary Cause, as the Providence exists before creation, the Areopagite teaches that "in some way everything partakes the Providence that flows out of the transcendent Deity."<sup>2</sup>

### 2.2.2. *The longing for God*

For Dionysius, all things *must* desire, *must* (my underlining) yearn for the Beautiful, for God, for their Cause.<sup>3</sup> This is compatible with their nature; they have the yearning in their nature; moreover, their nature is yearning. Not to desire is to run counter-nature. The longing as the dynamic of return has an anomnetical dimension and it is universal: "all things long for it (Cause); the intelligent and rational long for it by way of knowledge, the lower strata by way of perception, reminder by way of the stirrings of being alive and in whatever fashion befits their condition."<sup>4</sup>

The longing implies the unity of creation. One of the ways of realizing this unity, as it was mentioned, is knowledge, perception: "all things *are returned* (my underlining) to it (Cause) as their own goal; all things desire it. Everything with mind and reason seeks *to know* (my underlining) it, everything sentient yearns to perceive it, everything lacking perception has a living and instinctive longing for it, and everything lifeless and merely existent turns, in its own fashion, for a share of it."<sup>5</sup>

The final communion with God, is, in Dionysius' teaching, a synergetic work. In the text quoted above the double contribution is visible of this work: that of God, because things *are returned* and that of creation through the ardent, permanent, consuming desire.

The longing as connatural to beings, in relation to the Cause which is origin and final destiny of things, gives to the Cause the threefold dimensions: Protological, Soteriological, Eschatological.

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in Dionysius a Logos Pronikos, .

<sup>1</sup> *Ep.* 8, p. 278.

<sup>2</sup> *CH*, p. 156.

<sup>3</sup> *DN*, p. 79.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 75.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* This ardent and restless desire for the ultimate communion with God remembers St. Augustin: "Fecistis nos ad Te Domine post imaginem et similitudinem Tuam et inquietur est cor meum donec requiescat in Te."



### 2.2.3. *The ascent as return*

The whole life in the world is conceived by Dionysius as a progress to true being, through the reception of the light in an increasing fullness.<sup>1</sup> The ascent needs purification and illumination and leads to union or perfection,<sup>2</sup> it is accomplished through the help of hierarchies, in a hierarchical order.<sup>3</sup> As J. Vanneste reads Dionysius, "le Bien, dans sa fonction ordinatrice qui est d'unifier,"<sup>4</sup> makes us to come back, and this happens by different means among which we have the analogy and the symmetry, the common measure, which has also the sense of understanding everything in relation to God. The analogy and symmetry are models, reasons, predeterminations offered by God to creation for its progression.<sup>5</sup>

The return has a doxologic character. Because the return is a synergetical work and because without God's help it is not possible,<sup>6</sup> in its way *back home* (my (my underlining), recognizing the One who is preserver, protector, unifier of all things,<sup>7</sup> the creation praises him,<sup>8</sup> it becomes a perpetual epiclesis, a chart of joy in an eucharistic celebration of a cosmic liturgy.

For Dionysius, the Procession, implies Return, because for him, like for Origen, the beginning and the end are one.<sup>9</sup>

If the return of all things,<sup>10</sup> is to be understood as a restoration of all things, then, it refers to the totality of creation, it embraces all the events of the History and their continuation in Eschaton, therefore, it includes the Resurrection of the dead, the Parousia; in this sense, the return is a kinship idea with that of Recapitulation.<sup>11</sup>

For Dionysius, in respect to the return of creation, God is the call: "come back."<sup>12</sup> But it is obvious throughout all his works that, as Paul Evdokimov would say, "one can never invent God, for one can never go toward God if one does not start from God."

### 2.2.4. *Togetherness and salvation*

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<sup>1</sup> D. Rutledge, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

<sup>2</sup> *EH*, p. 235.

<sup>3</sup> J. Vanneste, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>5</sup> R. Roques, *op. cit.*, pp. 62-63.

<sup>6</sup> *DN*, p. 56.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 75.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 56.

<sup>9</sup> Origen, *On First Principles*, Ed. by G.W. Butterworth, Gloucester, Mass., Peter Smith, 1973, p. 53.

<sup>10</sup> *DN*, p. 75.

<sup>11</sup> Irenaeus of Lyon, *Contre les Hérésies* I, 2, ch 10, 1, Ed. critique par A. Rousseau et L. Doutreleau, Ed. du Cerf, "Sources Chrétiennes", Paris, 1979, p. 157, and tom III, ch. 11,8; 16,6; 21,9; 21,10, Ed. critique par F. Sagnard, Ed. du Cerf, "Sources Chrétiennes", Paris, 1952, pp. 203, 293, 371.

<sup>12</sup> *DN*, p. 51.

The theme of togetherness of all things here, is in relation with that of unity of creation presented above. Although the idea in principle is common, there it was presented in protological perspective whereas here, it is developed in eschatological perspective.

Dionysius teaches that in God all things hold together, in him all is perceived and preserved.<sup>1</sup> "Each being looks at its source as the *agent of cohesion* (my underlining) and as an objective." Again, the Good is beginning and end; in it, "all things hold together and are maintained and preserved as if in some almighty receptacle."<sup>2</sup>

The togetherness of things is a key idea in Dionysius' cosmology. But he never forgets to explain that the togetherness is in God and accomplished by God. God holds things together because God sees them all and fills them with himself although he transcends everything.<sup>3</sup> The same idea was developed by St. Gregory of Nyssa<sup>4</sup> who wrote also that God as Theos sees all things everywhere, penetrates all, that is why we call him Theos, Seer of what is to be seen.<sup>5</sup> The return viewed this way in Dionysian works, actually equals salvation. What he says about salvation is not foreign to what he says about return. Salvation is, Dionysius writes, the preservation of all things in their proper places without change, conflict or collapse toward evil, to keep them in "peaceful and untroubled obedience to their proper laws," it is to keep the proportion of everything in things and among them, not to turn anything into conflict or disorder or in its opposite.<sup>6</sup>

It would seem that here salvation has a static dimension but Dionysius teaches that this cosmic harmony of which he speaks here is related to the idea of growth,<sup>7</sup> of completion. "The nature of every thing in creation preserves what is due for that thing and what is necessary for it to attain its *completion*" (my underlining).<sup>8</sup>

One can see that the cosmology of Dionysius does not refer only to the origin of things and their destiny in Time as they go toward their final accomplishment in Eschaton, but he speaks as well about the inner structure of Things, about their interrelatedness and the laws that keep them in harmony. According to Dionysius, in every thing exist intrinsically the existential laws that lead them naturally to

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 99.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 75.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 126.

<sup>4</sup> See the note nr. 4.

<sup>5</sup> Gregory of Nyssa, "Answer to Eunomius' Second Book", in *A Select Library of Nicene and Post Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, V, transl. preface, Prolegomena and explanatory notes under the editorial supervision of Philip Schaff and Henry Wace, Eerdmann Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, Reprinted ed. 1988, p. 309.

<sup>6</sup> *DN*, p. 114.

<sup>7</sup> *Ep.* 9, p. 288.

<sup>8</sup> J. Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 64.

completion, to the final unity in God, to salvation. But, in the case of human beings, these inner laws are to be obeyed, applied actively in life and in this sense, again, salvation has a dynamic character, not a static one. Also, it can be said that in Dionysius' thought, salvation is a preocean and a goal as well.

### 2.3. Eschatology

All the subchapters in this part of the paper, in the framework of Eschatology, are related to the concept of union with God as the third stage of the spiritual ascent. Although they still may refer partially to the process, nevertheless, they refer in principle to the goal. Some of the ideas of this part were already presented above but whereas, there they were treated in a protological or soteriological sense, here they have in view the final goal of creation, Theosis.

#### 2.3.1. Participation

Gregory of Nyssa taught about the kinship (parenté) of things.<sup>1</sup> Continuing this idea in his teaching, Dionysius writes that all beings are deiform, that is why their participation in God is a natural necessity to them. Like salvation, the participation is a process and a goal at the same time. As a process, it leads to deification, but as a goal, it is deification. At that point the deiformity will be at its full although, this fullness will be in function of the capacity of subject's receptivity.<sup>2</sup>

As Pre-existent, as Cause of time and eternity and of all beings, God opens himself to participation by all creation. Dionysius even has the bold affirmation that "none among beings falls away"<sup>3</sup> from this participation. There are different levels of participation, according to the hierarchical order of creation. Of course, the first and most diverse participation in Deity is that of the angels.<sup>4</sup> Then, the intelligent beings participate in God in many ways and even the lower levels of existence, things without life, participate in Him because He is the existence of everything.<sup>5</sup>

Participation is a synergy. For example, knowledge of God is a participatory experience but this experience is not to be understood without the help of the divine energies.<sup>6</sup> Christos Yannaras reads in Dionysius that the Incarnation, the theandric person of Jesus Christ in the supreme foundation for the deifying participation.<sup>7</sup> This experience takes place in the Church as Christ's body where, with his nature regenerated by the communion with Christ, man becomes capable

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<sup>1</sup> R. Leys, *L'Image de Dieu chez St. Grégoire de Nysse*, Desclée de Brouwer, Paris, 1951, p. 47.

<sup>2</sup> R. Roques, *op. cit.*, p. 62.

<sup>3</sup> *DN*, p. 99.

Here he does not explain about the fallen angels and their possibility or impossibility of participation.

<sup>4</sup> *CH*, pp. 156-157.

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

<sup>6</sup> Ch. Yannaras, *op. cit.*, p. 105.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 111.

"de réfléchir la lumière."<sup>1</sup> Participation in the remedy of sin, of the broken relationship.<sup>2</sup>

### 2.3.2. *Perichoresis*

By participation in Beauty, all things are in harmony with each other, in interrelationship of love. This interrelationship does not eliminate the identity of each of them.<sup>3</sup> This is perichoresis: unity in diversity, communion without confusion; confusion; not egalitarian, uniforming, depersonalizing collectivism but rich share in distinctiveness. Dionysius writes that God penetrates unhindered in and through all things, energizing them.<sup>4</sup> This is perichoresis related to God. But there is one related to creatures and this is possible only through their participation in God. In fact, nothing could exist without a share in the being and in the Source of everything, teaches the Areopagite.<sup>5</sup> Perichoresis as the deepest possible form of relation when, to use Vl. Lossky's expression, "Tout est immanent à tout," supposes the connaturality of things, it supposes leur "parenté": "Le monde ne peut subsister dans l'ordre et dans la beauté que par une certaine parenté de ses éléments."<sup>6</sup>

### 2.3.3. *Unity in diversity*

This is already a part of the perichoretical relation between things. It speaks about the inner togetherness of every thing of which D. Bonhoeffer liked to speak also, about the communitarian ontologic dimension of every creature.

Dionysius emphasizes the intrinsic unity of every thing which is due, he says, to the peace, because "everything loves to be at peace with itself. This inward peace of things preserves the unity of each thing from any confusion or separation within themselves or from one another."<sup>7</sup> The peace not only maintains

<sup>1</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>2</sup> I quote again the WCC document *Towards an Ecumenical...* in order to once again stress the value of Dionysius' theology as an appropriate answer for the needs of our day: "We need a new concept that provides healing of relationship between human beings, between cultures, and between humanity and all creation...We need to begin by understanding ourselves as a part of the wholeness of God's creation" (Part I, 82, p. 18). And also: "Creation is not simply an initial act of God the Creator, but the liberating place of God's presence and ongoing activity, providing, sustaining, and protecting life. We are called to participate responsibly in this ongoing divine activity" (Part I, 71, p. 16).

"Further, the integrity of creation implies that *every creature is related to every other creature* (m.u.) as part of one interdependent community. It is particularly important for human beings to learn this truth, for we have thought of ourselves as apart, above, separate from the rest of the creation. But we are part of the totality, sharing with the other parts of the creation a common dependence on the Creator. Nor are we strangers to the material world; we too are 'flesh' (Is. 40:11); we too receive our life, daily, at the hands of our Maker (Ps. 104:29-30)", (Part I, 85, p. 19).

<sup>3</sup> *DH*, p. 77.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 116.

<sup>5</sup> *CH*, p. 156.

<sup>6</sup> R. Roques, *op. cit.*, p. 57.

<sup>7</sup> *DN*, p. 123.

maintains the inner unity of each thing but produces the harmony, the communion, the agreement of all things and returns them to the total unity.<sup>1</sup> This peace which grants identity to the elements through the qualities they have,<sup>2</sup> and keeps them *inseparably* (my underlining) together, with no confusion, is divine power.<sup>3</sup> Following Plato and Origen,<sup>4</sup> Dionysius the Areopagite holds that the exemplars of everything pre-exist as a transcendent unity in God.<sup>5</sup> This idea is consistent with all his understanding of God as a Source or Cause. The unity in diversity is the harmony of creation and this is due to the manifestation of the divinity itself in every nature.<sup>6</sup>

#### 2.3.4. *Theosis*

The deification of creation in Dionysius' theology is bound to the sacramental life in the church. This is the sacrament or sacraments that bring about the purification, the illumination and the perfection.<sup>7</sup> The Eucharist especially is the sacrament of union, it dignifies human being and in that, the whole creation. In that, man leads the entire creation to spiritualization stage in which it will be resumed into the spirit.<sup>8</sup>

It seems that using so many expressions like "all things", "everything", "all creation", Dionysius would hold the concept of *Apokatastasis* of Origen, in the sense of a final restoration of the total creation, even of the evil angels.

R. Roques says that Dionysius does not hold this doctrine except for the fact that he uses two times the word *Apokatastasis* but in a pure cosmological sense (in DN 6976 and 892 d).<sup>9</sup>

However, even if Dionysius does not use this doctrine in Origen's complete meaning, there are enough reasons to consider that the Areopagite held it. He did not explain much on that in a special way as Origen did, but even when he uses the word *Apokatastasis* in a cosmological sense, this implies precisely the whole creation and in that, it is a reason to consider that this doctrine was not foreign, nor even marginal in Dionysius' thought.

It is clear that the perspective of deification, through sacramental participation,<sup>10</sup> and especially through Eucharist,<sup>11</sup> in the divine life, is for the

<sup>1</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 121, 123.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 111, 122.

<sup>4</sup> Origen taught that the creation ever existed in God's mind in form and outline and there was never a time when the prefiguration of those things did not exist in God (*On First Principles*..., p. 42).

<sup>5</sup> *DH*, p. 102.

<sup>6</sup> J. Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 63.

<sup>7</sup> *EH*, p. 248; also *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité*..., col. 279.

<sup>8</sup> D. Rutledge, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

<sup>9</sup> *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité*..., col. 251.

<sup>10</sup> *EH*, p. 217.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 209.

whole of creation and it was shown that creation, in Dionysius' thinking, encompasses both visible and invisible world. He believes that man is indeed divine<sup>1</sup> and has the *right* (my underlining) to commune the divine realities.<sup>2</sup>

The deification is also a process and a goal. As a process, it is facilitated by the hierarchical orders; this is the aim of hierarchies: to help for deification, for the assimilation in God. It is understood that first, in the process of deification, are those made godlike<sup>3</sup> and then, through them the whole creation. Ultimately, theosis is founded on the power of God<sup>4</sup> and his generous self-giving<sup>5</sup> out of love love for the whole creation.

### 2.3.5. *The Mystery*

All things that so far have been presented here as a kataphatic approach to God, in their final development, according to Dionysius, turn into apophasis. All things in creation long, tend toward unity in God. If the first two stages of the spiritual ascent imply some accumulations, like of knowledge for instance, the unity as the third stage implies total detachment. Detachment of any knowledge, abandonment of being, going away from everything, ek-stasis. This is the culmination, the realization of mystical unity, through ek-stasis, when one enters the darkness of unknowing.<sup>6</sup> This divine darkness which is actually the unapproachable light<sup>7</sup> is equivalent with an "inebriation" in God. Dionysius, in his his apophatic theology, speaks also about God's "inebriation" or "drunkenness" in the sense of the total transcendence of any possible understanding. "God is beyond being itself. As 'drunk', God stays outside of all good things, being the superfullness of all these things."<sup>8</sup>

In its ultimate reality, for Dionysius every thing is a mystery; man<sup>9</sup> as well as as all creation. Einstein understood that when he said that the most incomprehensible thing in the world is that the world should be comprehensible. Also, any relation between things and between creation and God is mystery; everything is a silent but clear witness of "l'infinie transcendence de l'absolue

<sup>1</sup> For the divinity of man, but from a different perspective, see N. Berdyaev, *The Meaning of the Creative Act*, Victor Gallancz Ltd., London, 1955, p. 146.

<sup>2</sup> J. Vanneste, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

<sup>3</sup> *DN*, p. 112.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 127.

<sup>6</sup> *Ep* 1, p. 263 and J. Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 96.

<sup>7</sup> *Ep* 5, p. 265.

<sup>8</sup> *Ep* 9, p. 287.

<sup>9</sup> Man cannot know himself; this is evident also in Theophilus of Antioch's answer given to an atheist: "Montre-moi ton homme et je te montrerai mon Dieu"!

Incognoscibilité."<sup>1</sup>

### 3. Conclusions

For Dionysius, the world is a theurgy; therefore, the world belongs to God. The cosmos in its reality is a hierarchic and triadic order. This order is a sacred one. Its essential function is of mediation for deification. The whole creation reveals God although God cannot be seen.<sup>2</sup> The universe as theophany and place of God's manifestations, silently and mystically speaks of the divine majesty, sovereignty and glory and by its very existence is a praise of God. All divine attributes: Cause, Source, One, Beauty, Good, Power, Love, Measure, etc. are related to creation.

It is in relation to cosmology that he develops his doctrine of God. In doing so, he does not marginalize or neglect the biblical revelation; this is visible in the abundance of his scriptural references. However, it can be said that Dionysius' way of developing his theology and cosmology lets us hear what the world has to say about God. One of the emphasis of his cosmology is related to the Cause and the way in which the Creator is present in creation. Sometimes, there may be noticed contradictions or seemed contradictions in his thought and as well antiquities or dualisms. In fact, most of the time, these all constitute precisely the dynamic and the dialectic of his apophatism. For instance, when at one time, he says that God is Light, Good, Beauty and at another time, that God is not these things but their Source, (a fact which seems to be a contradiction or at least, a dualistic way of thinking), actually he is using the kataphatic and the apophatic way together, in the making of a mystical theology.

The reason for which sometimes, apparently he speaks separately of God as Being, Cause, Source, Beauty, etc. is not because he would let it be understood that there are separations and divisions in the Deity but it can appear so because of the method he uses to structure his books, especially *The Divine Names*.

He even specifies, to avoid any misinterpretation, that what he affirms about a name is also valid for the other names and all affirmations together are applied to the same one and eternal God.

Dionysius the Areopagite presents to the world a dignifying understanding of creation, a doctrine in which human beings, history and the universe have value. This makes his cosmology and theology be valuable and contemporary to use. The way it is conceived and developed, his teaching is an encouragement and an answer to the search of our people today to find and build a new type of relationship, to reinvent the communion, to find man's right position *coram mundo* and *coram Deo*, as it is significantly illustrated in the recent WCC

<sup>1</sup> J. Vanneste, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

<sup>2</sup> R. Roques, "Preface" to *Pseudo-Dionysius; The Complete Works...*, p. 6.

document on the Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation: "Creation has a value of its own. Humanity and the rest of the creation need a new and redressed relationship...The integrity of creation reaffirms the biblical and credal truth that 'all things', whether visible and invisible, have God for their Maker. This not only implies the entire dependence of the creation upon its Creator, but also connotes something about the worth and dignity of the creation itself, whose life is thus sustained and held dear by God to whom it belongs."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Towards an Ecumenical...*, Part I, 51, pl. 12 and also Part 1, 84, pp. 18-19.



## METAPHYSIK UND RELIGION BEI MAX SCHELER

Claudiu BACIU\*

**Abstract.** Max Scheler thinks every essence is corresponding to an actual thing. Methodologically, the entities and their relationships are independent (i.e., without their support) and he explores what is really a matter of phenomenology. Analyzing actuality is possible only through a concrete experience. This faith-directedness, unless it is satisfied not by a faith in God leads necessarily to metaphysics, ie to "entering a company from being the epitome of finite beings in the sphere of absolute per-intentioned. The so-called agnosticism is only a limiting case of such metaphysics, "metaphysics of nothingness". Man is "an essential and necessary metaphysician", (even) if he does not believe in the reality of God.

**Key words:** metaphysics, Max Scheler, agnosticism, ontological perspective, "metaphysics of nothingness"

Max Scheler denkt jede Wesenheit als entsprechend einem realen Träger. Methodologisch können die Wesenheiten und ihre Zusammenhänge selbstständig (d.h. ohne ihre Träger) erforscht werden, was eigentlich eine Sache der Phänomenologie ist. Von einer Wesenheit aber können wir nie ihren faktischen Träger erschließen und erkennen. Das ist möglich nur durch eine konkrete Erfahrung. „Es ist ein ganz allgemeiner Satz der phänomenologischen Philosophie, sagt Scheler, dass – obzwar das *Wesen* der Realität selbst (und des Realitätsbewusstseins) noch phänomenologisch zu eruieren ist, desgleichen die Realitätsform der materialen Seinsgebiete – die *faktische Setzung* und Nichtsetzung eines *wesensmäßig* schon bestimmten, aber auch ausschließlich so bestimmbareren Gegenstandes ausschließlich und überall auf Erfahrung, und zwar auf Erfahrung vom Wesen der ‚zufälligen‘, nicht auf Erfahrung vom Wesen der phänomenologischen Erfahrung, gründet.“<sup>1</sup> Im Falle des Göttlichen, kann also die Philosophie nie etwas anderes tun als das Wesen des Göttlichen aufweisen, d.h. nie einen „ontologischen Beweis“ bringen. Was diesem Wesen faktisch entspricht, kann nur durch eine *positive Offenbarung* erkannt werden, d.h. durch eine Selbstdarstellung des Gottes. Das Wesen des Göttlichen wird von der Phänomenologie als eine „unendlich heilige Person“ bestimmt, d.h. die

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<sup>1</sup> M. Scheler, *Absolutsphäre und Realsetzung der Gottesidee*, in *Schriften aus dem Nachlass*, Bd. 1, Francke Verlag, Bern, 1957, S. 180.

Philosophie kann nur formell den Begriff von Gott bestimmen, als „höchster Gut“. Deswegen wird die philosophische Gotteslehre „primär auf der *Axiologie* überhaupt (nicht Ethik in spezifischen Sinne), nicht auf Ontologie zu ruhen haben, Religionsphilosophie aber (die von der philosophischen Gotteslehre verschieden ist) primär auf der *Phänomenologie der Gemüts Erfahrung*, nicht auf jener der theoretischen Erfahrung wertfreier Gegenstände.“<sup>1</sup> Soweit die Werte aber und ihre Rangordnung ursprünglich durch einen Akt von Liebe erkannt werden, soll auch Gott, als *summum bonum*, erst durch einen liebenden Akt erfahrungsmäßig gegeben werden. Die theoretische Seinserkenntnis eines realen Gottes soll aber ihrerseits auch in dieser Gottesliebe begründet sein.

Wenn Gott in dem Wesen der Person gedacht wird, dann sollen ihm mehrere Bestimmungen zukommen: 1. seine Selbsterschließung als Grundbedingung seiner Erkenntnis von einer endlichen Person; 2. diese Selbsterschließung fundiert sich ihrerseits im Gott als „liebreicher Person“; 3. Gott muss als Weltschöpfer gedacht werden: „Denn nur im Wesen einer *Person* liegt es *schaffen* (nicht nur bearbeiten) zu können – wenn sie Realität hat –, und nur im Wesen einer *unendlichen* Person, es ohne das Substrat einer schon gegebenen Materie zu tun.“<sup>2</sup> Aus diesem Grund, konnte selbst „die Welt“, als eine einheitliche Ganzheit, in der Geschichte nur aufgrund der Konzeption eines persönlichen Gottes entstehen: „Ich will hier nicht in extenso zeigen, dass die Annahme eines realen Weltganzen und *eines* Ganzen (im Unterschied von einer Mehrheit von Welten) nicht etwa die mögliche Grundlage für die Annahme der Realität der Gottesidee ist, sondern allein die mögliche *Folge*.“<sup>3</sup> 4. Seine Schöpfung findet statt aufgrund seiner Allliebe. „Hierbei sind die Wertwesen den Seinswesen so zugrunde liegend zu denken, dass (noch unabhängig vom Wollen Gottes) nur dasjenige auch seinsmöglich ist, was Träger eines möglichen Wertes überhaupt sein kann.“<sup>4</sup> 5. Sofern die Welt als Schöpfung Gottes angesehen wird, kann und muss sie auch als eine „natürliche Offenbarung“ Gottes betrachtet werden. Aber die Welt, als eine natürliche Offenbarung zu betrachten, ist möglich nur unter der Voraussetzung des Glaubens, d.h. einer Realsetzung Gottes als Person, was durch Philosophie nie möglich ist. (Obschon in dem Korrelationsprinzip zwischen Akte und ihren Gegenstände die Seinsunabhängigkeit der Gegenstände von den sie erfassenden Akten steht und jedem Gegenstand noch die Idee eines ihm entsprechenden Akt gehört, wird dadurch der erfassende Akt selbst noch nicht gesetzt. Deswegen ist die Idee der Welt als eines Makrokosmos nur durch Glauben möglich, d.h. durch die Realsetzung Gottes.) Die natürliche Offenbarung führt aber zum Verstehen der menschlichen Vernunft als „lumen naturale“. „Es gibt also keinen ‚Beweis‘, sagt

<sup>1</sup> Ebd., S. 184.

<sup>2</sup> Ebd., S. 188.

<sup>3</sup> Ebd., S. 188.

<sup>4</sup> Ebd., S. 190.

Scheler, der Realität Gottes aus der natürlichen Offenbarung, sondern nur eine fromme nachträgliche Deutung unserer Vernunft – und Gemütskenntnis ‚als‘ natürliche Offenbarung – und immer schon unter der Voraussetzung der Realität Gottes.“<sup>1</sup>

Scheler widerlegt dabei zwei Arten diese natürliche Offenbarung mit der Vernunft als natürliches Licht in eine Einheit zu bringen. Die erste ist der Versuch von Augustinus (und später jene von Malebranche): demzufolge erkennen wir die Wesenheiten „in Gott“, sofern Gott die Welt Dinge nach ihnen, als Musterbilder, geschaffen hat. Scheler kritisiert dabei die Tatsache, dass in dieser Konzeption durch Gottes Wesen auch seine Realität gesetzt wird und dass man die Wesenheiten nicht ohne diese Setzung erkennen könnte. D.h. eine Erkenntnis der Wesenheiten und ihrer Zusammenhänge, ohne den Bezug auf Gott, ist unmöglich. Die andere Position gehört dem Thomismus, wonach die Wesenheiten der geschaffenen Dinge und die Wesenheiten im Geiste Gottes zwei verschiedene Reihen von Wesenheiten bilden, und zwischen ihnen ein Verhältnis von Ähnlichkeit und Analogie besteht. In diesem Sinne aber könnten wir die Wesenheiten der Dinge in sich selbst erkennen, ohne noch die Reihen der Wesenheiten im Gottes Geiste zu setzen. D.h. in beiden Fällen, wird keine echte Einheit zwischen Gott – Wesenheiten (und dadurch Welt) – und der menschlichen Vernunft vollgezogen: das eine Mal ist die „weltliche“ Erkenntnis der Wesenheiten nutzlos, das andere Mal die göttlichen Wesenheiten.

Demgegenüber beschreibt Scheler die einzig mögliche Position (die auch seine eigene ist, und worauf sich seine spätere Metaphysik begründen wird): „Die fromme Deutung des Inbegriffs der Wesenheiten als natürliche Offenbarung ist wesensmöglich nur in der Richtung, dass die Wesenheiten der Welt Dinge (und Güter) mit jenen in Gott *identisch* sind und nur die ihnen entsprechenden Ideen in Gott und in endlichen Personen verschieden an Fülle und Adäquation. Insofern kann – unter Voraussetzung der Realität Gottes – gemäß jener (dann notwendigen) frommen Deutung, jeder Wesenserfassung im Akte der Wesensschau oder des evidenten *Fühlens*, *Vorziehens*, *Liebens*, und zwar diesen primär – der Sinn gegeben werden, dass wir in ihnen das *mit*erfassen, was Gott ‚vorerfaßt‘, und dass die Dinge selbst nach ihrem Wesen erkennen, heiße, sie *mit*erkennen mit Gott, die Güter und Personen selbst ihrem Wesenswerte nach fühlen, vorziehen, lieben aber heiße, sie *mit*lieben mit Gott, richtig wollen aber *mit*wollen mit Gott. Die Wesensverschiedenheit eines unendlichen Geistes (und einer unendlichen Fülle von Wesenheiten) und eines endlichen Geistes (mit einer nur endlichen Fülle) bleibt hier also strengt gewahrt wie die notwendige Inädequation jeder Erkenntnis und jedes Werterfassens der Wesenheiten seitens eines endlichen Geistes.“<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ebd., S. 191.

<sup>2</sup> Ebd., S. 192.

Die Liebe zur Erkenntnis kann unter diesem „frommen“ Gesichtspunkt nur eine Gegenliebe, eine Art Antwort sein, die der Mensch der liebenden Selbstoffenbarung Gottes gibt, d.h. seine Liebe für die Wesenheiten im Allgemeinen, die am Grund jeder seiner Erkenntnis steht, ist ein *mitvollziehen* der göttlichen Liebe für alles Geschaffene und eine Antwort auf die spontane „Einladung“ zur Erkenntnis, die aus jedem Geschaffenen herausquellt. „Was dem Menschen vor dieser frommen Deutung nur einsichtig war – das leuchtet ihm jetzt im wahrhaftigen Sinne des Wortes wie ein vom Gegenstande ausgehendes Licht entgegen: Es ‚leuchtet ihm ein‘.“<sup>1</sup>

Diese fromme Einstellung kann durch keine teleologischen Beweise betreffs eines guten Schöpfers erworben werden, also durch keine endlichen Weltgüter. Dieselben Tatsachen und Prozesse können, vom Standpunkt einer sich zu einem bestimmten Ziel orientierenden Weltgeschichte, antinomisch interpretiert werden, sowohl als ein Gut oder als ein Übel. Ausgehend von dieser Unmöglichkeit einer Wertentscheidung, formuliert Scheler dann die Idee einer prinzipiellen Sinnunvollendung jeder historischen Tatsache: „Da zu jeder historischen ‚Tatsache‘ konstitutiv die *Einheit eines ‚Sinnes‘* gehört (der mit den subjektiven Absichten der Menschen nichts zu tun hat), ihr Sinn-Gehalt aber mit jedem nächsten Augenblick des welthistorischen Ganges variieren kann, ist eine ‚historische Tatsache‘ (z.B. die Ermordung Cäsars) ihrem Wesen nach sinnunvollendet, mag gleich ihr naturhaftes Substrat in der Vergangenheit abgeschlossen und vollendet sein. Alle Geschichte ist noch sinnerlösbar.“<sup>2</sup> Eben dieses Unvollendet-sein aber ist eine Hauptbedingung einer immer neuen Erkenntnis von Gott.

Es stellt sich aber auch eine andere Frage in Bezug auf alle diesen Bestimmungen betreffs des Wesens des Göttlichen: sie können keine Metaphysik begründen, d.h. ohne die Realsetzung Gottes durch einen *Glaubensakt* (und nicht einfach durch das Denken) sind diese Wesen sozusagen nur ein logisches Spiel. Jedoch spricht Scheler in seiner ganzen Philosophie immer wieder vom Gott und von der Beziehung zwischen dem Menschen und Gott und in seiner Spätphilosophie spricht er sogar über die Deifikation des Menschen. Und das nicht im Rahmen einer Religion, (wo der Glaubensakt vollkommen gültig ist) sondern (was die späte Philosophie betrifft) im Rahmen einer Metaphysik. Die Frage ist also die folgende: wie wird Scheler seine Metaphysik begründen oder, was die mittlere, phänomenologische Periode betrifft, wie gelangt er zu den metaphysischen Behauptungen, die in allen seinen Schriften so reichlich verstreut sind. Ist es einfach ein Beweis von seiner unsystematischen Denkungsart, ein Versehen das seine Philosophie begleitet, oder gibt es dafür auch theoretische Gründe?

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<sup>1</sup> Ebd., S. 193.

<sup>2</sup> Ebd., S. 194.

„Es liegt bereits in Schelers Auffassung von Wesenserkenntnis, sagt W. Henckmann, dass ihre Geltung über den Bereich der erfahrbaren realen Welt hinausreicht, nicht nur im Sinne unendlicher Erweiterung für alle möglichen realen Gegenstände gleichen Wesens, sondern auch im Sinne der Erkenntnis der Wesenheiten an sich selbst und in sich selbst.“<sup>1</sup> Welche sind Schelers Argumente in dieser Richtung betreffs des Wesens des Göttlichen, bzw. wie kann er von der Phänomenologie des Religiösen in den metaphysischen Bereich gelangen?

In derselben Abhandlung behauptet Scheler, dass betreffs der Problematik des Göttlichen die agnostische Position sich immer wieder verneinend bezog. „Hat jemand – populär gesagt –, sagt Scheler, das Recht zu sagen: Ich glaube nicht an eine *mögliche* Offenbarung oder Gnade Gottes, da ich um so etwas zu glauben, zuerst an die Realität Gottes glauben müsste, an die ich nicht glaube? Mir kommt ein solcher, der dies sagte, nicht anders vor als einer, der sagte: Ich glaube nicht an die Existenz der Zahlen, da ich sie nicht sehen oder hören kann; oder ich glaube nicht an die Existenz der Farben, da ich sie nicht hören kann. D.h. ein solcher vergisst, dass sich die mögliche Erfahrungs- und Erkenntnisart irgendeiner Gegenständlichkeit und Realität überall *nach deren Wesen richtet*, und dass das Wesen Gottes (als leibloser und ichloser *Person*) eben so beschaffen ist, dass – wenn ihm ein Reales entspricht – es überhaupt *nicht durch spontane Akte* irgendwelcher Art erfassbar sein *kann*, sondern ausschließlich durch *Selbstmitteilung* (Religion). Versagt er also seinen Glauben schon der Möglichkeit – nicht erst einer bestimmten Wirklichkeit – der Selbstmitteilung, so versteift er sich darauf, die Realität eines ihm gegebenen Wesens in einer sobestimmten Erfahrungsart zu erkennen, die gerade – wenn etwas dieses Wesens real sein sollte – evident und a priori unmöglich zu seiner Realerkenntnis führen kann. Das aber ist a priori widersinnig, genau so widersinnig, wie die Existenz von Farben von ihrer Hörbarkeit abhängig machen zu wollen. Der Glaube (als Glaubens-Inhalt) an eine Möglichkeit der Offenbarung (Selbstmitteilung) folgt also aus Gottes *Wesen*.“<sup>2</sup>

Im vorigen Zitat macht sich wieder das für Schelersche Philosophie grundlegende Korrelationsprinzip zwischen Akte und ihren Gegenstände geltend: die Gegenstände können uns nicht unter jeglichen Bedingungen gegeben werden, sondern nur durch die ihnen entsprechenden Akte. So wie schon die Eigenschaften der Dinge, für ein Lebewesen im Allgemeinen, nur durch adäquate Wahrnehmungsorgane zugänglich sind, so ist im Falle des Göttlichen der Träger des Wesens Gottes nur in der gläubigen Einstellung zugänglich. Für die Realsetzung jedes Trägers eines Wesens sind es noch auch andere Akte notwendig als jener der phänomenologischen Anschauung. Durch die phänomenologische Anschauung sind uns die reinen Bedeutungen als Wesen gegeben, nicht auch was ihnen

<sup>1</sup> W. Henckmann, *Max Scheler*, Verlag C. H. Beck, München, S. 76.

<sup>2</sup> M. Scheler, *Absolutsphäre und Realsetzung der Gottesidee*, S. 200.

empirisch entsprechen kann. Später wird Scheler die Art wie uns die Gegenstände wirklich gegeben sind, in seiner Widerstandstheorie behandeln.

Eine „reine“ Erkenntnis gilt prinzipiell, d.h. wesentlich, im Falle Gottes nicht, eben weil Gott nicht als einen „Gegenstand“ unter anderen gedacht ist, sondern als eine *Person*. Die Person aber ist frei. Sie ist nicht einfach „angeschaut“ (wenn wir die leiblichen Ausdrücke beiseite lassen), wie irgendein empirischer Gegenstand, sondern sie teilt sich selbst mit. Im Falle Gottes aber diese Person offenbart sich.

Die Notwendigkeit des Glaubens ist aber verschieden von dem *Wissen*, dass es eine „absolute Sphäre“ gebe (zusammen mit einer absoluten Seinssphäre und einer absoluten Wertsphäre). Dieses Wissen ist vor allem Glauben und Unglauben selbstgegeben, es ist „evident wahr“. Nur das, was als diese Sphäre erfüllend gedacht ist, kann bezweifelt werden, nicht das Bestehen der Sphäre selbst: „Man mag bezweifeln ob dieses Sein und dieser Wert auch eine Realität sei (Ding oder Gut), oder etwa gerade das Real- und Irreale nur zum daseinsrelativen Sein z.B. des Menschen gehöre, ob ihm Seele oder Natur als Form seines Daseins näher liege (Spiritualismus-Materialismus), oder es beides sei (Dualismus), ob es in seinem Was durch Menschen erkennbar oder sonst erlebbar sei oder nicht (Metaphysik – Agnostizismus), ob es das Gegenstandssein oder Wertsein oder Denken, Wollen usw. sei, was die absolute Sphäre primär erfülle, ob Welt, Gott, Ich usw. –: nicht am Bestande der absoluten Sphäre *selbst* lässt sich zweifeln. In jeder möglichen Art von Gegebenheit ist *dieser Verhalt mitgegeben, dass sie besteht*.“<sup>1</sup>

Für Scheler – selbst im Falle des Agnostikers, der behauptet, dass jenseits der Realität keine andere begründende Entität zu erkennen ist –, wird die absolute Sphäre doch erfüllt und zwar mit dem „positiven“ *Nichts*. Der Agnostiker behauptet dadurch einen „metaphysisch-religiösen Nihilismus“. Die absolute Seins- und Wertsphäre, indem sie intendiert ist, muss auch mit irgendeiner Realität erfüllt werden. Eben darum wird das Nichts des Agnostikers doch ein „Was“ (d.h. ein *positives* Nichts). Es erfüllt die absolute Wertsphäre, aber nicht als ein Gott (der vom Agnostiker bestreitet wird) sondern als ein Götze. Schelers Grundposition ist, dass für jede Wesenheit auch eine Daseinsform entspricht, und umgekehrt, jedem Daseienden eine Wesenheit. Dabei aber ist es durchaus möglich, dass wir, indem wir die Wesenheit kennen, das entsprechende Dasein noch suchen, und umgekehrt. Dieser Sachverhalt wird von dem Gang der Wissenschaft immer wieder exemplifiziert. Trotzdem gilt diese Beziehung nur auf der relativen Ebene, wo entweder die Erkenntnis des Wesens oder des ihm entsprechenden Daseins relativ auf unsere Erkenntnisvermögen sind. Für die absolute Sphäre kann sie aber nicht gelten, weil wir, indem wir durch einen Akt etwas Absolutes intendieren, nicht mehr zu dem Unterschied zwischen Wese und Dasein vom Standpunkt unseres Erkenntnisvermögen zurückgreifen können. Das,

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<sup>1</sup> Ebd., S. 201.

was von uns als Absolutes betrachtet wird, wird ohne irgendeine Beziehung zu dem momentanen, relativen Erkenntnisvermögen gesetzt. Hierin besteht aber der logische Irrtum des Agnostikers: „Es ist eine Täuschung, wenn der Agnostizist meint, er lasse die absolute Realsphäre, die er annimmt und setzt, bloß nach ihrem Was unbestimmt und könne mit Recht und Fug urteilen: ‚Ich enthalte mich ihrer Wesensbestimmung‘. Mag er so aussagen, mag er auch so (nämlich falsch) urteilen – er *erblickt* doch noch *eine* Wasbestimmtheit an seinem absolut Realen, und zwar *sowohl* eine Wesensbedeutungs- *als* eine Wesenswertbestimmung : Er erblickt ‚*das Nichts*‘ und ‚*die Nichtigkeit*‘.“<sup>1</sup> Dieses Nichts wird ihm anschaulich aber auch im Fühlen gegeben: anschaulich als absolute Leere und im Fühlen als Grauen. Darum hat der Agnostiker „nicht ‚die Religion der stummen Verehrung des unbekannten Wesens‘ gegründet, sondern – die Idee der Irreligion des absoluten Grauens und der absoluten Verzweiflung konzipiert“<sup>2</sup>.

Am Beispiel dieses extremsten Falls des Agnostikers, beweist also Scheler, dass es unmöglich für ein endliches Bewusstsein ist irgendwie die absolute Sphäre nicht zu erfüllen. Die Idee des Nichtgläubigen betrachtet darum Scheler als unmöglich. „Die *Glaubensgerichtetheit* auf den je vorschwebenden Gehalt als Wasbestimmtheit des als absolut-real Vermeinten ist *wesensnotwendig* im endlichen Bewusstsein *mitgegeben*, und kann nicht ausgeschaltet gedacht werden, ohne das endliche Bewusstsein aufzuheben. Eine mögliche ‚Wahl‘ oder auch nur ein möglicher ‚Vorzug‘ des Nichtglaubens vor dem Glauben überhaupt fehlt.“<sup>3</sup>

Diese Glaubensgerichtetheit, soweit sie nicht durch ein *Glauben im Gott* erfüllt ist, führt notwendig zur Metaphysik, d.h. zum „Hineinnehmen eines Wesens aus dem Inbegriff der *endlichen* Wesenheiten in die je gemeinte *absolute* Sphäre. Der sog. Agnostizismus stellt nur einen *Grenzfall* solcher Metaphysik dar – die Metaphysik des Nichts.“ Darum sieht sich Scheler berechtigt, dem Menschen nicht nur faktisch einen „metaphysischen Hang“ zu erkennen (von dem sich dann der Mensch abgewöhnen könnte, so wie der agnostische Positivismus glaubt), sondern nach ihm ist der Mensch „*wesensnotwendig Metaphysiker* – *sofern* er nicht an die Realität Gottes glaubt.“<sup>4</sup> Der „metaphysische Hang“ ist also ein Grundmoment jedes endlichen Bewusstseins und ist auch dadurch eine Bedingung jeder Religion. Obschon Metaphysik und Religion verschieden sind, sind sie vereinigt in demselben Tendenz des Menschen die absolute Sphäre seines Bewusstseins irgendwie zu erfüllen: Religion durch Offenbarung, Metaphysik durch irgendeine Hypostasierung.

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<sup>1</sup> Ebd. S. 203.

<sup>2</sup> Ebd., S. 206.

<sup>3</sup> Ebd., S. 207.

<sup>4</sup> Ebd., S. 207.





## KNOWLEDGE AND SPIRITUALITY

### - thinking patterns -

Dumitru GRIGORE\*

**Abstract.** The development of the mathematical models that can simulate psycho-physiological structures, led to the more conspicuous emphasizing of the great importance that engineering plays in the psychological research. With such a method, implemented in a technology capable to identify from biophysical data the activity of the cerebral functions, this work brings experimental proofs of the influence of the spiritual factor on the knowledge. Achieving compared determinations, for one hand, by raising the psychological profile using the EDA principles (electrodermal activity), on the other hand, by identification of the psychological relevance in the text structure, the authors demonstrate the existence of a *spiritual level* expressed in transition index, suggesting a new model in knowledge. This model reveals the functional aspects of thinking under the influence of the *spiritual level*, the way in which the clouds of *fractal and constructal patterns* of thinking.

**Keywords:** model, psychology, cerebral functions, spiritual level, cognitive pattern, knowledge ways, fractal, constructal

### 1. Introduction

An experimental approach of the cognitive pattern can be a challenge for the modern techniques and technologies. But the experimental determination of a physical measurement which can be connected to the spiritual activity of the human being seems unlikely. The idea of association of knowledge in its multiple forms to the spirituality should lead us directly to the areas of philosophical – theological issues, where, besides the arguments of the exact sciences, shall play their part the thinking tendencies, the ensemble of beliefs, the dogmatic assertions, etc, all these leading the speech toward abstract debate. But, here, we wanted the direct evaluation of the psychological profile, both of the form of the cognitive pattern and also of the correlation between such and the level of the *spiritual status* found in a physical measurement, that we have conventionally called transition index.

All these have been possible due to an implementation of technological engineering, (ESPE), an expert system of psychological evaluation in course of patenting ([www.biospecter.com](http://www.biospecter.com)), instrument with which most of the experimental

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determinations have been accomplished, determinations based on which this thesis has been presented, namely that the spiritual level has a concrete influence on the way of thinking.

The evaluation criteria used are totally different with regard to the working method, although the algorithm on which they have been shaped, is the same. If, in the first case, the modality of taking over the information can place us in the category of objective methods of investigation of the personality, because it supposes a series of psycho–physiological measurements, in real time, from which the personality profile is being decanted, by using a bio-scanner able to register the galvanic response of the skin to electric stimulus, offering the analysis program a stack of dependent variables, from which, by advanced processing, a psychological profile can be identified, in the second case, the information is excerpted by an advance analysis, from a set of text samples which the subject has elaborated in a more or less recent time. This way, the subject reveals himself/herself in writing, approaching a certain theme, the method of interaction with such subject being an indirect and subjective one.

In both cases, the experiment emphasized the correlation between the transition index understood as *spiritual level*, and the thinking *patterns* explained through the ways of knowledge.

This way, the final diagrams shall reveal the way in which the spiritual level shall be used as a resource of large importance in the human evolution.

## **2. Ways of knowledge, premise of the compatibility of the cognitive pattern**

The consideration from which we start in the building of this demonstration is the one that the composition of the human being keeps a certain logics of the informational – energetic exchange with the reality. This coherence shall be found and in all the cognitive practices. This way, the integral knowledge of the reality can be achieved only compatibilising our psycho – physiological architecture with the reality of the world in all its potential aspects. Therefore, the physical – emotional–mental composition shall offer us the prospective of twelve ways of knowledge. Each of these ways keeps certain particulars throughout which the interior reality can relate to the exterior reality. This way of knowledge shall naturally lead to the systemization during the time of twelve conceptions about the world, each of them keeping the specific of synergic level by which the connexion to reality has been possible.

In order to establish the *cognitive patterns*, we had in view the premise of any knowledge act, on whatever way we should be, is the one of compatibility of the *cognitive pattern* with the matter pattern of the knowledge way. Therefore, the access to a knowledge way can be favoured or, on the contrary, can be strongly

blurred by the form of the individual *pattern*. It can explain why a certain way or other can be so familiar to us, meanwhile, others are almost impenetrable. Essentially, the spectacular compatibilisation shall open actually the access to knowledge, the cognition being the effect of the application of the *cognitive pattern* in the matter pattern of the knowledge way.

In the Fig. 1, from the physical-emotional-mental structure shall be distinguished six main knowledge ways that shall mix on their turn other six intermediary ways. In the same time, in the knowledge plan, on each of these ways, the same number of *cognitive patterns* shall express, patterns which in their basic position (the knowledge way on which they are established) shall use, operationally, as we have shown above, the projection of the actions of the specific elements of that way.

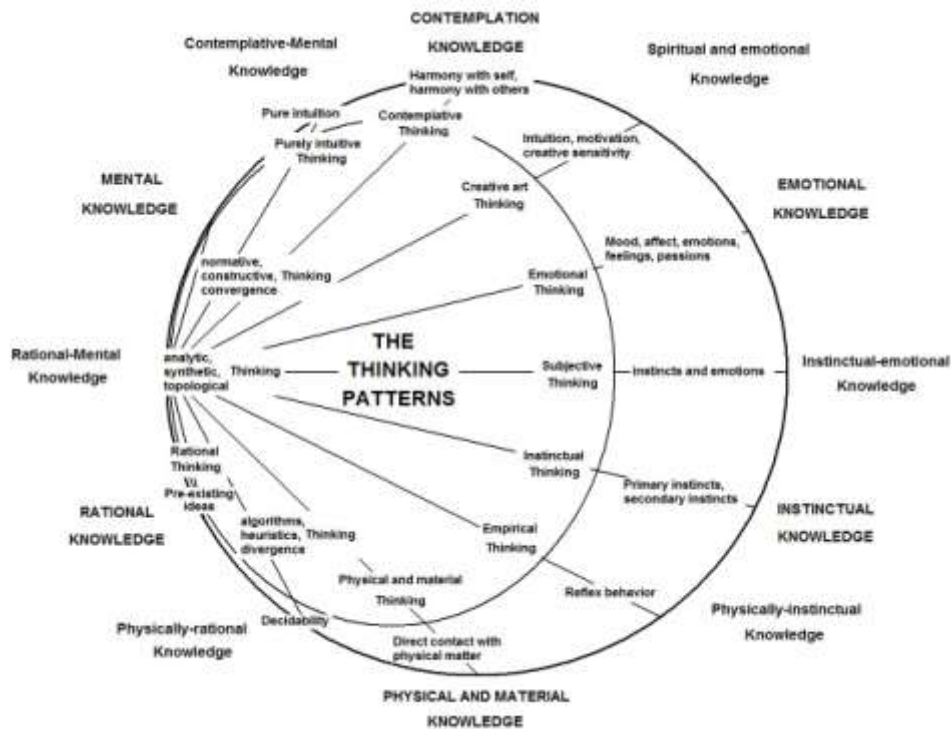


Fig. 1

The twelve knowledge ways determined are: the physical–material knowledge, the contemplative knowledge, the emotional knowledge, the rational knowledge<sup>1</sup>, the mental knowledge, the instinctual knowledge, the rational–

<sup>1</sup> Although in the current language, the expressions *mental* and *rational* can be used with very closed meanings, the ration as "human faculty of thinking, of understanding of meaning and

physical knowledge (mathematic-heuristic), rational-mental knowledge (systematic), contemplative-mental knowledge, spiritual-emotional knowledge (creative-artistic), instinctual-emotional knowledge (subjective), physical-instinctual knowledge (sensorial).

### 3. Thinking, experimental determinations of cognitive *patterns*

In the acceptance that the term of *thinking* as such is not enough clarified from the semantic point of view, it being associated through the philosophy and logics with different forms of the mental activity (operations, reasons, generation of ideas, etc), recently, the thinking is circumscribed to coordinates able to deduce and classify its specific attributes. Briefly it can be synthesised that *the thinking reflects the reality, organises functionally the human being, mentally regulates his/her behaviour, dynamically develops operating as a system.*

Because the thinking act participates in the psychic regulation of the human behaviour, it shall be motivationally involved in specific operations reflected on the contents of thinking. Example (Fig.2.a, b, c, d)

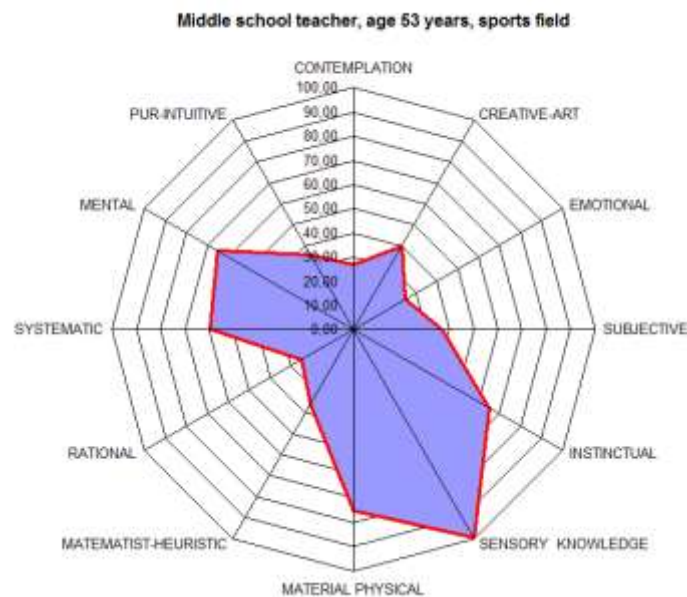


Fig.2. a

relations between phenomena”( [www.webdex.ro](http://www.webdex.ro)) being a mind activity, in the context of this description we shall distinguish between two terms which significances shall be strictly related to the form of cognitive pattern, on the way of considered knowledge.

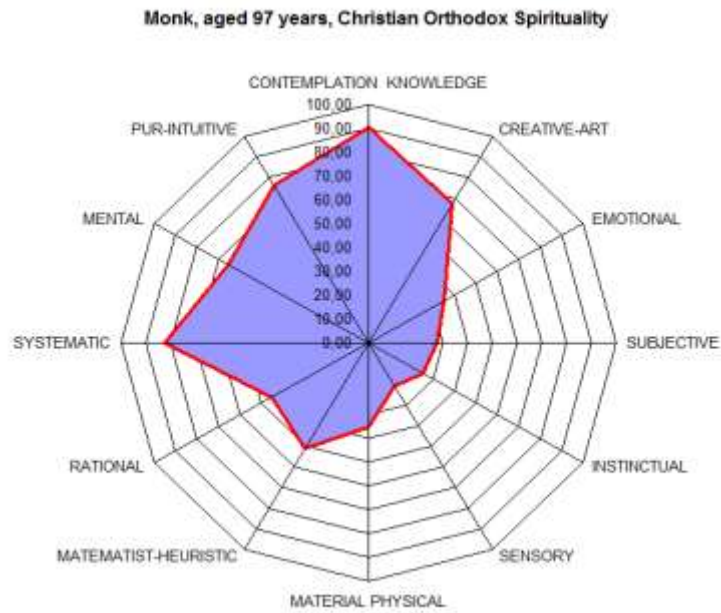


Fig.2. b

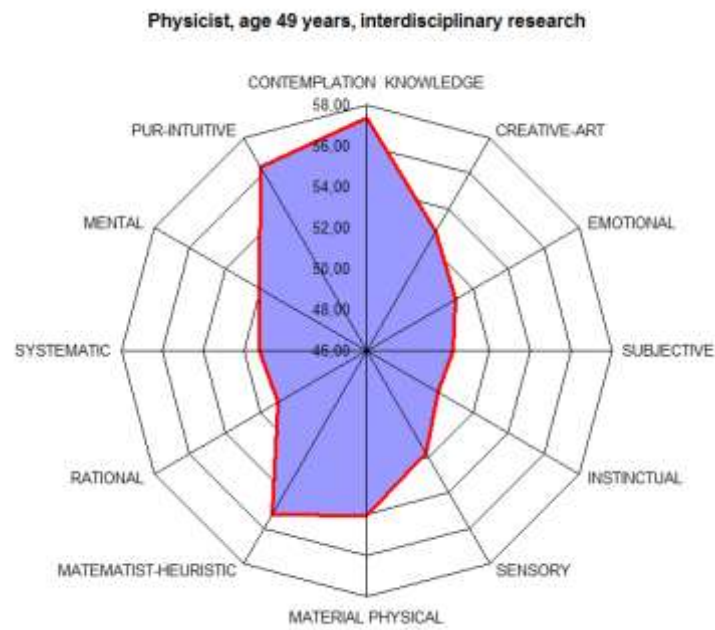


Fig. 2. c

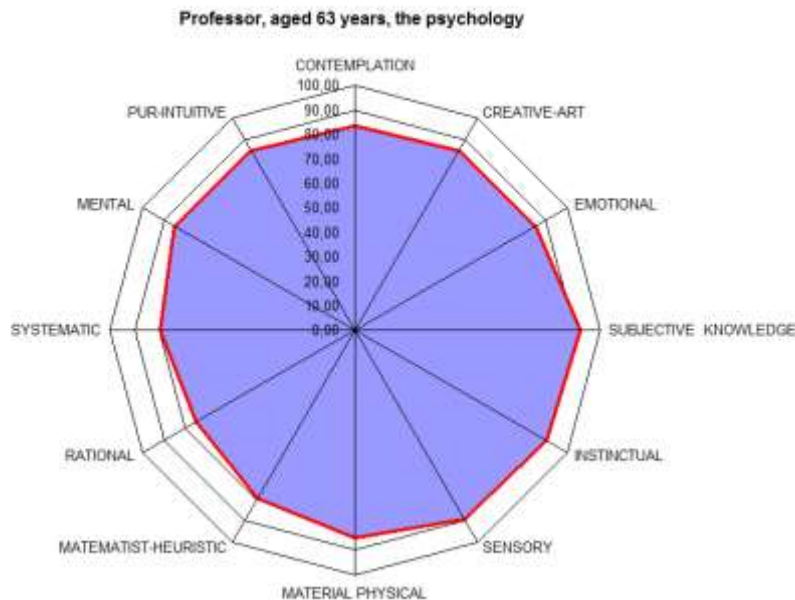


Fig. 2. e

#### 4. Systemic thinking, clouds of patterns in thinking

The identification of elements, properties and relationships shall be achieved by the operational ways *analytical*, *synthetic* and *topological*, characteristic of the systematic thinking; the operator systemic identifier that shall be applied on the criteria of *performance*, *integration* and *adaptation*; the modal operator of transformation, after transformative criteria -*identical*, *negative* and *reciprocal*, and the predictive one by *induction*, *deduction* and *analogy*. The laying of the operational aspects of the above mentioned thinking takes place following for one part the logics of the fragmentation of the reality in view of its comprehension by the act of thinking and on the other hand, recomposing a construct of the parties available. In both cases, during the fragmentation/ recomposing of the reality, the influence of pattern in thinking shall accompany any cognitive process.

**Fractal thinking – clouds of fractal patterns.** Because the fragmentation of reality shall follow certain precise criteria, on several levels, the following model shall use as work instrument, an algebraic<sup>1</sup> fractal. The organisation of the fractal shall take into consideration the elements of influence of the basic *cognitive patterns*, but also the meaning of the operational decomposition of the reality.

<sup>1</sup> Florian Colceag, “Algebraic Fractals - Fractal Varieties”, (2001); “Cellular Automata, Algebraic Fractals”, (2001); <http://austega.com/florin/>

This way we shall have for each fractalisation level, operational sequences related to: 1<sup>st</sup> level – the basic cognitive pattern; 2<sup>nd</sup> level – identifiable predictions: inductive, deductive, analogical; 3<sup>rd</sup> level – transformations: identical, negative, reciprocal; 4<sup>th</sup> level – systems, characterised: performative, integrative, adaptive; 5<sup>th</sup> level – relationships, properties and elements, determined: analytically, synthetically, topologically.

**Constructal thinking – clouds of constructal patterns.** Unlike the fractal model, the measure of recomposing the reality shall take place in the profoundness of four constructal<sup>1</sup> levels achieved on the basic structure of the twelve ways of knowledge emphasised in the Fig. 1. As in the previous case, for each constructal level we shall have the following sequences, where the operators order follows the logics of recomposing starting from the same basic cognitive *pattern*: 1<sup>st</sup> level – the basic cognitive pattern; 2<sup>nd</sup> level – Elements, properties and relationships determined: analytically, synthetically, topologically; 3<sup>rd</sup> level – systems, characterised: performative, integrative, adaptive; 4<sup>th</sup> level – Transformations: identical, negative, reciprocal; 5<sup>th</sup> level – identifiable predictions: inductive, deductive, analogical.

### 5. Level of the spiritual status<sup>2</sup> – influence on the cognitive pattern

In the evaluation of the criteria leading to the determination of the *psychological profile*, an important aspect taken into consideration is the transition index, calibrated on a scale between 0 and 1,000,000 units and correlated to the level of the *spiritual status*.

The final form of the *transition function*  $F_T$  shall contain all the components that contribute to the transition actions and to the integrative response in the operation of *integrative transition*. The values of the function  $F_T$  expressed in transition units represent the level of the *spiritual status*, a reality that can be measured directly with the SEEP technology.

The criteria of evaluation of the influence of the spiritual level on the cognitive patterns, emphasize by experimental determinations, on any knowledge way we should be, that the knowledge is in a closed connection to the spiritual level, certain knowledge ways being practically impossible to approach on an improper spiritual level. A diagram of the cognitive pattern distribution based on the spiritual level is presented in the Fig. 3.

<sup>1</sup> The concept of *constructal* is introduced by Adrian Bejan (1996); Duke University, Durham, North Carolina (S.U.A.); in the context, the term is used with the signification of a process opposite to fractalisation, of identification of the whole.

<sup>2</sup> Dumitru Grigore, "Informational Theology. Normative Aspects of the Sacred in Long-term Development", *Annals Of The Academy Of Romanian Scientists, Series On Philosophy, Psychology And Theology*, Volume 1, Number 2/2009, pag. 49.

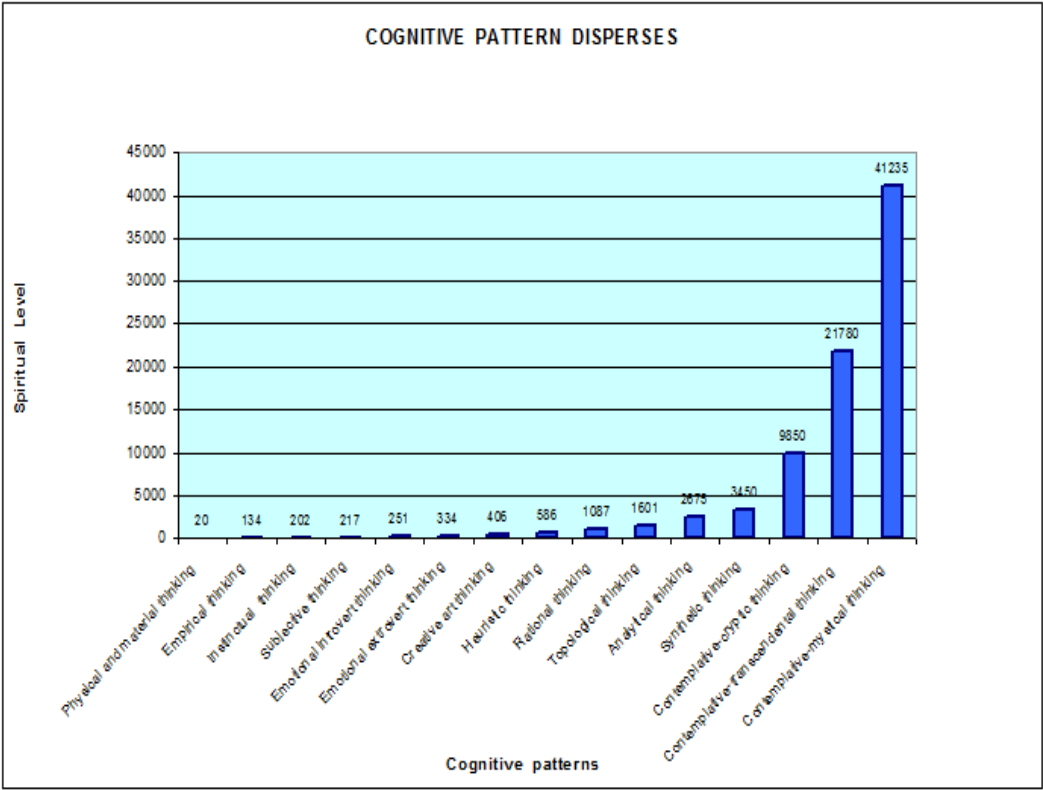


Fig. 3

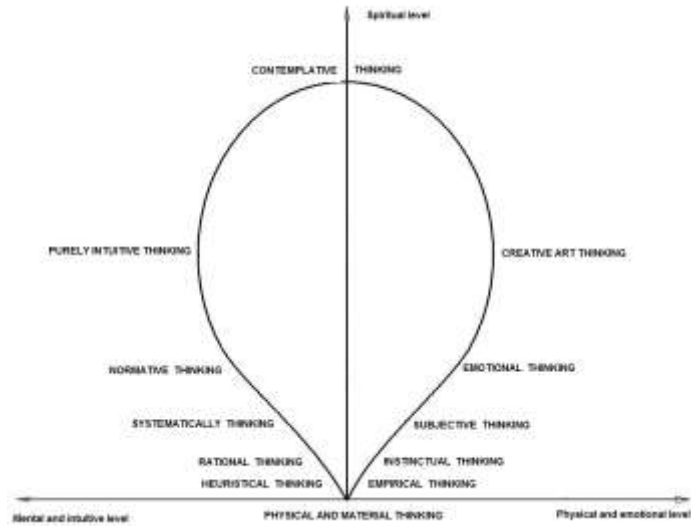


Fig. 4



An analysis of the spiritually normalised cognitive behaviour in the field of physical –emotional, mental –intuitive influence, shall lead to a form of distribution proposed in the Fig. 4, (the "drop" model), in which the dependence on the spiritual level of each knowledge initiative is being suggestively represented.

## 6. Psychological relevance of the text structure

Other confirmation of the influence of the spiritual status on the knowledge can be experimented by the analysis of criteria that identify the psychological profile from the content of a text elaborated by the evaluated person. The working principle has in view the dynamics of the utilisation of words in a given text, such approach manner being atypical in the linguistic territory because it does not operate with a semantic repertoire. This way, the *psychological relevance of the text structure*, as we shall hereinafter call this indicator, shall allow us to easily identify the *text genre* through the physical, emotional and mental contribution contained in its structure and on the ground of the graduality of a certain *spiritual status* of the author that the analysed text can reveal, reflected in a transition index.

Also, the first results related to the old testamentary text, to the canonical text of the New Testament, and also to the texts considered by the Church as non canonical, opened us a new prospective in the their investigation, evaluation and classification based on the criteria that have in view both the emotional – affective mark identifiable in the text and also its transition index. These combined criteria shall set up in an indicator of *emotional –affective level* that the analysed text carries with it. The new perspective transcends the philological approach, purely linguistic or philosophical –theological of the Christian texts on which we have focused our attention, offering besides any favouring of confessional nature, extremely useful touches in the objective analysis of the message that these contain, but especially original aspects of the personality of their authors.

The psychological perspective of the text structure that we propose has in view three criteria that can selectively classify the typology of the analysed text, related to a fourth, that also in the application described at the previous chapters, associated to the level of the *spiritual status* of the author that the analysed text can reveal as transition parameter. These criteria are related to the *personalities of the ego*, manifested in the physical, emotional and mental side. We can talk about the valences of the ego and the emotional mark identifiable in the text and also about the contribution of mental performance in its conception. In the Fig 8, a and b we suggestively represent the classification of the text typologies based on the proposed criteria.

The criteria presented in the Fig. 5, a and b receive, in basis of the scientific aspects of classification of the typology of the texts presented at the beginning of the paragraph, the correspondences in which they are emphasised: the genre of the

text as a result of the criteria modelling and the text types, possibly to be investigated in this model, with the specification that the utilisation fields shall be adapted accordingly to them.

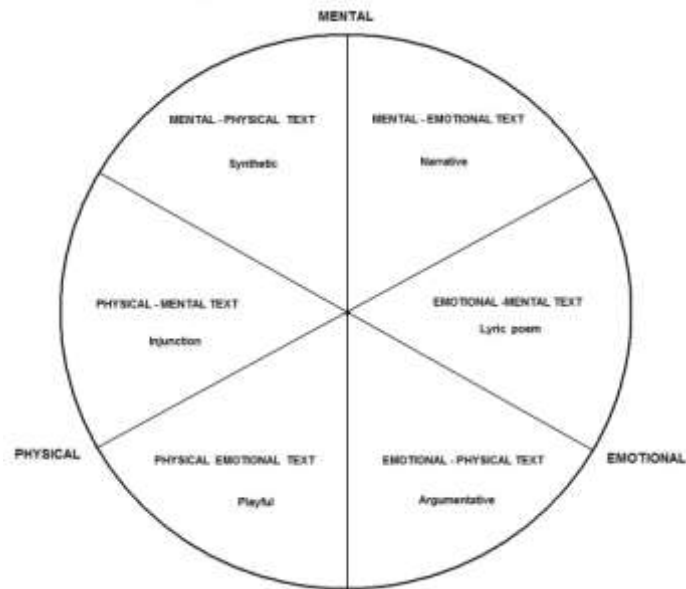


Fig. 5. a

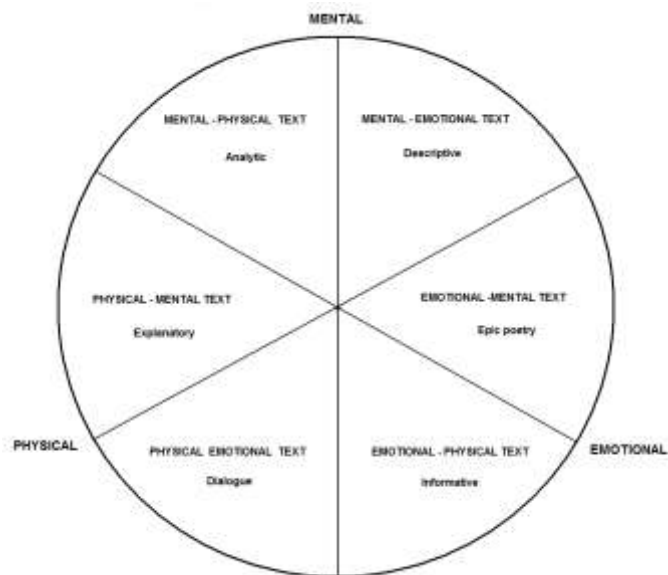


Fig. 5. b

## 7. The level of the spiritual status in the text

Also as in the case of the 5<sup>th</sup> chapter, with the help of the integrative transition we can extract from a personality profile enough elements for an attitude norming in the moral sense. From all the data offered by the transition operation we shall stop on the *transcendence* as attitude of self-improvement, associating to this characteristics a function able to identify the level of the *spiritual status* of the evaluated person. Being integratively correlated to other attitudes derived from the ego's potentialities, respectively the selfishness and altruism, *the transcendence* reflected by the transition function, ( $F_T$ ) is determinant in the qualification of a text. The processing done with the software instrument led us to a certain polarisation of the text categories based on the level of the *spiritual status* expressed in transition index. For relevance we present in the Fig. 6, a. a few examples of religious text for which he have followed the distribution of the *spiritual level*, viewing also its concordance to the quality of canonical or non canonical text. From the diagram presented we can notice that the non canonical texts are being distributed in the first part of the diagram under the level of 12,000 units.

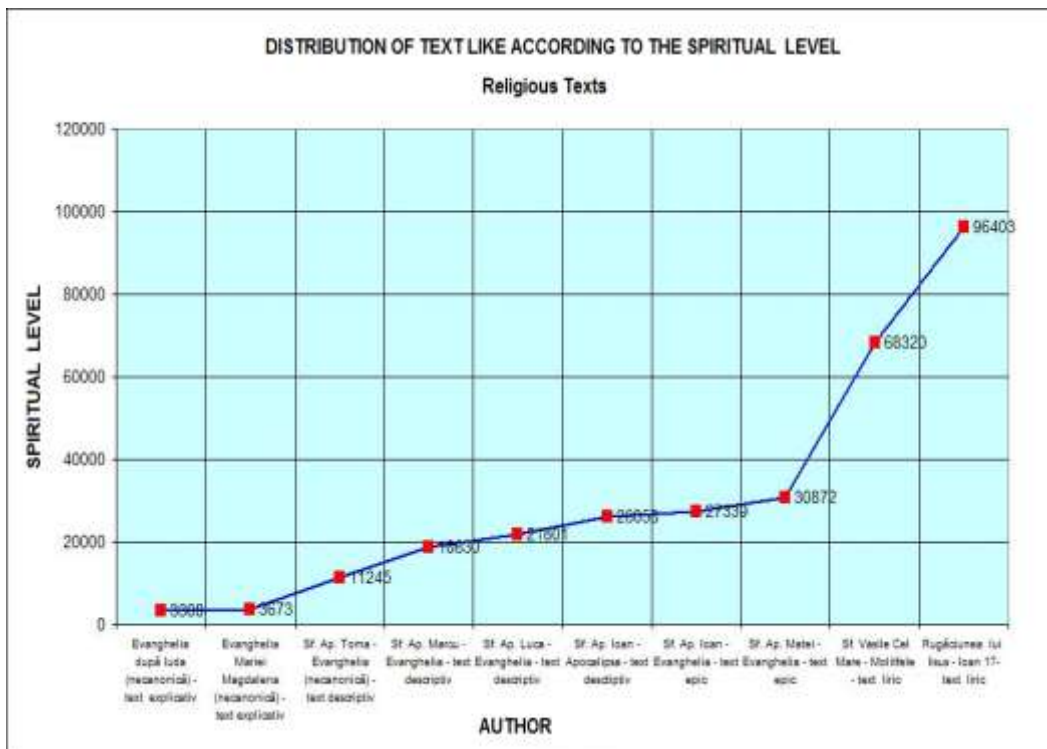


Fig. 6. A

Also, on the same criteria of distribution of the *spiritual level* there have been analysed a series of texts selected from the curricula of a psychology faculty. The distribution diagram is presented in the Fig. 6. b.

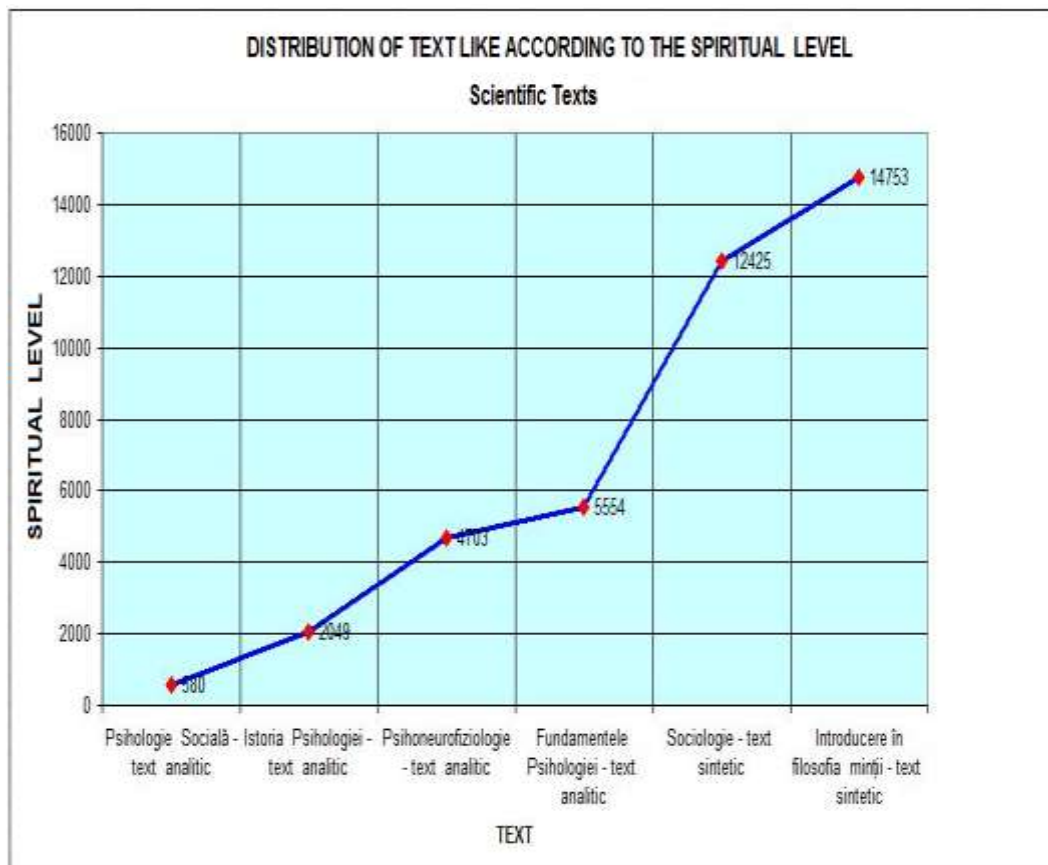


Fig. 6. b

These experimental data explicitly confirm the model of polarisation suggested in the Fig. 5, a and b. Because the polarisation is done based on the level of the spiritual status, we shall suggestively represent the experimental data on the same diagram (Fig.7).

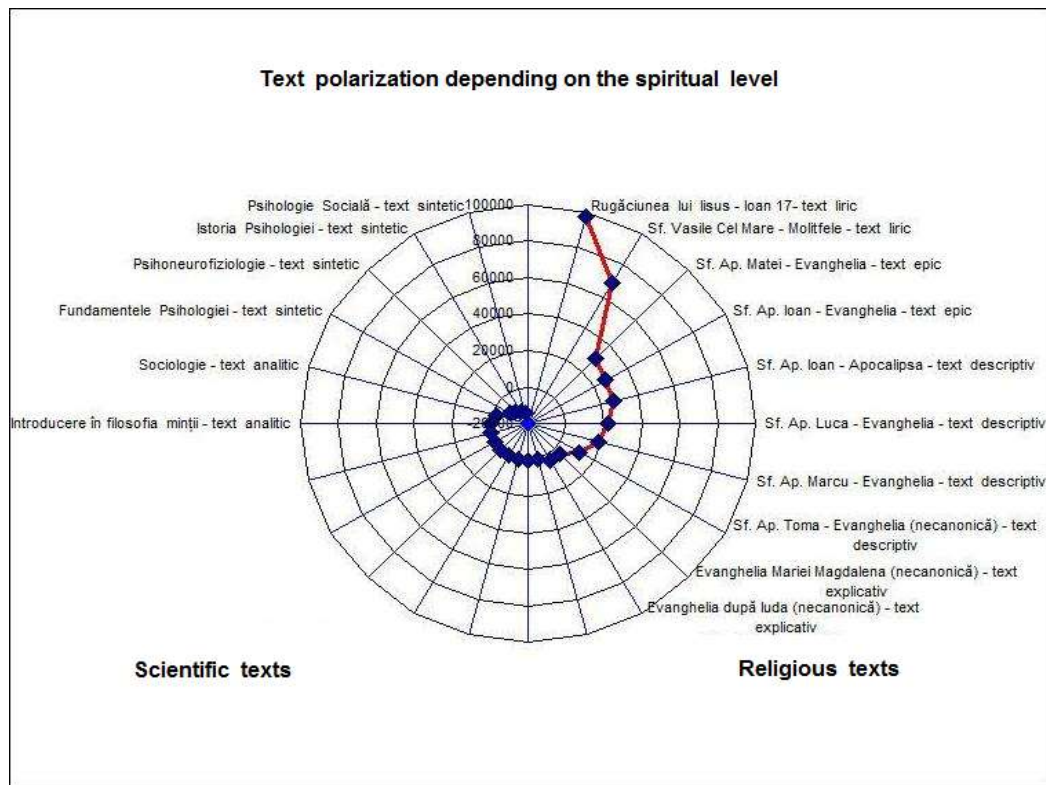


Fig. 7

### Conclusions

The two applications presented in this work bring at least the necessary experimental arguments that can certify the fundamental relationship between knowledge and spirituality manifested in the human being, as intrinsic part of the cognitive mechanisms. It is very important that this reality that we have revealed here to be undertaken on a level of formative-educational vision. The spiritual status emphasised by the application suggested here is an incontestable resource of the human being. In order to be correctly used, it has to be known and managed. The most handy example of the importance of knowing this reality is the one that refers to the educational process. This way, knowing that on the grounds of a high spiritual level we can not cultivate a pattern of systematic thinking (for example) as on the grounds of a low spiritual level we can not achieve spiritual performances, it should be enough to be able to re-adapt the selection criteria toward certain types of future activity fields for which the school age children, the youth, undertake in study, in an ample and complex process of the development of their own personality.

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## PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION – CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATION

Marius Augustin DRĂGHICI\*

**Abstract.** Taking as a starting point the historical "fact" of the research in the field of the religion problem, we shall try to determine, on the one hand, the object in front of the researcher, and on the other hand, his instruments, corresponding to the disciplinary position from which the approach is done. We take very seriously, therefore, that outlined above, namely the couple discussing religion/religions of the phrase "philosophy of religion/religions."

**Keywords:** philosophy of religion, religious experience, sacred, scientism.

The claims of this study did not aim, as it seems at first sight, a kind of conceptual analysis of the issue terms of 'philosophy of religion ', although bending the forms of singular/plural of those terms is concerned, but only as part of a strategy that goes beyond the strictly analytical type of research of these two terms. Our main purpose in this article concerns the attempt to detect, based on the concepts in question, possible explanations for the different types of reports on the complex issue of "religion"; ultimately, we will try to outline the legitimacy of the most relevant claims and their limits.

Firstly we will index below, from the apparent conceptual problem of our phrase, following discussions on the subject which is considered by the researcher ("religion/religions", etc.), the main types of approaches to the problem of religion – the historical-anthropological perspective, the phenomenological-hermeneutic perspective (M. Eliade and Codoban), and the most current view, related to the scientist vein, that of the "evolutionary science of religion" and the social sciences perspectives.

The effervescence in researching the issues of religion/religions was caused, in the last stage of the Western research on this matter, by (as Eliade noted) Rudolf Otto's book *Das Heilige* (1917) – *The Sacred*<sup>1</sup>. The originality and fascination caused by this volume consist primarily in the manner of approach "religion", as our historian and scholar of religions emphasizes "instead to lean on the *ideas* of God and religion, Rudolf Otto examines the modes of the religious experience". Theologian and historian of religions, Otto "had managed to

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<sup>1</sup> Rudolf Otto, *The Sacred*: this volume appeared in the last edition in the translation of Ioan Milea in 2005, Bucharest, Humanitas Publishing House.

highlight the content and features of this experience, going beyond the rational and speculative side of religion and insisting on its irrational side."<sup>1</sup>

So, taking as a starting point this historical "fact" of the research in the field of the religion problem, we shall try to determine, on the one hand, the object in front of the researcher, and on the other hand, his instruments, corresponding to the position from which the approach is done. We take very seriously, therefore, that outlined above, namely the couple discussing religion/religions of the phrase "philosophy of religion/religions." How emphasizes Eliade in the beginning of the introduction of his early book *The Sacred and the profane*, a fundamental aspect of the research in the field of "religion" is the way that the ongoing prospect identifies its subject: reporting can be done, in the first instance, to "religion" (in singular), or to "religions" (plural) or, as we shall see, to "religious phenomenon", "religiosity", "religious experience". Depending on how our choice is justified and explained, the type of approach is also proposed; finally, according to this mode will depend, in fact, the entire research and the "nature of the results" of this research.

One of the reasons for above can be set as minimal conditions related to the method is, of course, no lack of attempts to approach the field of philosophy of religion, but also, as one of our historians and philosophers of religions said, the very "extreme intrinsic complexity of religion itself"<sup>2</sup>: really, "a particular religion is, at the same time and paradoxically, something too vast and too complicated and also too limited and too univocal, in order to be taken as a starting point of religious philosophy approaches."

Not by chance I have raised A. Codoban's perspective regarding elements of "propaedeutics" in addressing the issue of the "philosophy of religion." Besides the fact that the philosophy of religion is a late appearance in the history of western culture, besides the fact that, in these terms, the phrase "marks the transition from a subjective relationship between the courts - religion *and* philosophy - assigning an attributive relationship - philosophy *of* religions"<sup>3</sup>, Codoban's justification for the variant of "plural" - the *philosophy of religions* is just talking about what I have said at the beginning of this study: on the mode of defining and determining/constructing the object of the "religion" research not only depend the specificity of the approach, but also, going farther from it, the circumscribing of the area results in a rigorous report with the corresponding field research, with the angle in which stands the author's disciplinary approach.

In this respect, we shall discuss three classes of interrogations regarding the issue of "religion" (relevant perspectives), three types of positioning to religious

<sup>1</sup> M. Eliade, *Sacru și profanul*, translation by Brîndușa Prelipceanu, Bucharest, Edit. Humanitas, p. 11.

<sup>2</sup> A. Codoban, *Sacru și ontofanie*, Iași, Edit. Polirom, 1998.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 11.



matters which can be grouped with other sub-classes, so as to cover, as I said, the scope in which is treated religion today.

The first class refers only to the relationship philosophy-religion, philosophy of religion/religions: there will be questioned the relationships between philosophy and religion from the perspective of their mutual relations - here our relationship will be presented through the studies of anthropology, history of religions and the phenomenology of the sacred as hermeneutics (will also be taken into consideration our authors, like Eliade and his followers contemporary to us: A. Codoban); theological perspective is only to be mentioned, it is not at all problematic, precisely because it works only "inside" of religion.

In the second class, we meet the approach from the "outside" of the religious phenomenon, from the standpoint of natural and social sciences (psychology, sociology, etc.); these approaches have often acquired the label of "denial": for sciences, their underlying rationality would be the sublimation of the logic of science in an attempt to "deny" anything you can not stand in a scientific experiment which is meant to confirm the initial assumptions. This approach would be (for many of the phenomenologists of religion and structuralist anthropologists) the essence of atheism which, for the scientist truth, denies himself the very referent of the object of the philosophy of religion – *the religion*.

The third class we will discuss is based on the Kantian perspective on the possibility of religion conceived "only within the limits of reason". If, in what concerns the other perspectives, there is a direct report to the "corpus" of religion (in theology), or a mediated one - by historical approaches, "morphological" approaches (Eliade), anthropological approaches, phenomenological approaches and hermeneutical approaches -, in this last class, we have to deal with a process specific to Kantian transcendentalism, but indirectly: questioning the conditions of possibility of religion, only after determining the scope of the intellect - and according to it - as responsible of scientific knowledge (with or in close cooperation with sensitivity). As shown, with the volume of Rudolf Otto, is posed the question of some other ways of appropriation of the object "religion": not by reference to "ideas" or "sacred" texts etc. - fashion exposed to failure because of the specificity of the object - but by reference to the "religious phenomenon" as such, to the "religious experience".

Codoban's adherence to the plural term "philosophy of religions" speaks of "the respect for the uniqueness and diversity: emphasizing the plurality of religions allows us to transcend the usual ethnocentrism and eurocentrism of most of the philosophers of religion." And, furthermore, "philosophy is to inquire human experience in general and, for it is not reduced to the European's, philosophy of religion have to do the same as, for example, philosophy of art, where there is no eurocentrism."<sup>1</sup> A second argument for this option is that "in the

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<sup>1</sup> A. Codoban, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

center of our approaches lies the sacred, not the divine." The difference between the sacred and the divine would be equivalent to the difference between a philosophy of religion and a philosophy of religion "which is often a religious philosophy."<sup>1</sup>

As a first observation, we believe that the positioning of our author is a correct one, with the addition that a philosophy of "religion" (singular) does not imply, however, necessarily, this philosophy to be "religious" - otherwise, Codoban himself takes caution to introduce the adverb "often" (not to anticipate the presentation of the three classes of approach - of Kantian origin - we shall find a different way from those of Codoban's dichotomy).

Rejecting the positions of an "interdisciplinary" research in the field of religion, believing that they are rather "a sign of a pathological situation in these disciplines, than of an epistemic solution to it, for it is the slogan of a federalization of human knowledge with the aim to occupy the place of philosophy." Our author argues that "collaboration between philosophy of religion and Humanities is problematic, primarily due to the difference in level of discourse: philosophical discourse evolves at the sense level, while the discourses of sciences, of social and human disciplines, at the significance level. Therefore, "the problem of cooperation between philosophy of religion and other disciplines would become the problem of articulation processes within the approach itself of the philosophy of religion, and the possibility of its resolution lies in the methodology."<sup>2</sup>

Recognizing the importance of methodology in the formula "theoretical platform" in the sense developed by Eliade, to become aware of procedures and techniques used by the philosopher and historian of religion in order to appropriate the religious phenomenon, A. Codoban takes as a starting point for his theory on the philosophy of religion the three-step scheme of Eliade. We do not insist on carrying on furthermore with the theory of our scholar, but we shall present shortly, with the intent that we presented in the beginning, the three methodological steps of the scheme formulated by Eliade and mentioned by Codoban in his book: the first step must be historical, because - emphasizes Codoban - "there is no religious phenomenon beyond its historical context. The product of this approach is a "morphology of the sacred"; the second is a phenomenological step: "placing the religious phenomenon – as an original and irreducible phenomenon - this process studies the typology of hierophanies - and cratophanies - as central to the experience of *homo religiosus*"<sup>3</sup>; the third is the hermeneutic step. It "addresses the trans-historical significance of the religious

<sup>1</sup> Idem. Here Codoban cites some works of major Anglo-Saxon authors, just in virtue of emphasizing his own adherence.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 20.

<sup>3</sup> Idem.

phenomenon." "Hermeneutics understand this message as it is perceived by the *homo religiosus* and question the living meaning of the sacred for modern man."<sup>1</sup>

Besides the two-way correlation of the "philosophy of religion"<sup>2</sup>, Eliade's scheme present in Codoban takes methodological valences significant only in the reign of the *significant* rationality. Here, our author distinguishes between strictly "operational" rationality, appropriate to natural sciences and also to Humanities, and what he calls "significant rationality", highlighting the tradition of structuralist anthropologist Lévi-Strauss, the paramount importance of preserving the meaning and the significance of the original symbol. "The phenomenology of religious experience concerns the meaning, the types and the structural connections within and between types of religious experience. It tends to lead us to the fundamental structures of religiosity, empirically ingrown in historically different religions. It provides the starting point and the base of support for what should be, in its natural exercise, a hermeneutics of experience."<sup>3</sup>

We observe, following the presentation of this class of reports (of philosophical type) to religion, that these exercises are done somewhat tangential or in symbiosis with religious significance and validity. Even the results obtained by the historian of religions and by the philosopher anthropologist are recovered in the space of a phenomenology of the "religious experience" in order to reveal the sacred trans-historical phenomenon in a hermeneutics of "religiousness". From this point of view, the phenomenology on which A. Codoban builds its own continues the tradition of N. Soderblom, R. Otto and M. Eliade as a purely descriptive, without normativity, not historical or sociological and without being an immediate basis for theology. As we have shown, it takes advantage of a "significant rationality", which incorporates coherently in its methodological articulation.

A completely different situation we meet with the class addressing religion as an "issue" to socio-human sciences in general and, in particular, to one of the newest scientific perspective on religion: "the evolutionary science of religion" from the evolutionary field of scientific origin. According to this (last) perspective is criticized not only the anthropological approach or the historical approach of religion; there are also rejected – by means of "essentialist" reporting

<sup>1</sup> M. Eliade, „Méthodologie et histoire des religions”, in: *La Nostalgie des Origines*, Gallimard, Paris, 1991.

<sup>2</sup> In this formula, of the double meaning, A. Codoban sees an instruction whether from the religious request to philosophy - where it is shown that philosophy can be powerful as a rational approach to religion, if instructed by the latter - , or from the philosophy to religion with intention to "undertake a purification of religion by philosophy, on behalf of the religious demands of reason". If in the first sense the author of the approach is presumed to be a believer at least implicitly, in the second (from philosophy to religion) even our author says that the approach takes place "in the name of the religious demands of reason" (*op. cit.*, p. 17).

<sup>3</sup> A. Codoban, *op. cit.*, p. 30.

to religion – perspectives as the one preferred by psychologists who believe that religion is an exclusively human behavior or sociologists-anthropologists such as Guthrie<sup>1</sup>, who sees the essence of religion in anthropocentrism<sup>2</sup>. Taylor is criticized because "he reduces the foundations of the world of religions to the concept of animism", and even E. Durkheim, who believed in a "progressive" tradition and claimed that science will triumph, finally, upon religion, is "corrected" in his socio-cultural evolution of religion described as a process related to the concept of social progress<sup>3</sup>.

As shown, these perspectives, which Codoban calls "parallel" to those we have introduced into the first class, are reporting from the "outside" of the religious phenomenon (considered as such) practically denying it and overlapping a reductive and austere grid of what philosophers of religion call the "scientist-type operational reasoning." We consider necessary to present the position of the "evolutionary science of religion" represented here by James W. Dow, a writer in vogue today, which proposes, in the study cited above, a "modular" grid - inspired by Kant (he says) - and seeks to explain the appearance of the (considered) religious phenomenon.

Using the hypothesis, the observation and the experiment, the mathematization, etc., tools of science that are essentially related to either formal sciences or natural sciences, Dow believes that their use in the social sciences and in the study of human (including religious) behavior is not wrong. Moreover, religious phenomena, religious behavior can best be defined by avoiding vague and intuitive elements or unobservable and subjective meanings and/or senses. Wallace is brought into question, saying that there are categories of behavior that can show that religion is defined as an observable behavior; although each culture has no necessarily only one concept of religion to describe all this behaviors, however, these behaviors reveal something that exists in most cultures. Wallace's definition of religion as a "behavior" is, he says, more practical and operational than those definitions which refer to meanings. Myths and meanings are part of religion, but the observed behavior accompanying them seems to be the allowing Westerners to perceive something that is acceptable as "religious". Hence, a definition of religion or religious behavior refers to a collection of behaviors that are unified only in the Western concept. This behavior has not evolved as a whole at the same time as a response to a single environmental change. Such an aspect is considered by these authors as a beginning argument to think that "religion is a

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<sup>1</sup> Guthrie, Stewart, *Faces in the Clouds: A New Theory of Religion*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1993, in: James W. Dow, *A Scientific Definition of Religion*, <http://www.anpere.net/2007/2.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> The response to that perspective is that events described as "religious" can be found also at pre-human individuals - we'll come back with examples.

<sup>3</sup> James W. Dow, in the recent study we have in mind, complains that Durkheim failed the idea that religion can occur via the mind, the brain, independent of society.

beautiful blend of ideas and behaviors with several independent origins outside religion as such. These behaviors involve many independent evolutionary origins from outside religion as such. Therefore, a historical-essentialist approach is not appropriate to this matter." A systematic approach may consist in a scientific investigation of "why" and "how" religion comes into existence as a human behavior.

Natural selection, variation and adaptation through learning from the environment are elements of Darwinism and evolutionary science in explaining the historical process of becoming man; from this point of view, to a complete elucidation of the evolutionary history of religion, it appears as a kind of *irrational adaptability*. The question these thinkers seek to answer is "what science knows about religion and how religion should be defined in order to be eligible for a scientific approach?"

Unlike Otto, authors such as Dow believe that religion should be aimed at defining of the observed (religious) behavior. It is necessary, then, a preliminary hypothesis to guide the whole research (the evolutionary, we add). He describes this hypothesis in the form of three steps: a) a knowledge of unobservable agents b) a sacred category classifier c) a reason for public sacrifice. Each of these three is a center for modern anthropological theorizing type. Although these three come together in "popular Western conception of religion", his article suggests that they are to be dealt with separately, given that they involve "independent complexes of development", which requires non-unitary approach: they should be investigated as separate types of religious behavior. Dow says: "Science has provided an understanding of human culture and of the natural world and human behavior; however, religious behavior logic is a complicated one: science needs to address this object as a complex of phenomena that do not respond directly to brain observable reality. For science: the cause of religious behavior does not lie in myth, but in understanding the cause for which human beings do and believe what they do and believe." An argument in favor of the evolutionary claim would be that religion is not exclusively human behavior. There are other species that communicate symbolically and have rituals (pre-human elements that exist in religious behavior). This would lead to the idea that other species have a religious-like behavior, at least in terms of pre-human elements. However, no other outside perspective can offer explanations of human consciousness on such events other than evolutionary perspective. Similarly, unlike Otto, Dow believes that irrational consists in the fact that individuals do not develop solutions to adapt to situations of rational type.

Thus, the provisional definition of religion is based on three modules (accustomed to the language and vocabulary of evolutionary psychology) involving a large range. They can be called *complexes* indicating the variety of behaviors to each of these modules relate; they have in common that, and so they

are called modules, they are solutions to particular problems of survival and reproduction – so, they have a high adaptive role. These modules evolve differently in different time, now offering three different ways to identify religion: types of behaviors produced by each of these modules can be considered religious.

Behavior towards sacred is provided through a moral purity continuum of the sacred object on which the report takes place. Evolutionary-adaptive role of the sacred is revealed by Roy Rappaport (1999): "sacred is controlling how human groups interact with their environment. Sacred signals coordinate groups to respond to changes in environmental control."<sup>1</sup> Durkheim also wrote about it: "sacredness was central in defining religion."

As the last class (the last view of the three) is concerned, it is not based on any studies or results of anthropologists, historians of religions or religious scholars, nor comprehensive interpretations of phenomenological hermeneutics of structuralist origin, nor on socio-human sciences efforts (psychology, sociology, etc.), nor on modules or hypothesis of "evolutionary science of religion" presented in detail above. The Kantian position concerning the issue of religion (although it is developed long before the others) is not necessarily invoked here because it would be more appropriate in determining the higher valence and more accurately religious phenomenon, or at least not on the content of the theory as such.

But rather through an interpretation of how Kant outlined the theory on intellect and reason in the *Critique of Pure Reason*<sup>2</sup>. It is known that Kant sees religion "within the limits of reason". Of particular interest here is that the issue concerning the conditions of possibility of religion tells us including about the type of reporting on it: directly or indirectly from the standpoint of the religious phenomenon; if it is put in these terms we can say that the Kantian approach is reported, of course to reason as the place of ideas that religion "works" with: the idea of God, of immortal soul, etc. This approach is not a direct one, nor Kant was concerned with the relationship with the phenomenon as such, much less with the empirical data about the source of the senses.

What interests here in particular is that the German philosopher proceeded "from principles", in synthetic fashion, inquiring our intellect and reason as places of categories and speculative ideas. This does not mean that experience is meaningless. It only means that, after Kant, the possibility of religion itself is not a primitive need for adaptability, nor a need to share the sacred or the need to communicate messages through symbols and rituals and ancient tradition, nor is the church dedicated to the history. Kant understands religion "as a natural

<sup>1</sup> Rappaport, Roy A. 1999. *Ritual and Religion in the Making of Humanity*. New York: Cambridge University Press, în: James W. Dow, *A Scientific Definition of Religion*, <http://www.anpere.net/2007/2.pdf>, p. 8.

<sup>2</sup> Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. by Nicolae Bagdasar, Bucharest: "Cogito", 1998.

disposition", as *a priori* location of our being in relation to the universe of experience provided by intellect in collaboration with sensitivity and whose ranges (otherwise infinite) can be completed only in reason, in the valences of *the unconditioned* in the series of conditions of experience.

In this perspective, transcendental, religious philosophy no longer requires "plural" for religion, since the object is not represented by the vast and inexhaustible phenomenon of sense, significance and meanings of religious "gestures" or by the sacred hierophanies in the archaic or secularized world, but by the very reason.

In conclusion, all kinds of approaches presented in the philosophy of religion or in conjunction with it provide different data and views in relation to the others, catching different and specific areas in its efforts to approach this issue as complex. Each of these perspectives is a data source and a horizon of understanding the issues risen in the philosophy by the status and opportunity of religion. However, the excessive claims of the scientistic vision must be reported, for, while using the tools of scientific rigor, the nature of the formulation of the hypotheses in philosophy of religion feeds rather from beliefs that do not pass through the filter of "scientific-operational" reasoning issues that can not be reduced to this; also the absolutism of the human *psyche* (in psychology) or of "*zoon politikon*" (in sociology), and the getting-over of any contribution of the natural sciences in the explanatory field of those phenomena that *can* be explained in a qualified and appropriate disciplinary frame, make the philosophy of religion/s to be more necessary than ever. In the space opened by the philosophical thought, are rising the conditions for the appropriateness of each of the positions that sometimes are in dispute. From this point of view, the "Kantian lesson" can be instructive here: the autonomy of the areas of spirit guarantees a cooperation of sciences, philosophy and humanities without starting endless and hopeless wars.





## PARALLEL UNIVERSES AND THE DIVINE BEING AS A STATISTICAL POSSIBILITY

Gabriel NAGĂȚ<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract.** Recent advances in astrophysics have led to an increasing credibility of the infinite space hypothesis. But, as cosmologists argue, in infinite space even the most unlikely events must take place somewhere. On the other hand, since our „universe” (i.e., the observable universe or „Hubble volume”) is a finite one, it follows that this is only one of the many parallel universes which co-exist as parts of a larger „multiverse”. This paper is an attempt to identify some possible consequences on the philosophical interpretation of the design argument, once accepted the multiverse hypothesis.

**Keywords:** Universe, Multiverse, Argument from design, Fine tuning, Anthropic principle/Univers, Multivers, Argumentul proiectului divin, Reglajul fin, Principiul antropic

### 1. Introduction

The word „universe” seems to have a very strange peculiarity: although it traditionally means all that exists, the physical world seems to enlarge at the same rate with our increasing efforts to scientifically investigating it.<sup>2</sup> Stimulated mainly by recent developments in cosmology and particle physics, and also by the controversial many-worlds interpretation of quantum theory, astrophysicists gather day by day new pieces of evidence, which augments the credibility of the infinite space hypothesis. As soon as it is taken seriously, this proposal raises serious conceptual questions, so it proves to be one of those research themes capable to initiate major changes in our conceptions about the science itself and, simultaneously, to reignite old disputes in natural theology. Cosmologists like to emphasize that in an infinite space even the most unlikely events must take place somewhere, so that each of us can have multiple copies somewhere in a distant world, or, why not, it could exist many distant worlds in which the proofs of a divine design could be by far more manifest than in ours.<sup>3</sup> But *where* exactly

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<sup>2</sup> „Although the word ‘universe’ literally means all that exists, the longer we have studied the world, the larger it appears to have become. /.../ the usage of this term has changed as we have progressed from the geocentric to heliocentric to galactocentric to cosmocentric view” (Carr & Ellis).

<sup>3</sup> For a comprehensive investigation of the concept of infinity, see the book of Graham Oppy *Philosophical Perspectives on Infinity* (2006). According to him, it is important to notice that „If concepts of infinity could have certain kinds of application outside the realm of logic and

would finally happen all those possible events, since our Universe (meaning, the observable Universe or the “Hubble volume”), despite its state of accelerate expansion, is seen as finite in its dimension? More and more cosmologists claim that there is only one plausible answer to this question, namely that the universe we currently talk about is just one in a multitude of other parallel universes, coexisting as parts of an all encompassing *multiverse*. In other words, the idea is that our universe has to be seen as just one instance of a particular natural kind. If we were to give credit to Max Tegmark, one of the founders of this new cosmological approach, this idea is so simple and evident that there is no point to ask whether parallel universes exist or not, but we should rather be interested in how many levels the multiverse has (Tegmark p. 41).

Nevertheless, many important figures in contemporary cosmology are not enthusiastic about embracing the multiverse hypothesis, which was declared by George Ellis as „the most dangerous idea in science”<sup>1</sup>. Indeed, although most scientists agree this is a hypothesis with an indisputable *explanatory* value, its critics emphasize that its *scientific* value is not obvious enough. Anyway, if the idea of multiverse is mostly the result of mathematical imagination working for the benefit of cosmology, its implications go far beyond cosmology and physics. We have to mention, for example, that many contemporary theologians consider that cosmology and evolutionistic biology can be declared “the closest scientific relatives of theology” (Polkinghorne p. 23), as long as this fields are seen more often than not as scientific domains in which empirical testing is not possible. As it has already been noticed, the encounter of science with theology and religion seems to be inevitable when interpreting the cosmic history, viewed equally as evolution of matter and life.

I don’t intend to examine this relation here. I only want to identify how the new ideas discussed in contemporary cosmology – the fine tuning, the anthropic principle, the multiverse – could echo through philosophical interpretations of some recent formulations of the argument from design.

## 2. Arguments for the idea of a divine project

Empirical arguments for the existence of God can be divided in two main types: cosmological arguments and teleological arguments. Unlike the *cosmological*

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mathematics, then the world would be a strange and different place – but there is a vast difference between *strange* and *impossible*” (p. 3).

<sup>1</sup> George Ellis, cited in (Gefter 2010). Ellis is equally skeptic about using the concept of infinity in physics: „Infinity is an unattainable state rather than a large number /.../ and it is a mathematical rather than a physical entity” (Carr & Ellis p. 3.23). In his article ironically titled „Universes galore: Where it will all end?” Paul Davies tries to show us that „although «a little bit of multiverse is good for you», invoking multiverse explanations willy-nilly is a seductive slippery slope”. He also challenges „the false dichotomy that fine-tuning requires the existence of either a multiverse or some sort of traditional cosmic architect” (Davies 2007).

*arguments*, which start from the existence of contingent things and conclude with the existence of an omnipotent designer and creator, capable to account for the actuality of all existing things, the *teleological arguments*, also known as *arguments from divine design* or *arguments from intelligent design*, take as their premise the presence in the world of many sorts of things that might be viewed as having very special characteristics, and conclude with the existence of a designer intellectually capable to design those special things. As Elliott Sober says, the design theorists „describe some empirical feature of the world and argue that this feature points towards an explanation in terms of God’s intentional planning and away from an explanation in terms of mindless natural processes” (Sober p. 25). In other words, the teleological arguments are focused on identifying the traces of an operating intelligence in the structures and behaviours of nature itself.

I think it is quite relevant that some new versions of the teleological argument are presented as arguments from *intelligent* design. Although they share the same ultimate finality with all teleological arguments – namely, founding the idea of God’s existence – in its more recent versions this line of reasoning has a more elusive target. That is the reason why its immediate objective is not founding the idea of a monotheistic god, as it happens in classical versions, but is limited to supporting only the idea of a supernatural designer, some sort of a divinity whose identity is to be determined on subsequent data and reasoning.

In its classical forms, the argument implying the idea of a divine project is basically an analogical inference, built on alleged parallels between human artefacts and some natural things or facts, whose characteristics can be seen as teleological expressions of an intelligent project: in the same way as the artefacts are the intentional results of human action, some natural entities (structures, properties, relationships etc.) can also be regarded as intended results of a supernatural intelligence acting in the world. The conclusion of this argument take the form „it is very likely that the natural entity E has the teleological properties P precisely because it is the result of an intelligent project, similar to human acting”. This kind of teleological argument by analogy has been convincingly criticized by David Hume, who tried to point out that, even if it could indicate an acceptable conclusion, the argument does not establish the attributes of the designer or its uniqueness, and in this sense it would not at all imply a traditional conception of God.

Grounded on the idea that our inferences are always guided by our explanatory considerations, the so-called „inference to the best explanation” represents another possible version of the arguments from design. In other words, it is based on the idea that we start from available evidence and infer what would be the best explanation for that specific empirical evidence, if true. In this configuration, the arguments of the divine project start from the premise that some of the natural things with apparently teleological characteristics can be explained on the hypothesis of being the result of an intelligent project, and since the

hypothesis is considered to be the best possible explanation, the conclusion favours the probability of those natural things being the effect of an intelligent project. This kind of arguments are therefore based on the idea that, whenever a theory or a hypothesis with superior explanatory virtues is available, we can interpret that specific explanatory superiority as a decisive epistemic ground for accepting it and rejecting the other competing theories.

Despite the controversies surrounding the most appropriate way to frame the argument from design, many authors are ready to agree that this is best expressed as a probabilistic inference. Una dintre exprimările acestui argument ia forma unei inferențe probabiliste de tip bayesian [4]:

- (1) Given that the development of life implies a special fine-tuning of many constants of the universe, but assuming that a supernatural designer couldn't exist, the probability for the universe to be favorable for life is very low.
- (2) Given that the development of life implies a special fine-tuning of many constants of the universe, and assuming that there is a supernatural designer, the probability for the universe to be favorable for life is quite high.
- (3) Given that the development of life implies a special fine-tuning of many constants of the universe, the probability that there is at least one supernatural designer is considerably higher than the probability of the premiss (1).

Conclusion: Given that the universe is favorable to life and given that the development of life implies a special fine-tuning of many constants of the universe, the probability that there is at least one supernatural designer is quite high.

In order to make this argument effective its supporter has to express his opinion on the hypothesis of the divine project – the hypothesis involved in the conclusion – *prior* to the formulation of his argument. So „the proponent of a Bayesian design argument cannot remain silent on the issue of the prior probability of the design hypothesis” – he must say something about the comparison between the probability of the design hypothesis and the probability that life is possible even when there is no design (Manson p. 7). This prior evaluation of probabilities is considered the main problem which undermine the Bayesian inference.

According to Eliot Sober, the problems generated by the Bayesian inference could be avoided, provided that the argument from design is founded on plausibility, which turns us back to comparing the value of two competing hypotheses as two possible explanations for the same thing. Two hypotheses are made starting from the observation that a certain thing exists in nature – one claiming that it is the creation of an intelligent designer, the other one claiming that it is the result of mere chance. Unlike other arguments of the same type, to avoid the problem of prior probabilities the likelihood version of the design argument does not claim that the design hypothesis is more probable than the

hypothesis of life evolving as a result of a mindless chance process.<sup>1</sup> Following the proposal of Graham Oppy, such an argument could be put in the following terms:

- (1) If the parameters of the universe are not tuned for the evolving of life, but there is an intelligent designer, the probability to exist life in the universe is higher than the probability to exist life in the universe when the parameters of the universe are not tuned so fine as to sustain life and considering that the universe is the product of a mindless chance process.
- (2) Consequently, we should prefer the hypothesis that our universe is the product of intelligent design to the hypothesis that our universe is the product of a mindless chance process, at least given the evidence that if some parameters of the universe weren't fine tuned, then there would be no life, and given that there is life in the universe.

So, given the evidence of fine-tuning, we have to accept the conclusion that the probability of intelligent design is higher than the probability of any competing hypothesis using the same data.

### 3. Fine-tuning, parallel universes and divine design

Even if the concept of multiverse was not motivated by an attempt to explain the „cosmic coincidences” that define the so-called anthropic fine-tunings, now these two ideas seem to be „inherently intelinked”: „For if there *are* many universes, this begs the question of why we inhabit this particular one, and /.../ one would have to concede that our own existence is a relevant selection effect” (Carr p. 6). This is the reason why many cosmologists are ready to accept that the multiverse hypothesis provides „the most natural explanation of the anthropic fine-tunings”, an explanation that can intelligently avoid the idea of a supernatural fine-tuning. On the other hand, if there is no direct evidence for the multiverse hypothesis, the fine-tuning could be somehow interpreted as an indirect argument for its plausibility.

Most scientists agree that the multiverse hypothesis has a big *explanatory* value, but on the other hand there are controversies regarding its *scientific* value or, more exactly, about its capacity to conciliate explanatory power with testability. The main objection to the multiverse idea is that it cannot be empirically tested, and by this very fact it is not real science – or, to cite George Ellis, „it may be true, but it cannot be shown to be true” (Carr & Ellis p. 2.35). To accept such an idea means to prefer a high explanatory power to poor testability or

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<sup>1</sup> Likelihood arguments „don't tell you which hypotheses to believe; in fact, they don't even tell you which hypotheses are probably true. Rather, they evaluate how the observations at hand discriminate among the hypotheses under consideration” (Sober p. 29).

even to non-testability and, in this sense, to accept an alteration of the very meaning of science.<sup>1</sup> But Ellis is decided to deny even the alleged explanatory power of the multiverse hypothesis, when he argues that even if it offers an „empirically based rationalization for fine-tuning”, it „cannot make any testable predictions because it can explain anything at all”: if all possibilities would exist somewhere, they could explain all imaginable observations, so it would be a hypothesis impossible to refute.

The multiverse hypothesis was welcomed by those who are troubled by the incapacity of science to offer credible answers to those elusive problems that transgress the boundaries of well established disciplines. It was considered the first genuine and plausible scientific alternative to the idea of the divine design. Indeed, when it is examined in the light of the observational selection effect, the multiverse proposal may be accepted as a plausible alternative to the thesis that our universe exhibits all sort of properties that prove it is the product of a very careful supernatural designer. On the other hand, theologians are more inclined to see it as a kind of last refuge for those inveterate atheists which obstinately refuse to accept all the arguments from design.

It is important to emphasize once again that the multiverse hypothesis is a very sophisticated exercise in probability and statistics. Its critics try to speculate this quite problematic origin and argue that once accepted the idea of an infinite universe, it is very difficult to manage any meaning of probability, since it is impossible to conceptualize the comparison of infinities and taking into account that in an infinite multiverse anything that could happen would effectively happen not just once, but an infinity of times.

The defenders of the multiverse proposal tries to convince the skeptics that this origin does not undermine neither its theoretical, nor its empirical value. As Bernard Carr argues, the multiverse is an implication of a probabilistic argument whose conclusion is the idea that the universe „is no more special than it need be to produce life”.

Even if we can observe only one sample of the multitude of parallel universes, we still could refute the multiverse hypothesis at a convenable confidence level, and anyway „statistical prediction still qualify as science”.<sup>2</sup> Our discomfort with the idea of the multiverse is due to the fact that it implies „a new perspective on the nature of science”.

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<sup>1</sup> George Ellis, for example, says that inasmuch as we can't imagine direct observational tests for the multiverse proposal, accepting it would imply „altering the meaning of science”: „In this context one must re-evaluate what the core of science is: can one maintain one has a genuine scientific theory when direct and indeed indirect tests of the theory are impossible?” (Carr & Ellis p. 2.33).

<sup>2</sup> Carr pleads for a Bayesian perspective on probability: „a core difference between the Bayesian and the frequentist views is the former's willingness to make inferences from single, and possibly unrepeatable, pieces of data” (Carr 2.35).

### Conclusions

(1) The multiverse hypothesis can be considered the last phase of the copernican revolution, which determined mankind to dramatically revisit its place in the world by abandoning geocentrism for heliocentrism, geocentrism, galactocentrism, cosmocentrism and, finally, for the idea of an infinite magacosmos. The multiverse hypothesis seems to imply the reevaluation of our perspective on science, and apparently this is the main cause of apprehension, in more reluctant if not conservatory circles. Therefore, it has a special significance for both the scientific knowledge of nature and our view on science, and can be seen as the prefiguration of a major methodological and epistemological paradigm shift.

(2) Even when the arguments from design have been more rigorously assembled or rebuilt on probabilistic inferences, and taking as premises the idea of fine tuning, they do not seem to gain more power and to be compelling for scientists. It is also true that scientific arguments based on the multiverse hypothesis have not been considered as ultimate by any supporter of the supernatural design.

(3) We saw that more recent arguments for the idea of divine project are largely built using probabilistic inferences. On the other hand, we noticed that the multiverse hypothesis is an intricate exercise in probabilities and statistics. Although this is the field of a remarkable mathematical conceptualization, it is well known that this is also the field of quite poor and very controversial philosophical interpretations of the very concept of probability. Definitely, the multiverse proposal and the contemporary formulations of the arguments from design will benefit from any clarifications of this concept.

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## THE POSSIBILITY OF KNOWING GOD: APHAERESIS IN THE THOUGHT OF MEISTER ECKHART

Oana VASILESCU\*

**Abstract.** The author investigates the foundation of Meister Eckhart's view on the best way and method to become oneself and to discover God. The study attempts to show that Eckhart's philosophical and mystical perspective is grounded on the concepts of aphaeresis and apofasis and, also, on their functional relation.

**Keywords:** aphaeresis, inner God, Meister Eckhart, mystical knowledge

Our communication tries to bring to light the foundation of certain striking similarities in thinking recognizable in the doctrine of master Eckhart's and Chan Buddhism in the forward path and method for human self-accomplishment and achievement of enlightenment or discovery of inner God. This foundation consists of a concept (common) subtended by the principle of aphaeresis, referring to the idea of preexistence potential within the individual, a real, pure (image of God, Buddha-nature) to be disclosed.

Circumscribing the role of negation in speech about God is achievable in the conceptual framework provided by the conditions of (im)possibility of a discursive knowledge about an object that transcends strictly cognitive and comprehensive skills and also human language. Strengths of apofasis are detectable by putting it in an interdependent relationship with aphaeresis method, since both aim to remove the veil of ignorance or illusory knowledge in order to reveal the hidden truth.

Confessing (also) about the influence of the Areopagite thinking, Meister Eckhart turns out to be, in his sermons and treatises, a follower of the path in the process of achieving apofatic knowledge of God: "If I call on God being, is such as I would call as the sun pale or white. God is neither this nor that.", "If I say that God is good, it adds something, but one is the negation of negation and deprivation of deprivation."<sup>1</sup> In Eckhart's conception, God is always inside the

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<sup>1</sup> Meister Eckhart, *The Soul Citadel*, translation, afterword and notes by S. Maxim, Iasi, Edit. Polirom, 2003, p. 72; *Benedictus Deus* (spiritual teachings), translated by D. Dumbrăveanu, Victoria Comnea (treatises) and Stela Tinney (sermons), Bucharest, Edit. Herald, 2004, p. 206.

human being ("Why not stay in you drinking in your own good? I Wear in essentially all truth.", "We must not consider God as being outside us, but as appropriate and inner."<sup>1</sup>) and can be rediscovered in the depths of the soul through a series of operations of aphaeresis ("Nothing must be covered within us that will not find it if we find all [...], God will reveal all that He is, in turn, and will not cover anything that may give: wisdom or truth, privacy, divinity or whatever.", "so long as it is not removed from us that which is intermediate, we do not savor him as God does himself", "There are three things that prevent us from hear the word forever. The first is the body, the second is the multiplicity, and the third is fleeting. [...] Who wants to hear the divine word must deny Himself entirely."<sup>2</sup>) and by an absolute introversion ("The man who has left and denied all, the man who does not shed any insight into what he has left and remains stead, resolute and firm in itself, is able to say that he has denied everything."<sup>3</sup>). Truth/God is inside each individual soul, is enrolled in the intimate fiber of human being itself. For this reason, one who seeks truth or God must return to himself and to discover the depths of the soul. To recognize God in his/her heart, one must also proceed as a hermeneut artist, namely to sculpt the statue inside, removing all that is intermediate, removing everything related to bodily multiplicity and transcending himself entirely. Only rigorous performing all these operations of aphaeresis man reveals God hidden inside his soul and reveals His image.

C.G. Jung says that, like Indian systems, Meister Eckhart developed a psychological concept about God: "In the Christian sense of culpability report, inner feeling of kinship with Eckhart's God seems a bit strange. We feel transported in the atmosphere of the Upanishads."<sup>4</sup> Psychological conception of God (identified with the archetype of the Self: "God's image does not coincide with the unconscious in general, but particularly with its content, namely the archetype of the Self."<sup>5</sup>) developed by Eckhart is close not only to this Indian concept of essential identity between Atman (absolute individual self) and Brahman (universal absolute self) - as already suggested by C. G. Jung - but also to the concept of Buddhism (Chan, especially) of the presence of Buddha-nature in each inner being. Master Eckhart's assertions about God inner, innate in man, the "own good" of man, which is the very divinity within, sent to Ma-Tsu Chan master phrases related to "treasury" includes every individual who always "treasure" nature Buddha: "In instead of looking into the treasury of your own, you left home and lost elsewhere. (...) You have your own treasure at hand, just

<sup>1</sup> Meister Eckhart, *The Soul Citadel*, ed. cit., p. 54 (Sermon 5b) and p. 60 (Sermon 6).

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, p. 89, p. 90 (Sermon 11) and p. 91 (Sermon 12).

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*, p. 95 (Sermon 12).

<sup>4</sup> C.G. Jung, *Psychological Types*, translated by Viorica Nişcov, Bucharest, Humanitas, 1997, p. 263.

<sup>5</sup> C.G. Jung, *The Human Image and the likeness of God*, translated by Maria-Magdalena Angheliescu, Bucharest, Edit. Teora, 1997, p. 307.

use it as you please - and then what's the vain search for something outside of you?", "Your own treasury contains absolutely all of which you need. Serve yourself of your own heart's treasure instead walking in vain for something outside yourself."<sup>1</sup> The treasure from within our mind or soul is the nature-of-Buddha always possessed as potential: "People despise/ the precious jewel (*Mani*),/ the treasure of *Tathagata*./ But each possesses,/ buried deeply/ in the *Alaya* consciousness./ (...)/ The treasure precepts/ of the nature of Buddha/ is imprinted deeply in our minds."<sup>2</sup>

Chan masters who also recommended *aphaeresis* method for achieving true nature, Meister Eckhart calls, in turn, to use the same techniques of *aphaeresis* to recognize divinity entered the human soul: "The soul is pure, more empty, more poverty, as have fewer creatures, and the more empty of everything is God, the purest understand God and God is contained in"; " the depths of the soul, the image of God, the Son of God, is like a spring of life. Even if he throws over the earth - it's worldly desires - and lies covered, so that no longer sees anything, he is still alive and, if the dust away, he comes forth again (...). In addition, we sometimes use another comparison. When a craftsman carve a shape of wood or stone, he removes chips covering and hiding the shape, it does not add anything to wood or stone, but rather picks and removes what it covers until what is hidden underneath shines. And so is buried treasure in the field, as our Lord says in the Gospel." "When man discloses the divine image God created in him by nature, the image of God is manifested in it. (...) By the liberation of the image of God in man, man become one with God, because man is the image of God, that image that is the essence of God in its purity. And man is emancipated, is more like God, more united with Him."; "Soul must detach all that was added to God by thought or knowledge, must grasp God in all its nakedness, as pure Being (...)."<sup>3</sup>

The method proposed by Meister Eckhart to discover God inside human soul is the *aphaeresis* method, which is - as is clear from the passages quoted above - of the following disclosure: emptying the soul of every creature and delight that comes from creatures; removal from the heart of everything is not God; poverty, draining and purification of the soul; removing the "earth" represented by worldly desires; uncovering the divine nature intrinsically to every human being; emancipation of the divine image within man; elimination of all additions of thought or knowledge; disclosure of the purity of inner divinity. Meister Eckhart uses explicit comparison, already promoted by Plotinus, between the disclosure of the pure godliness image from within the soul and how the sculptor works in

<sup>1</sup> Hui Hai, *Sudden Illumination*, translation by Stella Tinney, Bucharest, Edit. Herald, 2000, pp. 87-88.

<sup>2</sup> Yokai Daishi, *Shodoka*, in *Zen Masters*, selection and commentary by E. Zeisler and T. Deshimaru, translated by R. Ciocănelea, Bucharest, Edit. Herald, 1999, p. 64 and p. 72.

<sup>3</sup> Meister Eckhart, *Benedictus Deus*, ed. cit., p. 75, p. 104, p. 263 and p. 307.

wood or stone to carve a face. The sculptor that carves a form does not introduce the form into the material and adds nothing to wood or stone, on the contrary, he discovers the form within the material itself, using *aphaeresis* technology, they work for the purposes of disclosure, by removing the excess of material. As sculptor finds the perfect form within the amorphous mass of material (stone or wood) and bring it to light by removing the surplus of material, also, just inside his soul finds the believer the pure image of deity and his work for the purposes of disclosure is about removing all that is not divine, all worldly desires, everything related to creatures, all thought and all knowledge.

For Eckhart, the discovery of divinity in the very inmost soul and the possibility of knowing divinity itself in its essential purity are achieved through the method of *aphaeresis*. Thus, to rely on God, man must "be denied himself and to have denied everything, not to be bound by absolutely nothing that has to do with the senses from the outside and not linger in any creature in time or eternity. (...) Goodness and justice are a garment of God, they cover him, surround him. Therefore, you must know God in all his nakedness, or uncovered nothing and all its purity, as He is to Himself. This you will remain in Him."<sup>1</sup>

Aphaeresis operations represented by self-denial, removal of things and creatures, unraveling the external senses lead man to recognize God inside his soul, and aphaeresis operations represented by removing the veils of divine attributes (kindness, justice, etc..) lead man to knowledge of God in His essential purity/emptiness.

Master Eckhart recommended the removing of the veils represented by sermons ("Do not be turned away from God because of your words or preaching."<sup>2</sup>), the removing of the veil represented by the search itself of God ("The more you look, the less we find. Go it so that it does not find again. If you do not search Him, you find Him."<sup>3</sup>) and the leaving of God for God himself inwardly ("What is most important and most invaluable to be fulfilled it is that man lives God forsake of God Himself."<sup>4</sup>).

Thus, the true foundation in God is, for Eckhart, the result of a maieutical process which consists of a series of *aphaeresis* operations consisting in the removal of the veils covering all deity (the sermons, the divine attributes, the search itself of God, all related to creature, the ego and the earthly man, and – the most subtle veil - God Himself) and revealing the inner God from within the intimate fiber of the human being. The believer must act as a hermeneut artist able to discover God inside his soul and in every thing: "My mouth it expresses and

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 262-263.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, p. 41.

<sup>3</sup> Meister Eckhart, *The Soul Citadel*, ed. cit., p. 112.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid*, p. 93.

reveals God, but the very being of stone does it too, and I understand more of the fruits of God's work than of words."<sup>1</sup>

In summary, the conclusion of our discussion would consist of a (re)affirmation of the revealing role of negation and its transcendent meaning, of a relationship of mutual dependency between apofatic way and in the aphaeresis method of asymptotic tendency to union with God, and the possibility of setting common ground for fruitful parallels between different spiritual, cultural and religious areas starting just from views structured by concepts as *aphaeresis* and apofasis (or translatable in terms of one or the other).

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<sup>1</sup> Meister Eckhart, *Benedictus Deus*, ed. cit., p. 300.



## NIETZSCHE, THIS FORGETFUL, MUSICAL SOCRATES

Alina FELD\*

*Every philosophy also conceals a  
philosophy; every opinion is also a  
lurking place, every word is also a mask.*  
(Nietzsche, 1989: 289)

**Abstract.** Nietzsche's philosophic experiment as a whole tackles the form and idiom of an artistic performance. His interest in tragedy disturbs and awakens consciousness to the call of its own creativity. The author emphasizes that tragedy provokes a total participation to the mystery of being. His work challenges the vocation for the sublime which in Heideggerian terms would be the vocation to acknowledge the enigma of the presence of the Being as such in its very shelter which conceals it. Provided that the expression in tragic performance is non-conceptual, its meaning precludes its own doctrinal and dogmatic reification by a perpetual metamorphosis, personal and experiential, and, by its intensity, it turns the spectator into an *ad hoc* creator.

**Keywords:** Nietzsche, Heidegger, tragedy, mystery, Being, dogmatic reification

### 1. Heidegger's Verdict on Nietzsche or a Case in Misreading

In the conclusion to the four volumes of a close reading of Nietzsche's corpus, Heidegger asks the question whether Nietzsche's metaphysics has overcome nihilism (1982:200). He considers that Nietzsche was under the illusion that, by excluding Being as such as a devalued value from thinking the being of beings which is not nothing but will to power eternally recurring, the essence of metaphysics as nihilism was overcome (201). Thus Heidegger:

Nietzsche's fundamental experience says that the being is a being as will to power in the mode of the eternal recurrence of the same. As a being in this form it is not nothing. Consequently, nihilism, to the degree there is supposed to be nothing to beings as such, is excluded from the foundations of such metaphysics. Thus, it would seem, metaphysics has overcome nihilism (201).

Heidegger further engages on the task of demonstrating that Nietzsche does not even address the question of Being as such and that the *nihil* in nihilism is not

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thought in its essence. Being thought as value and being as a whole as will to power in the mode of eternal recurrence “block him from the path that leads to thinking Being as such” (199).

Let us follow Heidegger’s argument more closely.

Heidegger understands Being as such as unconcealment which veils itself into concealment in the essence of man, its main “abode” (217,244). It remains a “promise” (244) and a “mystery” (226, 233). Metaphysics is the history of this concealment of Being as such, the history of this omission which he calls “nihilism proper” (205) or “authentic nihilism.” Metaphysics which is ontology and theology at the same time posits the Being as such as the transcendental and the transcendent respectively (211) and thus repudiates the thinking, questioning of the Being as such. It thinks only the “being there,” the *Dasein* (218). With modern age, from Descartes to Hegel, metaphysics evolves as a metaphysics of subjectivity in which being itself is defined as will (205). Nietzsche does not overcome metaphysics, nor nihilism since metaphysics is precisely nihilism as the history of omission of Being as such. This omission is not a problem of thinking (213) but manifests the default of Being as such (216), the veiling of its unconcealment. Moreover, the desire of reversing, or opposing metaphysics indicates an “inauthentic nihilism.” (223-6) “Inauthentic nihilism” means the omission of the omission (226-7). In other words, the definition of the *Dasein* as will to power in the mode of eternal recurrence of the same interprets the concealment, the veiling of unconcealment of Being as such, as its absolute absence. The equation of the Being as such with value sanctions in Nietzsche’s view the liberation of *Dasein* from Being as such and the latter’s dependence, as value, on the former, thus reversing the relation between the two. In this way, Nietzsche’s metaphysics does not overcome nihilism rather fulfills it. As will to power eternally recurring, it is a negative ontotheology of the death of Being as such and of the death of god (210). Being/god as value indicates the last stage in the history of metaphysics which leaves the Being as such unthought and takes its concealment as complete absence. Nietzsche’s nihilism is thus inauthentic (231), i.e. it does not think nihilism in its essence, as the default of Being. An authentic nihilism would imply the infinite questioning of the concealment/unconcealment of Being. Heidegger writes:

Such acknowledging means allowing Being to reign in all its *questionableness* from the point of view of its essential provenance; it means persevering in the question of Being. But that means to reflect on the origin of *presencing* and permanence and thus to keep thinking open to the possibility that Being, on its way to the as Being, might abandon its essence in favor of a *more primordial determination*. Any discussion of Being itself always remains *interrogative*. (201)



Heidegger argues that Being needs to “abandon its own essence in favor of a more primordial determination (201), one that would include the nihil and that therefore nihilism cannot be overcome. Thus, Nietzsche’s program of overcoming nihilism is abortive *ex officio*. What is Nietzsche’s own understanding of *nihilism* and of *overcoming*? Heidegger believes that Nietzsche “experiences nihilism as the history of the devaluation of the highest values and thinks of the overcoming of nihilism as a countermovement in the form of the revaluation of all previous values” (200). Is this assessment of Nietzsche’s dissatisfaction with previous evaluation and his program of revaluation correct? Interestingly, Heidegger himself, unawares, points in the direction of a different answer. He remarks in passing that “the inmost core of Nietzsche’s metaphysics ... still lies concealed” (12) in his posthumous notes and that “Being remains in the glare of concepts, indeed in the radiance of the absolute concept of speculative dialectics, unthought” (213).

The present essay endeavors to question Heidegger’s verdict and its relevance for Nietzsche’s mode of discourse as a whole. It will try to prove that Nietzsche’s metaphysics as nihilism—in the sense the former uses the term—is an authentic nihilism which he does not intend to overcome rather to re-awaken. The Nietzschean nihilism in need of overcoming is a version of the Heideggerian “everydayness” and refers precisely to the growing inauthenticity of ontotheological metaphysics which does not take the *nihil* seriously. Overcoming the prevalent ontotheological metaphysics requires no less than the re-creation of its mythical foundations. If successful, it would initiate precisely the questioning Heidegger desires and would make Nietzsche a Heideggerian *avant la lettre*. His doctrines viewed as new myths of creation and redemption are meant to be the spurs in reopening the question of Being and the *nihil*.

## **2. Deleuze’s Version of Nietzsche’s Mode of Discourse as An Experiment in Counter-conceptual Thinking**

Nietzsche’s text is a provocation, intrinsically iconoclastic. In the best prophetic tradition it brings war and good news. It destroys and creates new meaning, new tracks for thought. It awakens to the question of truth rather than enthroning a new truth, a future idol. In order to address Nietzsche’s metaphysics, a preliminary condition is to become aware that the Nietzschean mode of discourse is not the discourse of the philosophical treatise. Deleuze offers one of the most pertinent characterizations of Nietzsche’s writing. In *Nomad Thought* Deleuze hails Nietzsche’s liberating the unconscious from the burden of transcendence and for having invented “nomad thought”, “a mode of thinking that is without logical or metaphysical precedent” (206). Nomad thought is characterized by its “impulse to decodify, its rejection of interiority and its

preoccupation with pulsions of power rather than intellectual constructs” (206). Consider:

Nietzsche’s thinking undoes encrypted philosophical concepts by transmitting uncodifiable states of experience not to a new notional language but to a new body, Nietzsche’s own or that of the earth. Differing from both representation and formal argument that take the subject or consciousness as a starting point, Nietzsche’s thought and writing are grounded in “an immediate relation with the exterior”...The human subject...is a play of forces and proper names are merely designations for pulsional intensities inscribed upon a body that may be individual, collective, or terrestrial. (207)

Thus “nomadism” is “a style of counterconceptual thinking” (207), “a line of flight, a thinking away from received philosophical distinctions” (206). Nomad thought is then the counterconceptual thought which rebels against conceptual reification of meaning. It restlessly metamorphosizes from one symbol or mask to another in order to prevent the stabilization of meaning and gives the impression of a “masque-rade”. Nomad thought engages the pursuer in a maddening hide-and-seek for the true face behind the mask. In other words, nomad thought invites a genealogical reading of Nietzsche’s overt doctrines identified by Heidegger as the “five main rubrics” of his metaphysics, i.e. “nihilism, revaluation of all values hitherto, will to power, eternal recurrence of the same and Overman” (1982:9). Such a search for origins, whose founder Nietzsche declared himself to be, involves the suspicion that one cannot take any of his statements at face value. It takes a Nietzsche to read Nietzsche. To read Nietzsche means to read “a storm pregnant with new lightnings” (Nietzsche, 1989:258) whose meaning is ever retreating, ever luring one beyond the last horizon.

3. *The Birth and Death of Tragedy*: Dionysius versus Socrates It seems that it is not Being as such that has been devalued in the history of ontotheology, rather the concept of Being as such due to the inherent reification of meaning. An indication of this possible reading of Nietzsche’s corpus is grounded in *The Birth of Tragedy* where the tyranny of the *nihil*—in Nietzsche’s terms and not Heidegger’s—originates with conceptual thinking symbolized by the “ugly Socrates”, the theoretical man. Nietzsche’s earliest work, *The Birth of Tragedy* bears unmistakably the mark of Schopenhauer’s philosophy of voluntarism and nihilism borrowed wholesale from Oriental sources. In *The World as Will and Idea*, Schopenhauer promotes the idea of a Buddhist double perspective epistemology i.e., of the reality of nothingness on the one hand and that of the will and cosmic illusion on the other. Without fully endorsing this doctrine Nietzsche

interprets the perfected form of Greek tragedy of Aeschylus and Sophocles as a mythic symbol of totality. Totality requires the synthesis of the ground of ultimate reality and the phenomenon of individuality; in other words, the consciousness of primordial, ultimate oneness/nothingness and the consciousness of the *principium individuorum* as transitory.

In his theory of *catharsis* Aristotle considered the effect of tragedy as purging the soul of passions through intense empathic exposure to pity and terror. Nietzsche mentions Aristotle's *catharsis* only to oppose it. He welcomes the "metaphysical comfort" of intense participation in the necessary unfolding where Being and nothingness engage in a tragic play of concealment and revealing—not unlike the Heideggerian presencing and veiling—precisely on the ground of arousing passions rather than quieting them. Dionysian truth is the tragic truth of a Being defined more primordially. Such a more primordial Being includes the nothing as ground and source of itself. At the same time the Greek tragedy that Nietzsche has in mind is not a conceptual, systematic disquisition. It is a mythic saying which constantly immerses itself and the spectator back into the indistinctness and totality of music. Certainly, for Nietzsche this immersion into the prelinguistic is neither a commendation to mystical union nor to abstract transcendence.

The tragic performance precludes the reification of the answer as well as the separation of Being and nothing, of concealed Being and its revelation. Art, i.e. tragic art, is the unique locus of the unfolding of this double perspective metaphysics, its principal embodiment. Nietzsche laments in this early work the loss of this tragic awareness and with it of the sense of wonder, awe, of the sublime. The one accused of this murder is Socrates, the arch symbol of the theoretical, abstract, disembodied mind. The nothingness that Nietzsche aims to overcome is Socratic nothingness. It is net of the conceptual spider. As a parenthesis, Nietzsche's project of overcoming Socratic nothingness and the later Schelling's *Naturphilosophie* share a similar intention.

The difference between Nietzsche and Schelling resides mainly in the mode of overcoming which, in the former case, takes the form of artistic performance: therefore, a masked performance which would resuscitate tragic myth. Nietzsche considers that the death of religions as mythical formulations of meaning happens when myth loses its power through doctrinal closure:

when under the stern, intelligent eye of an orthodox dogmatism the mythical premises of a religion are systematized as a sum total of historical events; when one begins to defend the credibility of the myths while one opposes any continuation of their natural vitality and growth, when accordingly the feeling of myth perishes and its place is taken by the claim of religion to historical foundations. (1989: 36)

Myth died “under the hands of Euripides” (1995:36) who manifested in art the demon of Socrates (42) for whom “to be beautiful everything must be intelligible” (43). The Socratic identification of knowledge and virtue, knowledge and beauty springs forth through “penetrating critical process, daring intelligibility, rationalistic method, conscious knowledge” (43). Socrates as “the theoretical man” opposed to Dionysian tragic art (46) is the symbol of conceptual knowledge. He represents the “sublime metaphysical illusion that with the clue of logic, *thinking can reach to the nethermost depths of being*” (53). The event of the concept and the enthronement of its rule are presented in dramatic terms as a cosmic catastrophe. Thus, after Socrates who is “*the turning point/vortex of universal history*” (53), “*a common net of thought was stretched over the entire globe*” (53). For theoretical man for whom to distinguish true perception from illusion becomes the noblest calling (54), error becomes the evil par excellence (54). In the Euripides-Socrates complex, Nietzsche is mourning the death of tragedy. By tragedy he understands both Dionysian metaphysics which gives a more primordial determination of Being to include the nothing and its mythical medium which prohibits the “evil slumbering at the heart of theoretical knowledge” (66). Or, translated in Heideggerian terms, tragedy is a locus of presencing and veiling of the default of Being as such, a metaphysics qua authentic nihilism which perseveres in the questioning and preserves the enigma.

#### 4. *Untimely Meditations*: The Art of Forgetting *versus* the Historical

*On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life* is another early text that contains a key to Nietzsche’s later development. Here the excess of history is opposed to a creative life of great deeds. One of the various ways to misconstrue Nietzsche centers round an apparent contradiction in his understanding of the body and extends to his infamous slave-master morality. It, too, springs—as in Heidegger’s case—from overlooking the specific game of disguisements witnessed in *The Birth of Tragedy*. It can be dispelled by listening more carefully to the present text. Edith Wyschogrod gives a quick summary of Nietzsche’s genealogical probing into the value of pity, the main feature of Christian morality. She explains that “on his view, pity is the emotion that is felt when a desire for revenge is suppressed” (100) and quotes from the *Genealogy of Morals*: “Impotence which cannot retaliate is turned into kindness; pusillanimity into humility”. The reason for this impotence to react promptly is found in a deterioration of health, a slackening of instinctual life correlated with “an excessive development of consciousness and the hypertrophy of reason” (100). Inner and institutional repression creates a new human type, the man of *ressentiment* (101). Wyschogrod detects the root of Nietzsche’s defective argument against altruism/pity in his limited and fictional anthropology, the “tacit presuppositions in Nietzsche’s description of the body” (101). Consider:

It can be argued against Nietzsche that he has given to the body too narrow an interpretation. His account cordons off a feature of corporeality intrinsic to it: the body's vulnerability. To be as embodied existence, as flesh, is to be vulnerable. This is not a property of diseased bodies but of bodies generally. While Nietzsche acknowledges and even celebrates death, he segregates the phenomena of vulnerability -- sensitivity to temperature, fatigue, exhaustion, sleep and the like -- from death itself. These phenomena are treated metaphysically in the manner of nonbeing. (103-4)

And further:

For Nietzschean vitalism human existence is a perpetual self-overcoming, an activity that neither sleeps nor slumbers...But life thus interpreted is based on one of its pathological conditions, unceasing wakefulness or insomnia. (104)

Wyschogrod notes the exclusion of the dark side of the physiology as a paradox in a thinker who "works to undermine the power of memory...because it makes possible a delay in the expression of affect" (104-5) and emphasizes the fundamental importance of forgetfulness. She complains that

Nietzsche confers normative value on the very phenomenon he criticizes with respect to memory, the phenomenon of unceasing activity when such activity is attributed to the body. A hypertrophied wakefulness is transvalued when it is ascribed to bodily life. (105)

*On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life* is one of his "untimely," i.e., "that is to say acting counter to our time and thereby acting on our time and let's hope, for the benefit of a time to come" (1996:60), "meditations." His overt thesis is that the unhistorical and the suprahistorical are the natural antidotes to the stifling of life by the historical, by the malady of history. (120-1)

He initiates the process of decoding his text and volunteers one insight into its meaning:

With the word "unhistorical" I designate the art and power of forgetting and of enclosing oneself within a bounded horizon; I call "suprahistorical" the powers which lead the eye away from becoming towards that which bestows upon existence the character of the eternal and the stable, towards art and religion. (120)

We are made aware that Nietzsche withdraws behind a series of masks which are different codifications of his ideas. The unhistorical is the art of

forgetting; the historical, consequently, the art of memory. What do we find when we look behind the mask of forgetting and that of memory?

A historical phenomenon, known clearly and completely and resolved into a phenomenon of knowledge is for him who has perceived it, dead... History become pure sovereign science would be for mankind a sort of conclusion of life and a settling of accounts with it. (1996:67)

The sleeplessness of history or memory is an image/mask for abstraction, generalization, pure objectivity, mediacy; in excess, it is inimical to life; it creates passivity, a sense of epigonism and indifference; it is the opposite of art; it transforms the living creature into a thinking animal, a “cogital” (119), human beings into “thinking-, writing- and speaking machines” (85); it kills intuition, neuters (87), creates a race of eunuchs” (86), “hollows out” (87), “paralyses” (98). The profusion of indirect, un-lived events takes away the “strangeness” (98), the “surprise.” It is the “great cross-spider at the node of the cosmic web” (108), the “devil” (114). The excess of memory or history brings about the extinction of life and, with it, the birth of an age of irony (100) and of “the grey-haired race” (101, 116). The blueprint for Nietzsche’s later nihilism (98-100) is sketched out: it is the dead fruit of the sleeplessness of conceptual idolatry, of the obsession with pure objectivity (84). The main consequence, like in the case of *The Birth of Tragedy*, is the incapacity for the sublime. He explains:

Expressed morally: you are no longer capable of holding on the *sublime*, your deeds are shortlived explosions, not rolling thunder. Though the greatest and *most miraculous* event should occur -- it must nonetheless descend, silent and unsung into Hades. For art flees away if you immediately conceal your deeds under the awning of history. He who wants to understand, grasp and assess in a moment that before which he ought to stand long *in awe as before an incomprehensible sublimity* may be called reasonable, but only in the sense in which Schiller speaks of the rationality of the reasonable man: there are things which he does not see which even a child sees... (1996:83) [italics mine]

Nietzsche makes it clear that the art of forgetting -- or of the unhistorical -- is the art of the cow, child and artist of great deeds.

That is why it affects him [man] like a vision of a lost paradise to see the herds grazing or, in closer proximity to him, a child, which, having as yet nothing of the past to shake off, plays in blissful blindness between the hedges of past and future. (61)

As he who acts is, in Goethe's words, always without a conscience, so is he also always without knowledge; he forgets most things as to do one thing, he is unjust towards what lies behind him... (64)

At different levels, cow/child/artist live in the present, freely, unhindered by memory, intuitively, unreflectively. The unconscious, unreflective life of the body is directly linked to the art of forgetting. Wyschograd overlooked the fact that for Nietzsche the body is another trope or mask for the art of the genius/creator par excellence. The ban on pity is to be understood in this context. In order to create, "to love his deed infinitely" (64), the creator has to be pitiless, i.e. "narrow-minded, ungrateful to the past, blind to dangers, deaf to warnings, [one is] a little vortex of life in a dead sea of darkness and oblivion" (64). Thus pitilessness towards the historical can be decoded in opposition with the slave's *ressentiment*. From the perspective of this "untimely meditation," the slave, as man of *ressentiment*, is the one who does/can not forget. By this juxtaposition the slave becomes a mask/trope for the excess of history, the sleeplessness, the drive for absolute memory, consciousness as opposed to the body's unconsciousness and to the artist's unreflective creativity. The equations slave-memory/the historical and master-forgetting/the unhistorical offer a key to Nietzsche's main doctrines by forming the bridge between early and later writings. The "common net of thought stretched over the entire globe" of *The Birth of Tragedy* becomes the "great cross-spider of history" in *Untimely Meditations*. Dionysian tragedy is opposed by critical, theoretical Socrates. The art of forgetting, life, intuition is opposed by history, memory, mediate experience, objectivity, abstraction, generalization. In both writings Life is the creativity of presencing in an aura of mystery and illusion. Thus

All living things require an atmosphere around them, a mysterious misty vapour; if they are deprived of this envelope, if a religion, an art, a genius is condemned to revolve as a star without atmosphere, we should no longer be surprised if they quickly wither and grow hard and unfruitful. (1996:97)

He further qualifies this atmosphere as an "enveloping illusion...a protective and veiling cloud" (97). Illusion, mystery, art, "unconditional faith in right and perfection" (95), "awe", sublimity (83) a "horizon, rounded and closed" (63)—all these qualifications of the life of the future race of creators circumscribe a metaphysics which is the fruit of his earliest desire to impersonate an artistic Socrates and create a new language. The lost paradise of "health"/ childhood/ inspiration can be regained (120) only through "a new stern discipline, a new habit, a new instinct, a second nature" (76) which will cultivate the "unhistorical"

i.e. will master the art of forgetting. The new language will not be conceptual rather mytho-poetical.

### 5. Nietzsche as Creator of a New Idiom

It seems that Nietzsche was enacting in his later work the program of his earlier writings. He was obviously qualifying his young loves but the seeds planted in the refuted work, i.e. *The Birth of Tragedy* and *Untimely Meditations* were growing steadily. In his search for origins, Nietzsche witnesses the moment of creation, the origin of meaning. A *creatio ex nihilo* of our hitherto cosmos of meaning in which we have lived and had our being. This cosmos of meaning he identifies as the Platonic-Judeo-Christian. The Logos as Word/concept, i.e. language, fashioned man in its image and likeness. Believer or non-believer, European man was born into the house of meaning of his own making and became its prisoner. He spent centuries inside, in this Procrustean bed, trying to fit in, to adjust, to acquaint himself with all its nooks and crannies, explore again and again the same place with new eyes from a different perspective. At least this seems to correspond to Nietzsche's reading of European meanderings of the history of philosophy: a century-old rumination of the same indigestible food, the Platonic-Judeo-Christian. Philosophically Nietzsche finds fault with the ontotheological foundations of prior metaphysics, i.e. the equation of Being/essence and the Good and the separation of essence and existence. Theologically he laments the reification of myth. The death of God symbolizes the impotence of the Christian symbolic universe to speak meaningfully to modern man, i.e. to awaken him to his infinite, unexplored potentialities. The main factors in the process of reification were the narrowness of the ontotheological interpretation prevalent in mainline theology and philosophy, on the one hand, the conceptual objectification, on the other. God interpreted as Being itself can never account for the underground rumbling of suffering and evil. All theodicies fail ultimately and essentially to preserve the reality of God as Good and Being and account for evil and non-being. Heidegger notes the necessity to define Being more primordially in order to account for the *nihil*. Also Platonic and Christian thought in spite of all its metamorphoses has deepened the wound between essence/being/god and existence/non-being/man. From Plato through Descartes to Kant Nietzsche watches the infection spreading. He finds most disturbing the infection of moral consciousness. What Nietzsche proposes himself to do is to free man from his own prison by creating a new house of meaning.

So, he appoints himself as creator of new meaning in whose image and likeness man can live and act. The creation of new myths lacks pity for the old myth which had turned into idols, a hindrance. He philosophizes with a hammer. For Nietzsche it is not the reality of Being itself which is a value as Heidegger



naively believes but its mask, the concept of Being itself, an idol, a disincarnated myth, the god of ontotheology. The transvaluation of values means creation of new myths of unsettling, unstable original versatility which would bar conceptual reification, idolatry. It is strange that Heidegger does not realize that the nihilism that Nietzsche ambitions to overcome is not the nothingness as ground or intrinsic to Being itself/as such. Nietzsche's nihilism comes precisely from the ontotheological omission of the nothing in the definition of the Being i.e. the definition of Being as God and the Good which could not account for the richness of existence nor for the depth of suffering. Frozen into concepts it became a tyrannical interpretation of meaning incapable to redeem the continual flux of existence perceived as sinful, thus incapable to awaken consciousness from its dogmatic slumber. The new mythical realm will be circumscribed by the doctrine of the eternal recurrence and the Overman. Instead of *creatio ex nihilo* or *ex deo* the eternal recurrence of the same, instead of the new man in Christ, the Overman. The new gospel is staged by a masked performance. And it is tragic, tragic in the sense in which early Nietzsche understood Greek tragedy prior to its dissolution in the age of conceptual thinking. In the Greek tragedy of Aeschylus and Sophocles the Apollonian *principium individuum* appears only to be sacrificed as tragic hero. He is reabsorbed into the nothingness of the ground of all.

The sublime is the category most appropriate for the tragic event. It is interesting to note Nietzsche's change of heart regarding Kant in this respect. Whereas Kant along with Schopenhauer and Wagner were viewed as the heralds of a resuscitation of the tragic mode on German soil, later Nietzsche finds him as another instance of critical Socrates, trapped in memory, in self-consciousness, in the net of the spider. Nevertheless though with specific qualifications, Nietzsche's sense of the tragic resembles Kant's category of the sublime.

## 6. The Nietzschean Tragic as a Modified Version of the Kantian Sublime

For Kant the sublime is a relation between the cognitive powers of Imagination and Reason whose specifics are caused by the object and experienced as a paradoxical feeling of displeasure and pleasure. Kant explains that the sublime is not to be found "in products of art where both form and magnitude are determined by human purpose nor in natural things whose very concept carries with it a determinate purpose, but in crude nature" (109). The reason why "crude nature" is the main locus to have the feeling of the sublime is the physically/sensorially overwhelming magnitude and might displayed. Kant has a "sacred thrill", awe, a mixture of horror and respect, i.e., veneration in front of this display. Consider:

Thus any spectator who beholds massive mountains, climbing skyways, deep gorges with raging streams in them, wastelands lying in deep shadow

and inviting melancholy meditation...is indeed seized by amazement bordering on terror, by horror and a sacred thrill; but since he knows he is safe, this is not actual fear; it is our attempt to incur it with our imagination in order that we may feel that very power's might and connect the mental agitation this arouses with the mind sense of rest. In this we feel our superiority to nature within ourselves and hence also to nature outside us. (129)

With a few changes this passage could be read as a footnote to Nietzsche's hymn to tragedy or to the Overman. Kant explains that such a spectacular vision challenges the powers of cognition. Imagination and Reason are called into play. But this play is not a harmonious encounter between the two; rather it is a conflict which is resolved at the price of Imagination's self-sacrifice. Imagination as the power of sensibility is crushed under the magnitude and might which evoke Ideas of the Infinite. It cannot produce images of the totality and the absolute which are required by Reason; thence the negative feeling, the displeasure. In experiencing the inadequacy and defeat of Imagination the mind comes to feel its own sublimity which lies in its supersensible vocation (121). Kant concludes:

We are dealing with nature as appearance. We cannot determine the idea of the supersensible. We cannot cognize but only think nature as an exhibition of it. The idea of the supersensible is aroused and strains the imagination to its limits of expansion and might. The mind has a vocation that wholly transcends the domain of nature: moral feeling. (128)

Thus the feeling of the sublime in its inner mechanics represents a type/figure of the tension and struggle involved in the moral triumph of mind over matter. Morality though can and should never be perfect and the highest good of the reconciliation of nature/happiness and morality/freedom requires an infinite progression and thus can be assured only in the beyond by postulating god and immortality. It is only in the feeling of the sublime that man comes to a full sense of his vocation, dignity and true self. Kant believes that only by "a strange subreption we substitute respect for the object for respect for the idea of humanity within ourselves" (114). Consider his exposition of the mathematically and dynamically sublime. Sublime is the absolutely large, large beyond all comparison (103). Excessive might inspires terror, raises the soul's fortitude above its usual middle", allows us to discover in ourselves an ability to resist which is of a different kind, gives us the courage to believe that we could be a match for nature's seeming omnipotence. A "hymn to man's divinity", the sublime call is a calling forth of "affects of the vigorous kind" (133). The enumeration of these is almost unsettling: it is a blueprint of Nietzsche's Dionysian humanity. Enthusiasm, self-imposed *apatheia*, anger, indignant

desperation, voluntary isolation (132-4), sublime madness (136), calm, moral control, beligerance (122)—these instances of sublime self-encounter push the self on the brink of physical annihilation and open the entrance into the realm of the supersensible: they are instances of self-conquering, self-expansion and transcendence. Defeated, imagination, the power of imaginal sensibility withdraws. Kant reveals his iconoclastic leanings. This iconoclasm this obsession with a priori purity is echoed in Schopenhauer's appropriation of the ideal of Buddhism and with early Nietzsche's Dionysian discarding of the *principium individuum* that only music and pre-Socratic tragedy can induce.

If the Kantian feeling of the sublime is experienced in nature, Nietzsche's tragic feeling is triggered by an artistic performance. Kant rationalizes the sublime/offers a conceptual explanation of the sublime, whereas Nietzsche intends to provoke it as reaction to his exposition of his new doctrines. Most importantly, Nietzsche's tragic does not call to a supersensible vocation. Nor does it need to postulate God and immortality nor is it a "triumph of mind over matter." The annihilation of Imagination requires the courageous acceptance of the nihil as ground of a conceptually non definable Being. His doctrines are meant to resuscitate in the audience the spirit of the sublime which the Greek tragedy induced. To that purpose Nietzsche's philosophic experiment as a whole the form and idiom of an artistic performance.

The play he directs must be a tragedy. It must disturb and awaken consciousness to the call of its own creativity. Tragedy provokes a total participation to the mystery of being. It provokes the vocation for the sublime which in Heideggerian terms would be the vocation to acknowledge the enigma of the presence of the Being as such in its very shelter which conceals it. Since the expression in tragic performance is non-conceptual, its meaning precludes its own doctrinal and dogmatic reification by a perpetual metamorphosis; it is also personal and experiential, and, by its intensity, turns the spectator into an *ad hoc* creator, thus initiating the era of the race of creators, envisioning masters of the art of forgetting, of the art of letting the Being as such. Heidegger concludes that Nietzsche has not asked the question of Being as such. Indeed, Nietzsche does not ask the question of the Being as such, rather he provokes the encounter with the tragic mystery in its presencing.

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## SCIENCE AND FAITH IN DIMITRIE CANTEMIR'S WORKS

Mihai POPA\*

**Abstract.** Dimitrie Cantemir was a humanist, his work covered almost all the spiritual domains of the time. Mixing both the scientific and artistic creations, Cantemir continued the Renaissance tradition. He was also a politician, involving, as an enlightened ruler, in diplomatic and military actions which build his reputation as state's man, along with those of humanist and artist. Cantemir's ontology in the *Sacred science* – where, for example, as regards the time issue, the author tries to demonstrate that this is an attribute of divinity – is essentially reformulated from the point of view of the sacred – historic (profane) relationship in his historical works. In short, Cantemir grants the historical life a certain immanent finality.

In *The Divan*, Cantemir gives faith an essential part as compared with the reason, with the human intellect, with the free manifestation of one's own will, with the historic finality of human condition. From this point of view, his opinion is not different from the conclusions – not always expressed – which we may have after reading *The Teachings* of Neagoe Basarab.

**Keywords:** faith, history, law, truth, science

Dimitrie Cantemir was a humanist, his work covered almost all the spiritual domains of the time. Mixing both the scientific and artistic creations, Cantemir continued the Renaissance tradition. He was also a politician, involving, as an enlightened ruler, in diplomatic and military actions which build his reputation as state's man, along with those of humanist and artist. He finished his education begun in Iași, where he studied the classic subjects (Greek and Latin and elements of neo-Aristotelian philosophy, having as a mentor the Greek scholar monk Jeremiah Cacavelas), at the Constantinople Academy. There he studied the main works and met the most important scholars of the time, also the accredited diplomats at the Sublime Porte. Among the Greek scholars, professors at the Patriarchal Academy of Constantinople or the Peripatetic philosophers, some who studied in Occident, I mention Al. Mavrocordat, Hrisant Notara, art archbishop, Meletius – who initiated him in Van Helmont's philosophy –, Spondonis Vizantios, Jacob Manos of Argos, an influent adept of Coridalean<sup>1</sup> neo-Aristotelian.

Cantemir's early scientific work, starting with his first one, *Sacrosantae scientiae indepingibilis imago* dedicated to his first teacher Jeremiah Cacavelas, is

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<sup>1</sup> *Istoria filosofiei romanesti*, vol. I, București, Editura Academiei, 1972, p. 59.

situated in the context of these discussions, in which the conflict between neo-Aristotelianism and Van Helmont's<sup>1</sup> philosophy.

*Sacrosantae* represents also an attempt to systemize the main theologic and philosophic notions. It has three volumes (physics, metaphysics, ethics), of which only the first one, (titled by Nicodim Locusteanu, *Metaphysics*) is finished. In the first book of this work, Cantemir describes in an allegoric background which appears also in his next works, the "sacred science" principles. One may find the concepts of theological philosophical ontology, the work being a cosmogony structured like the patristic Hexameron, quoting the *Genesis* text from Pentateuch. The originality of Cantemir consists in the historical approach of the Creation, as compared to the Van Helmont's philosophy who gave less importance to universal diachrony. The link between the Christian dogma and neo-Aristotelian doctrine, through Coridaleu commentaries appears especially in the III<sup>rd</sup> Book: On time and eternity, in the V<sup>th</sup> Book. On life or the quadruple form of things, and in the V<sup>th</sup>: The sacred science garment in which things preservation and free soul operation are explained.

The concepts of Aristotle physics confirm, in Cantemir's view, the relation between Creation and the world, between the eternal life and physics principles, between the duration of sensitive things and divine time. The IV<sup>th</sup> Book discusses this in detail, as hazard (*casus*) and luck (*fortuna*), and is consacrated mainly to the relation providence and nature also providence and the free will, being presented by Cantemir as a preliminary of theologo-metaphysics and theologo-ethics."<sup>2</sup> (tr. n.)

The scholastic method, in which are approached the physics, metaphysics and Aristotelian ethics problems, is upside down and ironic to some extent (in fact a masterpiece of the genre) the 1705 *Hieroglyphic History*. One may notice the critic realism of the Moldovian Prince, as well as his visionary historical idea – approached as satiric attack, which exaggerates the characters and the habits of autochthonous boyards, also vices of the Ottoman noble men – developed in *Incrementa atque...* (1714–1716). The Cantemirian work, especially the philosophic one, but also the literary and historiographic or literary one, has at the basis a strong cultural motivation, specific for the pre – enlightenment period and for Renaissance and Humanism, centred around two categories, ratio and fides. In historiographic works, rational principles are not inferred anymore, as in *Sacrosantae*, from the scholastic works and the theologic Eastern dogmas. The truths of the Christian creation show their own meaning, being opposite to the laic ones in the work "the Divan or the Wise Man's Dispute with the World or the Litigation between Soul and Body", though the literary form permits in a smaller extent a systematic approach. The polemics between the atheistic spirit,

<sup>1</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 64.

representing the world order which reflects, in its becoming, the order of the eternal things and Wise Man spirit, claims both rational and dogmatic arguments. As Virgil Căndeia said the litigation between the Wise Man and the world resorts to the reason court, using the notions of Aristotel logic, the spirit-substance dualism, fed by inner contradictions, specific to the historic medieval life<sup>1</sup>.

The relationship sacred-profane is approached from the gnoseological perspective: sacred reason – scientific reason; it is a continuation of an old scholastic dispute, known under the name of double truth: “about one and the same truth, which is simple, the theologians speak indeed theologically, on the other hand the physicists speak in physics terms and usually they treat the simple truth in different manners they call sciences, but their divergent axioms and much special doctrines do not stand.”<sup>2</sup> In the light of this statement and of others in *Hieroglyphic History* or the *Chronicle*, the author seems to grant an independent status to the truth of each science, to the sacred one or to the profane one, although the delimitation of the theology from science is more clearly formulated in the historiographic works. According to him, history is not a field of faith, but especially of the logical research, in which the historical proofs should be confronted and if they lack, in compliance with the methodological norms or canons, can be drawn conclusions about the existence of the facts on the basis of the proofs that existed before or after them. The research of the Roman continuity in Dacia, presented in the *Chronicle*, offers Cantemir the opportunity to expose the principles of a real historiographic criticism, following the path opened by Cantacuzino High Steward. According to this method – the prince states – the contemporary sources are preferable to the late ones, and the internal sources should not be favoured to the external ones, as they can be suspected of partiality.<sup>3</sup> The witness of a single source should be regarded doubtfully: *dictum unius, dictum nullius*. Yet, the real efficacy of the critical method is met in *The History of the Ottoman Empire*.

The topic of this work, which brought him the fame of European scholar and that represented the foundation of the Western diplomacy in the relation with the Sublime Porte for over a century, resumes the principles drawn by the author in a paper that can be considered an Introduction to the history of philosophy: *Monarchium phisica examination*. Cantemir introduces here the theme of the cyclic evolution in history, of “rising and falling of the states”, before Vico’s in “*corsi e ricorsi*”, launched in *New science*, published in 1725. Like Vico, he

<sup>1</sup> Virgil Căndeia, *Studiu Introductiv la Divanul*, Bucuresti, 1969, p. I-LI.

<sup>2</sup> *Sacrosanctae*, mss.f. 243, translated by Locusteanu, preface by Em. C. Grigoras, Bucuresti, Ancora, 1928, p. 21.

<sup>3</sup> Dimitrie Cantemir, *Hronicul vechimii romano-moldo-vlahilor* (*Chronicle of the durability of Romans-Moldavians-Wallachians*), ed. G.G. Tocilescu, “Carol Göbl” Institute of Graphic Arts, p. 62 (218).

presents the idea of finality in history, the succession of the three ages or stages – “rising”, “stagnation”, “falling” – being taken over from Cantacuzino High Steward. In fact, the cyclicity of history development is a thesis that develops from nature philosophy, the philosophy of physics, an Aristotelian influence, exposed in the doctrine of generation and corruptness, depicted in his first volume of *Sacrosanctae*.

For Cantemir, all the particular things are subject to evolution, being coordinated by the law of rising and falling. The world states, the monarchies, have also a cyclic existence. While the prophets, inspired by God, foresaw the general lines of the direction towards which the humanity history would evolve, people could also research the natural determinism of the things and, through rational forecasts, could describe the order of nature and society. As regards the movement of the societies, the question is if the individual – as part of this order – can interfere with history, changing the direction of the events and making the facts favourable to him or he is constrained by the course of the historical events, as well as by the natural phenomena. The historical causality and the individual freedom are two distinct notions on which Cantemir insists upon in his philosophical or historiographic works. As a humanist, knowing the classic disciplines, he praises the antic civilization and culture. In a chapter in the *Chronicle*, in which he describes the history of the Roman Empire, he stresses the fact that the power and the nobility of a people do not consist in the political and military force or in the size of the conquered territory, but in culture, in sciences and in the good manners. In *Chronicle* we notice a contradiction between the praise the author brings to the antic civilization and its minimization in *Sacrosanctae*, where are highlighted the superstitions in the old cultures or the worship of heroes, because of a “haughtiness” inspired by the devil – the author states. The explanation of the position in the latter is offered by the theological and theologizing principles it is based on, while in the *Chronicle*... or in *The History of the Ottoman Empire*, the mythology and the culture of the antic history (especially the Greek one) show the evolution of Cantemir from his early writings (and readings) to the crystallization of the humanist notions and their integration in the maturity works.

The historical determinism at Cantemir takes the form of the cyclic evolution. Things and facts evolve by virtue of an “order” that is immanent, by virtue of their nature. In history we can notice a category of finality, taken over from Aristotle’s metaphysics or rather, through Van Helmont’s influence. The cyclic development – a current idea in the epoch, developed also by Vico – is placed in the field of anthropology. The model is the biological one. The idea is configured even from the *Hieroglyphic History* (it was only sketched in the *Sacred science*). It is preserved the principle of sacrality, of the first engine or of the primary cause, later becoming an immanent principle: any being is born,



growths and degrades, but transmits the life principle to another being, to the descendants, who will continue the evolution cycle to infinity. Cantemir grants it the character of a law and generalizes it philosophically in *Monarchium physica examinatio*, where he stresses its character of law, of “uninterrupted order of nature (*ininterruptus naturalis ordo*), which nature follows endlessly.

The initial relation was one of divine origin, but Cantemir rephrases it in terms that should not contradict the principles of dogma, adopting the scholastic notion of the secondary causes: “The first created elements [...] are primary organs, but secondary causes [...], the earth gives us food, sun and moon rule, the whole celestial suite help to the preservation of the universe structure, all these being obedient subjects of the creator, and not authors or causes.”<sup>1</sup> Cantemir’s ontology in the *Sacred science* – where, for example, as regards the time issue, the author tries to demonstrate that this is an attribute of divinity – is essentially reformulated from the point of view of the sacred – historic (profane) relationship in his historical works. In short, Cantemir grants the historical life a certain immanent finality. Following the line of the natural causality – where phenomena repeat over and over again, the species subsist to the individuals –, the biological cycle is repeated only at the individual level. In history the individual is responsible for his actions. Here does not work the theocentric principle – idea that is resumed especially in the *Chronicle*., *The History of the Ottoman Empire*, *Hieroglyphic History*. “In fact the man’s status is not considered in theological categories. His dignity does not consist – like in *Sacrosancta* – of his singular, unique relation with the religious transcendence (God incarnated only in man), in his transcendent vocation. Taking over the criticism of the natural and philosophic finalism from Van Helmont, as well as some themes from the Orthodoxism, Cantemir absorbs them in a synthesis from which results the revealing of rationality and of moral freedom, of the capacity of establishing aims, as fundamental determinants of man.”<sup>2</sup>

The ethical behaviour is based on reason. Of all the creatures of nature – to which he is related through his physical structure – man is the one who, through spirit – relates to God. The ethical action or the moral behaviour makes him singular, as an historical being, because, of all the creatures that follow unconsciously the divine “order”, only man can choose between good or bad. On the ethical level – Cantemir says in the *Hieroglyphic History* – man has “from the beginning of his actions, the thought of the end (of the finality – from lat. *finis* translation loan word)”<sup>3</sup> The final cause (*teolos*) acts only on the ethical level, not

<sup>1</sup> *Sacrosanctae*..., p. 86.

<sup>2</sup> Petru Vaida, Dimitrie Cantemir – *Idei despre cunoastere. Logica* (Ideas about knowledge. Logics), in *Istoria filosofiei romanesti* (The History of the Romanian philosophy), vol. I, Bucharest, Romanian Academy Publishing house, 1972, p. 88.

<sup>3</sup> Dimitrie Cantemir, *Istoria ieroglifica (Hieroglyphic History)*, edition under the supervision and with introductory study by P.P.Panaitescu and I.Verdes, Bucharest, 1964, p. 175.

on the physical level. Reason creates the possibility of finality, of following conscientiously a purpose; through the knowledge of determinism (causality) man resembles God. This topic, taken over from the doctrines of the Orthodox theologians, is developed by Cantemir in *The Divan* and *Hieroglyphic History*. Freedom – the possibility to act freely in nature and history – is a “supernatural” quality, it does not come from his natural “diligence”, but it is a gift, a quality insufflated by the divinity. In this regard man feels freedom as a state of grace, “somehow – the author of the *Hieroglyphic History* says – against and beyond nature”.<sup>1</sup> It should be stressed this way of understanding freedom, present in the above mentioned writings, as one specific to the Orthodox thinking, as *theosis* is an ideal that includes also a component of Isichast origin.

If the other rulers were active and creative personalities, both at politic and cultural level, some of them creating epochs or styles named after them – Stephan the Great or Constantin Brâncoveanu –, Dimitrie Cantemir is, as Neagoe Basarab, but in a different manner, a personality who is very conscious of the fact that he creates through his work, renaissance and humanistic Romanian spirituality, closing a cycle, and having an entitled European acknowledgement. Before him, Miron Costin had started a unique humanistic approach which was meant to connect his people’s culture to the Greek-Roman Antiquity. The love for Romanian language and literature, and as well his intention to awake again in his contemporaries the conscience of their Latin origin, made him to use Latin topic “in formulating Romanian proposition and phrases, which make his style look artificial [...], as compared to flowing, spontaneous and authentic popular style of Neculce and Grigore Ureche”.<sup>2</sup>

We are interested, both in the scientific work of the Romanian Prince, and in the politic attitude manifested in his works, the role given to the individual within history, but, most of all, to his creative capacity which allows him to build, in the world in history, a significant destiny. In *The Divan*, Cantemir gives faith an essential part as compared with the reason, with the human intellect, with the free manifestation of one’s own will, with the historic finality of human condition. From this point of view, his opinion is not different from the conclusions – not always expressed – which we may have after reading *The Teachings* of Neagoe Basarab.

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>2</sup> *Istoria filosofiei romanesti*, p. 168.

## NEVER AS ONCE ...

Nicolae GEORGESCU\*

**Abstract.** The paper investigates the negotiations of meanings between the current and older linguistic systems, to follow the wonderful journey of words, images and meanings in Eminescu's poetry. There is no final version even for one manuscript of the Romanian national poet Mihai Eminescu, not even the one that went to the printing press. And, then, we must know that even after it saw the light of print, Eminescu worked on the text again. His effort is divine, his poetry is incantatory, bringing the universe of existence closer to God.

**Key words:** meanings, sense, writing systems, incantatory poetry, "once"

When one governs an older writing system he must be attentive to the meanings twice: first, in relation to the current and usual ones, then, to those in the respective older system. The authors that have long thought about writing are involving the thought in the script; one must at least ask oneself whether *what* and *how* they wrote make sense, before changing that for us. Look, for example, at the ordinary "once" used by Eminescu. I am giving the first stanza of "Luceafărul" (*Evening Star*) in the form from *Almanahul România Jună* (April 1883):

There was, as in the fairy tales,  
As ne'er in the time's raid,  
There was, of famous royal blood  
A most beautiful maid.<sup>1</sup>

*Convorbiri literare* magazine resumes the poem in August 1883, as following:

There was, as in the fairy tales,  
As never in the time's raid,  
There was, of famous royal blood  
A most beautiful maid.

Titu Maiorescu kept, for release in December 1883, the form from the Almanac, in the second edition (1885) it is the same - but in the third edition (1888) he put *A fost o dată ca nici o dată* (*There was once ... as not ever*) form

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<sup>1</sup> Transl. by Petre Grimm.

that he then abandoned. (It is not difficult to understand why he dropped it: when resuming the term, in the girl's words, he had: *N'oi merge nici odată* (I will ne'er go), so he also intended to correct here: *o dată* (using "once"), but the proofreader misunderstood and this is how the mistake *Noi merge* (We shan't go) appeared instead of *N'oi merge* (*I will not go*); but usually around Maiorescu's corrections, new typographical errors appear. So, in the fourth edition he gave it up.) The publishers after him oscillated between never (*niciodată*) and *nici odată* (*ne'er*). Today the text is like this, according to Perpessicius:

There was, as in the fairy tales,  
As never in the time's raid,  
There was, of famous royal blood  
A most beautiful maid.

In the first edition of 1939, Perpessicius had nothing after the first verse, against the whole tradition up to him, but then he returned to the form adorned with commas – that in fact C. Botez (1930) had set.

As to the manuscripts, they do not clarify too much, "Evening Star" laboratory being extremely broad. We find somewhere "A fost odată ca 'n povești, / A fost ca nici odată" - *There was, once, as in the fairy tales/ There was, as ne'er ever* (Ms. 2277, 132, correlated with "N'oiu merge nici odată" - *I will ne'er go*), it is the same in Ms. 2275, 39, as in *The Legend of the Evening Star* (Ms. 2261, 198, dated April 10, 1882 by the poet) we find "A fost odată ca 'n povești / A fost ca nici o dată" - *There was, once, as in the fairy tales/ As not ever/once in the time's raid*, but correlated with "N'oiu merge nici odată" - *I will ne'er go*. Throughout the manuscript the punctuation is white - whether there are drafts or it is left aside on purpose (probably in order to be completed on the final text systemically) - so that we can only attribute to the author himself for sure the comma from the *Almanac* or the full stop from *Convorbiri* after the first verse. Once again: the one who deludes himself with the illusion that the manuscripts solve the most editorial problems is wrong – they rather give suggestions. For not (even) a poem by Eminescu do we have the final manuscript, the one given to printing. And, to be even more reassured about this, there is one thing we also have to know: even after printing the poet intervened on the text (see the case of *Letter III*, published in *Convorbiri literare* and then in *Timpul*). I have shown elsewhere that, in extreme cases for typographical errors interrupted the printing of literary talks, due to typographic mistakes, the printing process of *Convorbiri literare* used to be interrupted, and the correction was made and then it printing was resumed. (There are copies of the magazine, the same issue, which differ: some have the printing mistake, others do).

So, also regarding the first verses of the *Evening Star*, again the editors should observe the authorial will.

What does it mean, in fact, this oscillation of forms and punctuation? Not much, one would say, writing evolved to simplified forms, *nici o dată, nici odată, niciodată* – *not ever/once, ne'er, never* whichever is easier to write. The Romanian language does not have a specialized term for the French "*jamais*" (for example the way in which nor German has) – and I think it's attempted its artificial creation. In our language, the theoretical "*nicicând*" (*not once*) failed to generalize (it refers to the future, not to the past).

The adverb "*odinioară*" (*formerly*) is, on the other hand, quite complicated; but what an interesting noun-formation from the Latin *de una hora* – "in one of the hours", moments, instances: see, for example, "*într-o doară*", which is symmetric to it: *in una de hora* "in any hour, any minute", "randomly", "or whatever may be" – but not "*bunăoară*", *bona hora*, "a good moment" – for which, see the French *bonheur*, "happiness", except that there a pair of was created with *malheur*, "misery", from *mala hora*, while the Romanian language has not preserved *malus* (we have inherited a legal term for the idea of "bad": *reus*, which means *accused*; perhaps that the Thracian "mal" (*shore*) was too strong and could not be displaced, see *Dacia malvensis* and so many place names around *mal*: Mălureni, Malu Surpat, even Moldova, as demonstrated by Mr. Mihail Vinereanu, etc., etc.; in Romanian "*ceasul rău*" (*a bad moment*) is a Slavic-Latin mixture, it does not mean "misery", "malheure", but "bad luck", and it is also related to the fatidic moment or hour – and it does not have a pair in "*ceasul bun*" (*a good moment*). Thus, the expression "*să fie într-un ceas bun*" ("may you have good luck") seems singular and it is probably rebuilt on the cultured line: to be of good omen, etc. – since it also means something concerning luck: it seems that in our language the expressions pair-system has become unbalanced here because the rejection of the Latin *malus*, and, anyhow evil is not opposed to good, as in the phrase "*e bine rău*" (it's awfully good), where, etymologically, something or someone is *accused* of something good, very good). Unable to create the pair, *bunăoară* (*for instance*) has passed into the adverbs group. All these forms are disguised in writing, because we write phonetically (and well we do, of course ...) that is connected: *doară* for *d'oară*. But if we are curious to search, the Latin primary meaning is preserved, even for the man of an average solid culture, not only for linguists.

Thus, the multiple forms with the Romanian "*dată*" (*time*), may confuse the speakers and they tend towards a uniform script, "never" instead of "ne'er", just like in the case of "*oară*" (*time*). A scientific panic – I think – pushes the Romanian linguist to form words – concepts or to discover concepts where you would not expect as a philologist. For example, a good friend from this area of linguists is convinced that in the Romanian word "*nimic*" (*nothing*) lies the idea of absolute zero, of *kenos* from Greek. Not at all: nothing comes from "ne" and "mica" (a crumb, very small piece, "*miette*" in French), so nothing (rather "*nimica*") is not even a whole crumb, but less than a crumb. That is why it is said: "*o nimica toată*" (almost nothing), that is a very small bit, than all – so, something

however that can still be divided, not an atom (it is also said: *un nimic, niște nimicuri* - a scraping, scrapings), language expressions appear to be aware of etymology). Space is fragmented for the language – and so is time: fragmented times and times ... But the linguist must do his centenary-long norm in reforms, otherwise he cannot explain evolution anymore, can he? ... To get out of this area of so pleasant digressions, we'll say simply that we accept this writing, but ask to be told where it changed, so that we, the ordinary readers, would know.

As to commas, again the contemporary linguist can say that they only help to recreate the fairy-tale atmosphere, are desirable ... If so, why don't the publishers put one more as follows: "an exquisite royal" because relatives are great, and kingly, is an apposition, wouldn't be good to be pointed out? Here, however, no one makes it an apposition. It is not about kings like great people, great family members - but it is about the great kings, the kings of the world (maybe even in temporal sequence), those who have kingdoms, not simple kings from fairytales. This must be emphasized when reciting, so the author invites us to use special accents. The poem of Eminescu starts with "there was once", but it does not continue in the logic of a fairytale: "Once upon a time, there were a king and a queen, and they had a daughter, and so on", but it stops at a most beautiful maid, who was the only child of her *parents*, but, again: the parents are to be found among the saints and the stars.

I think that nobody judges so simply the „overture” (Lucian Costache) of “Luceafărul” (*Evening Star*) anymore, as they notice that the basic text, the one from *Almanac*, stands out among the editions. The poet does not create fairytale atmosphere, but he judges the fairytale and passes beyond it, surpasses it going towards profound philosophical meanings. The Academician Alexandru Surdu told us once, in the smoking room of the Academy Library, that, in the preamble of “Luceafărul” (*Evening Star*) he acknowledges the definition given by Hegel in the introduction to “Science of Logics”: *being is nothingness* (I quote his words from memory „Das Sein, das reine Sein (...) ist das Nicht”); I can confirm that he would spell „Das reine Sein” exactly like „O prea frumoasă fată” (*a most beautiful maid*) afterwards. This presentation remained in my mind, and I found the text in the translation of D.D. Roșca: „Being, pure being (...) is, in fact, the void.” (GWF Hegel: “Science of Logics” p. 62-63, passim; he apologizes to Mr. Alexandru Surdu as, “although I do not have the necessary instruments to approach the issue in the strict area of the philosophy, I write about these things ‘relying on him’: I think I also do that to bring it to Eminescu himself”). You can find here the formula from the preamble of the Romanian fairytales, but it depends on how you read it. If I say “there was once”, it means that it happened as it has never happened before or as it shall never happen afterwards, it happened only once; in French: *une fois comme jamais* – so it was, it did happen, but we do not know exactly when. To this end, “once” can be written (and understood) as *once, only one time*, as Titu Maiorescu wrote and understood it in his third

edition. But, if you say as Eminescu did: *odată* ca nici *odată* (*once as not ever*), it means that you clearly deny *odată* (*once*), it was/happened with no determiner, so it has never happened (in French: *jamais pas jamais*, in Greek: *topos – atapos, kronos akronos*). *Luceafărul* (*Evening Star*) wants to say that *once upon a time there was*, as in fairytales, it is possible to happen as in fairytales; it is emphasized when reciting *a fost* (*it was/happened*) as a certainty: indeed, as in the fairytales from our days, it happened once upon a time. The argument from *Convorbiri literare* seems to me firmer, and I compare it with the situation from *Te duci* (*You leave*), verse 2: again, the firm argument from *Convorbiri* (refused though, by all the editors, one by one). But, besides this firm argument, it goes on with: it happened as it cannot happen, as it can never happen. But these events, this story, this myth ... are/is real. (The fairytale goes ironically out of the paradox, emphasizing it as follows: „Că dacă n-ar fi nu s-ar povesti” (*As, had it never happened, we could never tell it.*)) It is/happened without being, as it did not fall in the Time. It was not/did not happen in the past, it will not be/happen in any future: that means that it can be/happen any time, even now. Moreover: this means it is continuous, these events are underway now, are happening now, have always happened and shall always happen, continuously springing, looking for ... a time/ a “once” of their own.

To this end *Luceafărul* (*Evening Star*) is felt as *present*, and is *present* as a myth, i.e. we all live it, and it lives us all. (As at the end of the fairytale, with “Și au trăit fericiți până la adânci bătrânețe, și mai trăiesc și azi, etc.” (*And they lived happily ever after, and they still live, and so on and so forth*). Hyperion is continuously tempted to go down as a clayface and continuously restrains himself not to, as he has not the dimension of luck, i.e. he cannot be now and here, for this most beautiful girl: he may fall somewhere else (in time and space), he may find another girl, but not this one. He must let her look for him. But how is she going to recognize him among so many clay faces („Ce-ți pasă ție, chip de lut dac’ oi fi eu sau altul?” (*How much to you care, clay face, if it's me or another?*)) (with the original punctuation), how else unless by matching herself with somebody and ... invoking her luck?! Again to this end, ... the story writes about a girl who is not, but she is, she has no corporality, no time, she is only in our minds, a „virtual reality”, a reasoning ...

In a recently published book (Lucian Costache: *Mihai Eminescu. Eseuri deschise. Chipul de aer și chipul de lut* (*Mihai Eminescu. Open Essays. The Air Face and Clay Face*), Ed. Tiparg, Pitești, 2009), the author reads Eminescu with the original punctuation and forms and comes to similar conclusions. This book is a real encyclopaedia of Eminescu’s works, Mr. Lucian Costache consulting actively, for his analysis to „*Luceafărul*” (*Evening Star*), a really impressive bibliography. To the opening of the poem, he dedicates almost one hundred pages for a philological and stylistic analysis. Among the suggestions offered by him, I first quote this one, from Tudor Vianu: „it is a *niciodată* (*never*) neither of the

past, nor of the future, but a *niciodată* (*never*) of the *fiction*; the above-mentioned formula wants to say that the narrated story belongs to imagination/illusion, not to reality, it is ethereal and cosmic". I would gladly read Vianu again, only that Mr. Lucian Costache sends me to a new edition (Junimea, 1974), while the study of Tudor Vianu appeared in 1930, before the edition of Perpessicius, so he could not quote the latter one, i.e. it was modernized after our norms, from nowadays. Thus, I will not confront them now, but I remind you that, in ancient times, they used to quote from Eminescu after the first sources, and the editions used to be printed with the necessary circumspection. (I found at Vianu several quotations even from *Convorbiri literare*, with the punctuation from there).

But we would not stop to "Luceafărul" (*Evening Star*). We find *odată* (*once*) in many contexts in the works of Eminescu, for example in *Rugăciunea unui Dac* (*A Dacian's Prayer*), v. 6: „Pe când pământul, ceriul, văzduhul, lumea toată / Erau din rândul celor, ce n-au fost niciodată” (*When the earth, the sky, the blue, the whole world / were from among those which have not been once*) (C.L., Sept. 1<sup>st</sup>, 1879; in two previous manuscripts: *nici odată* (*not ever*), which is a proof that he studied the last form, the print form; at Titu Maiorescu: *nici-odată* in all the editions; for the rest, everywhere *niciodată*, the comma after *celor* (*among those which*) from C.L. is not kept anywhere), where we can find the same context: *a fi este a nu fi* (*to be is not to be*), except that those which “were” stayed this way, identical with themselves, in the uncreated world, and were waiting to become beings, faces, and realities. If we overlook the manuscript forms (as the common sense actually urges us), we have the clear situations in the printed forms: „a fost ca nici odată” (*there was once as not ever was*) *Luceafărul* (1883) – „n-au fost niciodată” (*they have never been*), *Rugăciunea unui Dac* (*A Dacian's Prayer*) (1879; the Eminescu's comma is very necessary here, as it clearly separates the quasi-identical categories: *celor, ce* (*among those, which*) and *cele, care* (*those, which*) are not the same, those which, they, but *unele* (*some*) as compared to *altele* (*others*)). To this end (*Rugăciunea unui Dac/A Dacian's Prayer*), never is „jamais” and shows the continuous time, undifferentiated, before the creation. One cannot say *nici odată* (*not ever*) about concepts which exist and only wait to enter the world.

Again in 1879, in *Despărțire* (*Separation*): „Să fie neagră umbra în care-oi fi perit / Ca și când niciodată noi nu ne-am fi găsit” (*Be it black the shadow in which I had disappeared / As if we had never found each other*) – identical situation: *nici odată* (*not ever*) for three times in the manuscripts, *nici-odată* (*ne'er*) at Titu Maiorescu, *niciodată* (*never*) in the first printed work. (What other clearer proof do we need to understand that he used to study the forms in the manuscripts, to decide about them in the final text?). The hypothetical situation from the argument has the same meaning *niciodată* – „jamais”.

We illustrate this with "Strigoii" (*Ghosts*): „...Și fost-ar fi mai bine / Ca niciodată'n viață să nu te văd pe tine” (*And it may have been better / for me, to*



*never ever have seen you in my life*), as we have an expression, probably a loaned translation from French: „jamais de ma vie”.

There is also a context which we would like to invalidate the above-mentioned statements.

We are talking about *Sonet (Trecut-ai anii)* (*Sonnet (The Years Have Passed)*), the first two verses, reproduced as follows nowadays:

Trecut-au ani ca nouri lungi pe şesuri  
 Şi niciodată n-or să vie iară  
*(Years went passing by as long veils(=clouds) over the plains,  
 And they will never ever come back)*

I read in MLR Edition the text established by Petru Creţia, who explains, in a separate study, why he preferred the form *nouri* (*veils*) from the manuscript [for *clouds*]. Indeed, it harmonizes more elegantly than the classical form [*clouds*] from Maiorescu Edition (the first print work; here, the editor does not put a hyphen, but uses two words, as in the preamble of *Luceafărul* (*Evening Star*):

Trecut-au anii ca nori lungi pe şesuri  
 Şi nici odată n’or să vie iară  
*(Years went passing by as long clouds over the plains,  
 And they will never ever come back)*

The manuscript form provides similarities especially for the nouns: *years* and *veils*, both not articulated. But the disagreement with the title is still there: “Trecut-au anii” (*The Years Went Passing By*). This appears only in the first print work. The manuscripts did not contain it. The one who gave it (Eminescu or Maiorescu) must have had in view the articulated form which repeats: *anii* (*the years*). There are 7 versions of this sonnet in Eminescu’s manuscripts, each of them very much worked, and the final (i.e. printed) text takes something from each of them. They are not first hand. It is clear that the author weighed properly each detail until he found the right form. But, in the choice made by Petru Creţia for „ani ca nouri” (*years like veils*), the 2<sup>nd</sup> verse is *Şi nici o dată n’or să vie iar* (*And they will not ever/once turn back*), as seen in Mss. 2260, 150 (deciphered by Perpessicius *niciodată* (*never*), linked, maybe intuitively or absent-mindedly). *Nici o dată* (*not ever/once*) is repeated in Mss. 2261, 237, this time written even by Perpessicius this way. We are not interested in the oscillation *nici o dată* - *niciodată* (*not ever/once* - *never*). It is more important that we have *nici odată* (*not ever*) in other forms.

After all, what does this poem want? At Eminescu, *Sonetele* (*Sonnets*) are fixed forms of incantation poetry, they raise the spirits, conjure, they remind us of *enigmas*, *superstitions* (*ghicitori*, *eresuri*). Here, the negation is strongly underlined

three times: *not ever, no, again* (*nici odată, nu, iarăși*). But, in the form of the first print, there still is a play-upon-words: (*lungi*) *nori* (*long clouds*) / *n'or* (*să vie*) (*will not/won't turn*). After all, it is a banal statement: the years have passed, and they won't turn back. Told to the long clouds, but which have no uniqueness, whose law is to turn back again and again, the irreversibility of time becoming relative. It is told three times that “*nu vine*” (*will not turn*) in firmer and firmer forms, among which *nici o dată* (*not ever/not even once*), not even once, it is very solid, but the image of *nour* (*the veil or cloud*) persisting in the play-upon-words ... gives some hope. In prophesies or incantations, divination texts in general, the word matches validate or invalidate; here, that *jamais* makes things relative. Let us pay attention to the logical accent (not necessarily to the prosody): Trecut-au ani ca *nouri* lungi pe șesuri / Și *niciodată* n-or să vie iară: the accent falls on *nouri* (*veils or clouds*), *niciodată* (*never*), nostalgically, but: Trecut-au *anii* ca *nori* lungi pe șesuri / Și *nici* odată n'or să vie iar, the accent falls on *anii* (*the years*) și *nici* (*not*), leaving a secondary accent line on the immediately following words: *nori* (*clouds*) – *n'or* (*will not*). After all, it is the „philosophy” of our „never say never” of nowadays. Even in *Luceafărul* (*Evening Star*), when saying at the presumptive mode: “N’oi merge *nici odată*” (*I won’t ever go*), the king’s daughter totally denies time, she thinks the action is relative and she leaves space for changes of mind, as a proof: the Evening Star really comes with the same entreaty / request. She does not state firmly: *Nu merg* (*I won’t come*), but leaves a trace of doubt: Maybe I’ll come, maybe I won’t (she even negotiates, asking him to come down on the earth, and so on).

It is important that the form „*nouri*” (*veils*) is in the manuscript 2260, 150, in correlation with *nici o dată* (*not ever/once*). The printed form, *nori* (*clouds*), is not in the manuscripts, but it is positioned in Maiorescu’s Edition besides the word *nici odată* (“*ne’er*”). The play-upon-words made by Eminescu cannot be destroyed by choosing the manuscript form *nouri* (*veils or clouds*), no matter how expressive and grammatically comfortable it would be (and, with Eminescu, *nouri* (*veils or clouds*) is recurrent, see also the character *Toma Nor*; moreover, the exception from here must be considered as relevant and must be kept), and *nici odată* (*ne’er*), split as it is, must be kept with the value from the preamble of *Luceafărul* (*Evening Star*): there, something is continuous, as negation is negated; here, it is seen as relative as, although mounted in a triple negation, it still stays in a powerful connection with the compared reality. Had he said: the years are *not* like the clouds which come and go, the years do not turn back again, the author would have told a simple truth, noticeable for everybody; when he says that the years are (passing) as clouds do, it is something else. It means that he hopes for them to come back or, as in *Cu mâne zilele-ți adaogi* (*With Tomorrow, You Add More Days to Yours*, from the same manuscript area), that he intends to develop his own theory of the complete time.

## LUCIAN BLAGA AND HIS PHILOSOPHY

Angela BOTEZ\*

**Abstract.** The intellectual *ecstasis* of the aspiration to synthesis was the only one able to create the matrix of a new metaphysics, adapted to the spirit of a new aeon, Blaga tried out the power of the antinomic method in the very elaboration of his work. Thus, Blaga's system is build up around dual and complementary concepts such as consciousness and unconsciousness, enstatic and ecstatic intellect, Kantian and abyssal categories duplicates, Luciferian and paradisiac types of knowledge, anabasic and cabasic, etc. The so-called dogmatic method - the method of 'transfigured antinomy' - the complementary duality, in fact-realises the shift in orientation from plus-knowledge to minus-knowledge, by applying the antinomic perspective to the dichotomy known-unknown. On this ground, it can be explained why the unknown as a whole is not decreased by the deduction of the known; on the contrary, it actually increases by being put into words, opening itself to new logical potentials.

**Keywords:** Lucian Blaga, philosophy, stylistic matrix, Luciferian knowledge, Paradisiac knowledge

Lucian Blaga is one of the most prominent persons in the history of Romanian culture. A great poet and philosopher, his works had a decisive influence on the Romanian poetry of the 20th century and on the self-definition of the Romanian national consciousness, and represented a major contribution to the foundation of the metaphysics of knowledge, of the categorical philosophy of the unconscious and of the philosophy of cultural styles.

Lucian Blaga was born in Transylvania, on May 9th 1895. He was the ninth child of the parish priest (Romanian Orthodox Church) of Lancram, a village situated near Alba Iulia in Transylvania, at that time part of the Kingdom of Hungary within the Austro-Hungarian Empire. He attended high school and the School of Theology in Transylvania. Then he went to Vienna, where he attended the courses of the Faculty of Philosophy, getting his Ph.D. degree with a thesis on *Kultur und Erkenntnis (Culture and Knowledge)*. At the age of 15, he published his first poems in the literary review *Tribuna* and at the age of 19, he published his first philosophical essay *Notes on Intuition with Bergson* in *Review Românul* in Arad. In 1919 he published his first volume of poetry, *Poems of the Light* and a volume of aphorismes *Stones for my Temple*. In 1924 his first book of philosophy *The Philosophy of Style* was published. It was the beginning of a prolific career,

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which produced many volumes of poetry and philosophical works. The latter would finally constitute the four trilogies (*Trilogy of Cognition, Trilogy of Culture, Trilogy of Values, Cosmological Trilogy*), which define his philosophical system, articulated on central categories such as mystery, style and culture. His work also includes plays, a novel, essays, memoirs and aphorisms. Between 1924 and 1939 he was a press attaché, cultural counsellor and minister plenipotentiary in six European capitals. From 1939 to 1947 he was highly appreciated as the Professor of Philosophy of Culture at the University of Cluj. Elected a member of the Romanian Academy, Blaga delivered in the presence of King Carol II of Romania one of the most consistent and expressive reception speeches, *Eulogy to the Romanian Village*, a fundamental text for anyone who wants to understand the special character of the Romanian people. The response was given by another philosopher, Ion Petrovici.

Blaga was a brilliant translator of Goethe Lessing. He spent the last years of his life as a mere librarian and researcher because of the communist regime. He died in 1961 at Cluj.

Blaga's philosophy is frequently reprinted, and commented abroad as well in Romania. After the Italian version of his book, *Horizon and Style (Orizzonte e stile)* was published in 1946, L'Age de l'homme, Publishing House, edited *L'Eon dogmatique* (1988); then Librairie du savoir (Paris) published *L'Éloge du village roumain* (1989), *L'être historique* (1990) and *Les différentiels divines* (1990). Other studies included in the *Trilogies* were translated and published in French by a team from the Sorbonne. As time goes by, Blaga's work proves to be an endless source of meanings and significations in the confrontation with new trends in thinking and new artistic models. Bear witness to that the unsettled controversies, the multitude of approaches and interpretations it gives occasion to by its vivid strength, the sign of the great spiritual creations, which defy centuries and paradigms by the very fact that they remain open to rational and sensible understanding, that, in spite of accumulations data in knowledge, they preserve their ideative challenge, their ability to incite the mind to search for new solutions of the central mystery of our Being. Around thirty monographies and numerous studies on Lucian Blaga's works were edited in Romania.

The critical bibliography of Blaga's works also includes titles published outside Romania like: *Profili di estetica europea: Lucian Blaga*, Gaston Bachelard, Carl Gustav Jung, Casa editrice Oreste Bayes, Rome, 1971, *Contributions à l'histoire de la versification roumaine: La prosodie de Lucian Blaga*, Akademiai Kiado, Budapest, 1972. Beginning in 1932, twenty-three foreign encyclopaedias and lexicons have mentioned his work. The *Encyclopaedia of Philosophy* (ed. Edwards, 1962) underlines the originality and harmonious architecture of his philosophical system in the article on Romanian (Rumanian) philosophy.

“The most gifted and original thinker has been Lucian Blaga, the only Rumanian philosopher to have completed an extremely complex system, including a highly personal metaphysics, a new theory of knowledge, and a detailed morphology of culture. In this ambitious construction Blaga utilised myths, symbols, and ideas from popular Rumanian traditions, both religious and secular. For the first time, the autochthonous heritage of Rumania found philosophical expression”<sup>1</sup>.

Antonio Banfi dedicates to Blaga a whole chapter in his book *Filosofia dell'Arte* (Editori Riuniti, Rome) and names him 'one of the most vivid and original contemporary philosophers'. A society for the philosophy of style was created at the Sorbonne, bearing Blaga's name. Far from Blaga's becoming dated, his conceptions become more and more topical as time goes by.

Blaga was a brilliant translator of Goethe (*Faustus*) and Lessing. He spent the last years of his life as a mere librarian because of the communist regime. Nominated for the Nobel Prize 1956 on the proposal of Bazil Munteanu (France) and Rosa del Conte (Italy), he was on the point of getting the award when the communist government in Bucharest sent emissaries to Sweden to protest against his nomination with false political allegations.

The place of Lucian Blaga's works within the context of philosophical thinking between the wars in Romania is a singular one, which partly explains their more or less sinuous 'destiny' after the author's death. His posterity recorded the most various and antagonistic attitudes toward his work, even extreme ones occasionally, from apology to a negation. The diversity of the comments represents in itself a proof of the complexity and the far-reaching implications of his work. Obviously, the critical and thorough analysis of his works is far from being completed. New facets of the text unveil themselves for the observant reader all the time. Honest and unprejudiced exegeses, dedicated to the thorough examination of the intrinsic philosophical value of his works, reveals the specificity of his system and method, as well as the central concepts of his thinking: mystery, style, transfigured antinomy, the Great Anonym, the categories of unconsciousness.

A comparative analysis of Blaga's ideas within the context of modern orientations in thinking would define his position as kindred to and yet different from those of Kant, Goethe, Nietzsche, Spengler, Husserl, Berdiaev, Cassirer, Freud, Jung and Heidegger. His modern openings toward dual, polarised philosophy, and towards complementarity, define his conceptions as a special form of rationalism-ecstatic rationalism. Together with other Romanians - Vasile Conta, Mircea Florian, Stephane Lupasco, D. D. Rosca, Constantin Noica - Blaga outlines a

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<sup>1</sup> Paul Edwards (ed.), *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Collier – Mac Millan Ltd. London.

certain type of discourse specific to Romanian philosophy between the wars, which gave new meanings to metaphysics, unconsciousne antinomy and relativity.

In Blaga's opinion the supreme spiritual value is metaphysics: 'In metaphysical creation we can see the very crowning of philosophical thinking', he writes.

We shall spare no effort in pleading in favour of such an appreciation. The metaphysician is the author of a world. Any philosopher who does not aim at becoming the author of a world simply betrays his own vocation; he may sometimes be a really brilliant thinker, still he would remain an advocate of unfulfilment... It is true that a metaphysical vision is never final; that is, no success makes useless a new attempt. A metaphysical vision represents an historical moment, meaning that in a way its fragility is inherent in its very conditions and structure... We have to get accustomed to approaching metaphysical conceptions from a different point of view than that of regret for their perishability. We are then able to grasp that particular sensitivity of weighing a metaphysical vision according to its depth and inner harmony. We repeat: whenever we have to judge some metaphysical conception we are asked to use an immanent critique. Under such flashes of light, the transitoriness with which each metaphysical conception is stigmatised grows into a fatality which is inherent in even the most evident achievements of the human mind<sup>1</sup>.

'Contrary to classic systems, this system I am working on', Blaga explains, 'has a symphonic character; it is not the system of a single idea, nor of a single formula; it is structured just like a many-steepled church. This system contains numerous intertwined main leitmotifs, that reiterate from one study to another and a rhythmically alternating succession. Eventually, all studies overflow as a metaphysical vision of the whole of existence; the last volume of each of the trilogies attempts to be a crowning of the others and a metaphysical turning to account of the problems discussed'.

For Blaga, metaphysics is something different from science, from philosophy with scientific aspects. 'Metaphysics is always a jump into the uncontrollable, a creation of imagination... experience plays here only the role of a veto when metaphysics contradicts it, but experience is not asked to check and positively control metaphysical conceptions'.

"In the *Transcendental Censure*, Blaga admits that "an absolute metaphysical principle" exists as well as an individuated cognition, their relationship being perceived as a relationship between productive existence

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<sup>1</sup> Lucian Blaga, *Trilogia cunoasterii*, (Trilogy of Cognition). Ed. Minerva, Bucharest, 1983, pp. 74-75.

and a produced existence, that is between the creator and the created, between an X that determines and a determined result. According to Blaga, the absolute metaphysical principle is what metaphysics has always taken to be substance, the absolute ego, the immanent reason, the unconscious, the consciousness etc., that is all that he calls "the Great Anonymous". He is not interested in finding out whether the Great Anonymous is immanent or transcendent as related to existence, but in learning that the Great Anonymous is characterized by the central place taken in the system of existence. The thesis on the relationship between the Great Anonymous and personal cognition is thus formulated by the Romanian thinker: "For reasons that pertain to existential balance, the great Anonymous defends himself and all the mysteries deriving hence, from aspirations of any individual cognition, creating between these and the existential mysteries a network of insulating factors. The insulating network placed between the existential mysteries and individuated cognition appears as censure"<sup>1</sup>.

The potentiality of dual thinking has been realised and represents a topical subject of debate at present, but an exegesis such as the one Blaga devoted to it in *The Dogmatic Aeon* and in his entire work, has not been reiterated so far, at least not to our knowledge. Establishing his roots in ancient modalities of reflection, whether philosophical, religious or mystical and following its manifestations in the history of culture, the Romanian philosopher proved that dual, antinomic thinking is specific to man and becomes manifest in times of aeonic renewal, characterised by major shifts in spiritual paradigms. As a main feature of such periods of transition, Hellenism and the 20th century share it, as well as the aspiration to synthesis, the dovetailing of oriental and western thinking, the triumph of 'configuration' in science, the search for deep meanings of existence in myths and symbols, in new philosophical constructions and significations (the relativity of orientations in philosophy, the interest in the philosophy of history, the inauguration of a new ontology). Convinced that this way of intellectual *ecstasis* was the only one able to create the matrix of a new metaphysics, adapted to the spirit of a new aeon, Blaga tried out the power of the antinomic method in the very elaboration of his work. Thus, Blaga's system is build up around dual and complementary concepts such as consciousness and unconsciousness, enstatic and ecstatic intellect, Kantian and abyssal categories duplicates, Luciferian and paradisiac types of knowledge, anabasic and cabasic etc. The so-called dogmatic method - the method of 'transfigured antinomy' - the complementary duality, in fact-realises the shift in orientation from plus-knowledge to minus-knowledge, by applying the antinomic perspective to the dichotomy known- unknown. On this

<sup>1</sup> Vintila Horia, *Preface to a Renewal* (Foreword to the Aeon Dogniatique), French transl. L'Age de l'homme. Publ. House, Paris. 1986.

ground, it can be explained why the unknown as a whole is not decreased by the deduction of the known; on the contrary, it actually increases by being put into words, opening itself to new logical potentials. Antinomy, Blaga states, will bring forth the future cultural coherence, where science will open new mysteries 'by Luciferian knowledge', entering a new stylistic field, characterised by new orientations, horizons and values (of a systemic, contextualist, complementary type, we should add).

Within the contemporary intellectual contexts, when renowned scientists and philosophers (R. Thorn, E. Laszlo, I. Prigogine, M. Bunge, S. Lupasco, etc.) manifest interest in a new philosophy of nature, in an ontology of the human (psyche, social, moral), Blaga's metaphysics, as an ontological theory of culture, opens a surprisingly prolific philosophical horizon. The Archimedean point of his thinking lies in his conception of the categorical structure of the unconsciousness and of the stylistic matrix, the way stylistic categories function in the process of creation being the link among the philosophies of knowledge, culture and values, while his metaphysical construction represents the final fulfilment, in the horizon of mystery, of all his indisputably original philosophical approaches

However, in company with important contemporary names in philosophy of science (Koyre, Collingwood, Kuhn, Prigogine, Polanyi, Rorty, Chomsky, Thorn etc.), Blaga's contributions are both essential and actual, as he investigated the cognitive dimensions of science in an ontological, cultural, historical and axiological context and realised the interdisciplinary integration of philosophy of science, on the one hand, and theory of knowledge, the philosophy of culture and axiology, on the other. Like recent theories of the 'innate' in knowledge and of the 'historical entities' in the field of the dynamics of science, of the disciplinary matrices and contexts of the anthropology of epistemological outlooks, Blaga introduced many original and interesting ideas such as: the stylistic and cultural approach to science, the theory of categorical doubles, of the over-method and of minus-knowledge, of differences and connections between science and philosophy etc., ideas which became even more relevant within the context of the dispute with the adepts of neo-positivism and the adepts of phenomenology. Like R.T. Allen notes for example:

From comparativist analysis between Polanyi and Blaga result that they were both interested in the deep structures of the mind and its knowledge, structures of which, they both emphasised, we are not normally aware yet which guide our proximate knowledge and action. Both of them were thus radically opposed to those Empiricist theories which, in Locke's words, regard the mind as a 'blank tablet' passively receiving 'impressions', and to Positivist philosophies which deny the very existence of frameworks of thought and interpretation of experience. Equally, and unlike Kant, they had



a sense of the historical and developing character of those structures and frameworks, yet, unlike many post-modern thinkers, they also emphasised our commitment to truth and to revealing the real world that is independent of our knowing. These are the lines that any genuine philosophy must take. In particular, they both recognised that reality transcends our cognitive abilities and that it cannot be confined within any formulae. Blaga regards mystery as an essential and distinctive feature of man and human awareness, a permanent background to all our knowledge. He criticises theories of cognition, and especially of science, which reduce all knowledge to what he calls Type 1 (or 'paradisic') knowledge, in which certain categories, not varying greatly across history, are applied fairly straight-forwardly in perception and action. In contrast, science also requires Type 2 (or 'Luciferian') knowledge which applies deeper categories, relating to man's distinctive existence within a horizon of mystery and revealing those mysteries. These categories are much less fixed and general, and themselves guided by yet deeper, 'abyssal', categories which form a 'stylistic field. Blaga rejects the Positivist characterisation of such categories, e.g. teleology in biology, as 'useful fictions', and stresses that they function to reveal mysteries. Polanyi likewise emphasises the roles of intellectual frameworks and the activity of the knower in the formation of our knowledge, and also is aware of their variability while insisting that we aim at truth 'with universal intent', although we can never quite get there, a point that Blaga also makes. Polanyi again criticised the 'pseudo-substitutions offered for the notion of truth ('economy', 'simplicity', Kant's 'regulative ideas') which tacitly trade on the notion of truth which they supposed to replace. He also maintained that reality outruns our attempts to know it and that it cannot be confined within our formula<sup>1</sup>.

In order to seize the entire novelty of Blaga's vision, the analysis of his sources (the morphology of culture, the philosophy of life, psycho-analysis) is relevant, as well as the comparative approach in connection with structuralism (Lévy-Bruhl, Foucault), existentialism (Heidegger, Jaspers) or with postmodernism (Polanyi, Rorty).

As CO. Schrag mentions "Lucian Blaga was able to marshall conceptual and spiritual resources for addressing the philosophical situation of our time. It were as though Blaga anticipated the intersection/confrontation of the modernist and postmodernist cultures at our own fin-de-siecle. And it is his notion of "transfigured antinomy" that we find to be of particular pertinence for addressing the issues at hand.

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<sup>1</sup> Lucian Blaga, *Trilogia cunoasterii (Trilogy of Knowledge)*, Edit. Minerva, Bucharest, 1983, p. 643.

The dynamic of a transfigured antinomy is such that the differences at issue retain their integrity whilst being transfigured in Such a manner as to be comprehended through a complementarity of perspectives, articulated via a new logic of opposition. Now it was the genius of Blaga to discern the applicability of the dynamics of transfigured antinomies not only across the specialized areas of the physical sciences, but also with the developing fields of micro and macro biology, as well as within the wider cultural existence of the human species. That which strikes us as being of particular moment in Blaga's understanding and use of the notion of transfigured antinomy is its relevance for addressing the modernity versus postmodernity problematic of our time. On the one hand we are presented with a logic of identity, with its claims for a unity of knowledge, a totality of explanation, and a universal commensurability; and on the other hand we encounter the partisans of difference, plurality, heterogeneity, incommensurability, and historical particularity. The modernist would have us keep the vision of a universal logos wherewith to secure the stable contents of knowledge; the postmodernist, positioned against the logocentrism of modernity, would have us scatter the universal logos to the wind and make do with the heterogeneity of language games and the relativity of historically-specific beliefs and practices. With our notion of transversal rationality *cum* communication we are position to split the difference between the universal logos of modernity and the anti-logos of postmodernity, utilizing the resources of an expanded reason that is able to extend across the differences of beliefs and perspectives, converging with them without achieving coincidence at a point of identity. And it is with a measure of philosophical excitement that we have found a family resemblance of our notion of transversal rationality in Lucian Blaga's notion of transfigured antinomy<sup>1</sup>.

To re-think the human world from the perspective of the man-nature- culture triad, as Blaga does in his *Trilogy of Knowledge*, means to create new philosophical discipline-noology-concerned with the uniqueness of the human, with the ontological meaning of culture and of metaphor, with the structure of the noosphere (the layer of ideas that surrounds the earth). No less important is Blaga's critical analysis of biologist theories (Gehlen, Alsberg), which marks him off from Bergson, Freud, Nietzsche, and Cassirer.

Equally noteworthy are his visions of the philosophy of art (the law of nontransponsibility, polar and vector values) and of religion as a form of culture. Conceived as an ontological mutation, culture is the standpoint of the building and architecture of Blaga's system. Man exists as a creative subject in the universe

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<sup>1</sup> CO. Schrag, *Philosophy at the End of the XX<sup>th</sup> Century with Note on Blaga* in Romanian Review nr. 1/1996.

through culture alone, he became a constituent part of his being. Therefore philosophy, as both knowledge and metaphysical construction, science, as cognitive act and cultural creation, noology as investigation of the uniqueness of the human and the genesis of the metaphor, they all lead, through the stylistic matrix, to man as being in the centre of cultural values, which, in their turn, are constituent parts of each spiritual aeon.

The influence of Neo-Kantism, of Hegel, of Goethe, of the philosophy of life and of the morphology of culture on Blaga, as well as the originality of his thinking, can be traced in philosophy but also in his literary work. Neither his poetry, a lyrical expression of the ontological mutation within an inner tension due to the relationship between man and Cosmos, nor his plays, which project human drama on the level of the universal Whole and reveal the passage from appearance to essence, from the momentary to the transcendent, can be grasped without taking into account his spiritual biography, and his philosophical vision.

As did Brancusi<sup>1</sup>, Tuculescu, Ion Barbu and other Romanian artists close to the vision of the mioritic space, Blaga retraces the origins of creation in search for the stylistic matrices, for the primordial patterns, for the layer of genesis, a universal vision of the organic in an endless dissemination of variants around some imagistic centres, some cardinal ideas. Through his entire work, Blaga valued the creative genius of the Romanian people and sustained the self-consciousness and dignity of Romanian culture its specificity among other European cultures and emphasised its values in their entire complexity and continuity. Early as 1936, he was writing:

The close and tenacious examination of our folk culture led us to the gratifying certitude of the existence of a Romanian stylistic matrix. Its latencies barely perceived justify the conclusion that we have a high cultural potential. All we can say, without fear of being contradicted by further evolutions, is that we are the bearers of huge possibilities. All we can state, without violating lucidity, is that we trust we have been assigned to enlighten, with our flower to come, a corner of the Earth. All we can hope, without making ourselves prey to illusions, is the pride of some historic spiritual initiatives that would flow, from time to time, like sparks over the heads of other peoples<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Edgar Papu, *Blaga-Brancusi Galaxy*, Romanian Review 5/1985.

<sup>2</sup> Lucian Blaga, *Triogia Culturii (Trilogy of Culture)* Ed. Minerva, Bucharest, 1985, p. 331.



## ELIADE ON SACRED AND CENTER

Victor BOTEZ\*

*Motto:* „Man becomes himself when he acknowledges his history.”

**Abstract.** The subject of Eliade’s research is constituted by the *experience* of space as it is lived by the religious man, as well as by the man rejecting the sacredness of the world, the center, assuming a profane existence that seems purified of any religious presupposition. An *entirely* profane World, the totally de-sacred Cosmos, seemed possible in the newer visions brought about by the industrial society. Yet, reality proves that the profane *existence* does not manifest itself in a pure state, although the degree of de-sacredness of the World has increased. Eliade used to believe that the sacred is hidden within the profane, as well as for Freud or Marx profane was hidden within the sacred. He sustains that the upmost de-sacred existence keeps yet the traces of a religious valorization of the World, especially privileged places, qualitatively different from all the others such as the natal land, the ambient of the first love, etc., favoring the instances of „crypto-religious” behavior of the profane man.

**Key words:** Eliade, center, religious existence, profane existence, de-sacredness, „crypto-religious” behavior

Mircea Eliade has given six decades of his life to the science and philosophy of religion. The articles from the Romanian press and the correspondence with the great Italian scientists dedicated to spirituality, but especially the courses at Bucharest University of his brilliant Professor and mentor Nae Ionescu, prove him as early as the age of 19-20 years old preoccupied by the specific character of the religious experience, especially of the mystical one. The fundamental book entitled *The Sacred (Das Heilige, 1917)* of the German Rudolf Otto strongly influenced his own research from the perspective of „religion as an attitude of the spirit” and of the *numinos* – the irrational element of the religious experience. These sources provide the foundation for Eliade’s audacity to affirm as early as the age of 20 that „religious feeling can pretend to represent next to reason the other center of human consciousness”. Eliade entertained relations of collaboration, friendship and mutual appreciation of their scholar work with the reputed Professor from Marburg University (where he had as a colleague Heidegger, nevertheless, as famous). However, among the nouns for *sacred* in different languages, the Romanian scholar appreciated as the most representative the German one: *Das Heilige*.

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In the articles dedicated to Papini's Christianity published in the newspaper *Cuvântul* [The Word] or in *Est-Vest* [East-West] in 1927, or in *Itinerar spiritual X* [Spiritual Itinerary X] he evokes Unamuno and Buonaiuti to highlight „the formidable and permanent wonder which is Christianity (...)” considering that it is „the most perfect religion (...)” for it „brought man the closest to his Creator”(...) and that „return to Church is both redeeming and necessary”.

The pulsing of teenage and maybe even the wish to astonish, as well as the influence of the lectures from Papini that arose his admiration for asceticism and heroism, urged Eliade, at the age of 20 years old, to „describe Christianity as a religion of heroism and individual fight, but not of divine grace.” Țurcanu quotes from *Gaudeamus* ( the 1929 novel of Mircea Eliade): „I do not believe in God. I only believe in Jesus Christ, the first and foremost hero of Christianity”.

As known, during the next three years (1928-1931) Eliade will study in India the autochthonous myths and religions, the tantric texts, the Sanskrit language and he will learn asceticism in an ashram in Himalaya. In his talks with Claude-Henri Rocquet, Eliade will affirm that the most powerful religious, mystic and spiritual experience was the one he lived in India. And from there on his career of scientific, philosophic and literary excellence took off. During the third and the fourth decades of the last century he consolidates his reputation as Orientalist and as reputed scholar in the morphology of the religious phenomena. He had the idea of the *Prolegomena to the Compared History of Religions* within the anti-aerial shelter of the Romanian Legation from London, bombed night after night by the *Luftwaffe*, philosophical work where not really the diachronic aspect is predominantly relevant, but the structure, concepts and symbols, and also there appeared the inspiration for the literary state-of-the-art novel *Noaptea de Sânziene*. At that time the coordinating convictions at the basis of his entire scientific, literary and philosophical activity gained shape, along with the idea of unity and sacredness of Cosmos and life, as well as the idea of interrelation among spirit, freedom and sacredness.

The consciousness of a real and meaningful world – said Eliade at old age in his memoirs *Încercarea labirintului* [The Trial of the Maze] – is intimately related to the discovery of the sacred. The sacred is not just a stage in the history of the consciousness; it is an element in the structure of this consciousness. „The sacred does not imply the belief in Gods or in spirits. It is – and I underline this – the experience of a reality and the spring of the consciousness of the existence in the world.” Until Eliade *the sacred* was used predominantly as an attribute, not as a substantive, sustained in a study of Paola Pisi. The critic Florin Țurcanu remarked that adopting on a broad scale the term „sacred” in his theoretical vocabulary Eliade made it the key term of his postwar thought.

In his preface to *Traité d'Histoire des Religions* Eliade pleaded for an objective and well-balanced approach in his researches: „any manifestation of the spirit is important; any rite, any myth, any belief or divine figure reflects the

*experience* of the sacred and, as a consequence implies the notions of being, meaning and truth (...). By the experience of the sacred, the human spirit noticed the difference between what reveals itself as real, powerful, rich in meanings, and what lack any of these qualities, that is, the chaotic and dangerous flow of things, their fortuitous apparitions and disappearances, deprived of meaning.”

Georges Dumézil, the academician and the steady friend and supporter of Mircea Eliade’s career in France, said about the value of the *Traité* edited at Payot: «On est venu – ou revenu – à l’idée qu’une religion est un système, différent de la poussière de ses éléments; qu’elle est une pensée articulée, une explication du monde. Bref, c’est *sous le signe du logos et non sous celui de mana que se place aujourd’hui la recherche*”. („They come – or, they have returned – to the idea that religion is a system, different from the myriad (*la poussière*) of its elements; that it is an articulated thought, an explanation of the world. Briefly, religion is under the sign of *logos* and not under that of *mana* under which the present research is placed.”

*Mana* is in the beliefs of the Melanesians and Polynesians a force or a supernatural power attributed to the persons, spirits or matter deprived of soul. It has a dual character; it can be good or bad, related to *powerful beings or objects*. The West used it in the 19<sup>th</sup> century only with relation to religion, but during the last century it interpreted it as a symbolic manner of expressing the special qualities of important persons, as social position, or to explain unluckily actions or failures. To the latter explanation was Dumézil referring pejoratively, underlining that the treaty of Eliade was under the superior sign of *logos*.

Each of the great domains of the human knowledge and human creations is constituted as a system organized around a central, dominant value as a pivot on which the others are aggregated. *The sacred* is in religion the equivalent of what represents *the truth* in science, *the beautiful* in art, *the good* in morals, *the doubt* in philosophy, *the information* in mass-media, etc.

The most natural definition for the sacred was obtained by the opposite or the contrary of certain concepts. „Man acknowledges the existence of the sacred because it manifests and presents itself as a totally different thing from the profane” – stated Eliade in one of his essayistic works, destined to broad audiences, with the observation that he does not approach the subject solely from the perspective of the discipline that consecrated him – the history of religions. *Homo religiosus* presents interest also for the philosophical anthropology, phenomenology, and psychology. „The experience of the sacred is the manner of existence”, concludes Eliade from an ontological perspective.

He turns to the term *hierophany* to explain the act of the „manifestation of the sacred”. The hierophany expresses only what is comprised within the etymological meaning: that is, we are shown *something sacred*. One may say that the history of religions, from the most primitive to the most elaborate, is composed of an accumulation of hierophanies, of the manifestations of the sacred

realities.” Exemplifying, Eliade shows that there is no rupture between the most elementary hierophany, as a manifestation of the sacred in a stone beneath a tree, to the supreme hierophany, which is, for the Christian, the embodiment of God in Jesus Christ.

The famous hierophanies of Eliade say, hence, about the stone, or about the sacred tree that „they are not adored as such”, but because they „show” something which is neither stone nor tree, but sacred, *ganz andere*”. We are, obviously, in front of a paradox. Expressing the sacred, any object unspecific, becomes *something else*, without ceasing to be *their own self*, because they continue to belong to its cosmic universe. The whole Nature could present itself to the people who have a religious experience as cosmic sacredness. „The Cosmos, in its entirety, – generalizes Eliade – could become a hierophany”.

At origin, within the archaic societies, in fact, in all the pre-modern societies, sacred means power, and then, in its process of becoming, it means *reality*. The wish of the religious man *to be*, more precisely, to be a part of reality, determines sacredness to be saturated of being, to feel saturated of power.

*Sacred* and *profane* – writes Eliade in *Das Heilige und das Profane* (the edition published in Germany in 1957) are two manners of existence in the world, two existential situations assumed by the human being in history, actually, determined by the different positions conquered by the human being in Cosmos.

The subject of Eliade’s research is constituted by the *experience* of space as it is lived by the religious man, as well as by the man rejecting the sacredness of the world, assuming a profane existence that seems purified of any religious presupposition. The *entirely* profane World, the totally de-sacred Cosmos, seemed possible in the newer visions brought about by industrial society. Yet, reality proves that the profane *existence* does not manifest itself in a pure state, although the degree of de-sacredness of the World has increased: “I believe that the sacred is hidden within the profane, as well as for Freud or Marx, the profane was hidden within the sacred.” As following, Eliade sustains that the upmost de-sacred existence keeps yet the traces of a religious valorization of the World, especially privileged places, qualitatively different from all the others such as the natal land, the ambient of the first love, etc., favoring the instances of „crypto-religious” behavior of the profane man.

The sacred space eases the acquiring of a „fix point”, the possibility of orientation within the homogeneous chaos, envisions the „creation of the World” and the real feeling, while the profane experience maintains the relativity of the space. In the profane, the *true* orientation disappears because the „fix point” of support does not have a unique ontological status anymore, appearing and disappearing according to the daily needs of the industrial society. Therefore, the World and the space look as „some fragments” of a shattered universe, the amorphous mass of an infinite number of „places”, predominantly neutral.



The classic examples for sacred space are well-known: the Church, the temple, the sanctuaries within which premises the profane world is eluded, where the communication with the Gods is possible usually through the images and the symbols of certain *openings* towards the heights, most of the times named the „Gateways to Heavens” – places of passing, between the Sky and the Earth. Other places could be added, all bearing meanings, suspending relativity and confusion, emphasizing the sacredness of certain places, and the incentive to piety and recollection.

The conclusions of the researchers on the experience of the sacred space show that it permits the founding of the World, where it *unveils the real* and the World begins to exist. Eliade sustains also that the „irruption of the sacred does not project only a fix point of support amidst the amorphous fluidity of the profane space, a „Center” in the Chaos, but also a rupture of level, „opens communication between the cosmic levels (the Earth and the Sky) easing the passing through, of an ontological order, from a manner of existence to the other.”

As well from this ample ontological perspective, Eliade concludes that the religious man cannot live but in a sacred world, because only this world participate to the being and *truly* exist. This religious necessity mirrors an unquenchable ontological thirst. „Religious man is thirsty for being”.

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We shall not insist here anymore on the component of the *sacred time* and the profane length, on the primordial mythical time, of the regeneration through return to the *time of origin* or the *festive Time* and structure of the holidays, brought back into the present time to sooner arrive at the symbolism of the Center. Only two decisive phrases from Eliade’s vision: „The experience of the sacred Time will allow the religious man to find again, periodically, the Cosmos as it were, *in principio*, in the mythical moment of Creation” (...). „This religious nostalgia mirrors in fact the *wish to live in a pure and holly Cosmos, as it were at the beginnings of times, when it exited the hands of the Creator*”.

The Hierophany of Space reveals the necessity of an absolute fix point named „Center”. Nothing occurs within the sacred space without an anterior *orientation* and any orientation presupposes acquiring a fix point. This is the reason why religious man strived to situate himself in the „Center of the world”.

The Earth, the Sky, and the inferior regions – the world of the dead can communicate by the means of an image of a universal column (*Universalius columna*), there where is a rupture produced amongst the three cosmic levels. This *Axis mundi*, in popular terms „the belly button of the world” is the Center of the World, whose coherent and complex symbolism renders comprehensible the traditional behavior toward the „space of life” of the religious man. The Center of

the World can be the mythic or real Cosmic Mountain, for instance „The Mountain of the Countries in Mesopotamia”, or „the Belly Button” in Palestine, which is to be considered the highest place of the World, where Christians think there is Golgotha. From this perspective we understand the assertion that „our world” in its entirety is holly land, because it is constituted as *the closest place to the skies*.

Other cosmologic images and religious beliefs situate in the Center of the World holly cities (Jerusalem, the Capital of the Chinese Sovereign) or in sanctuaries, in the temples that make the „connection” between Sky and Earth, in countries situated with predilection in the middle of the World such as Iran, or the Babylonian sanctuaries, etc. Each of these envisions at the same time an image of the world, *imago mundi*.

„The man of the pre-modern societies – Eliade writes – wants to be situated as close as possible to the Center of the World”. Even more than that, he also wants that his own house is *imago mundi*. *Homo religiosus* felt the need to live always in the Center, as did Achilpa Australians who took along with them everywhere their earthly but sacred pole. Similarly, the creation of man represents a replica of cosmogony, for the first man was made in the „belly button of the Earth” according to the Mesopotamian tradition, in the Center of the World (in conformity with the Iranian tradition) or at Jerusalem (according to the Judeo-Christian traditions).

Eliade raises even higher the meditative level within the series of hierophanies, as well as the level of his hermeneutic vision, of the ontological interpretation. „The Genesis of the World becomes the archetype of any creator gesture of man, whichever would be his plan of reference.”

The Cosmic symbolism of the village is illustrated through the tradition from Bali Island to set the village placing the landmark at a natural cross-road, where two paths naturally unfold perpendicularly, as a consequence, dividing also the rural community in conformity with the original division of the Universe in the four horizons. Ancient Italy or pre-Medieval Germany offers the example of similar structures, such as *Roma quadrata*, or the Germanic villages and cities and the pre-Medieval cities systematized according to the same cosmologic scheme and the same ritualist scenario.

Thus, we arrive at what Eliade considered the highest representation of the Center precisely for the human being. Another more expressive explanation is offered by the symbol of Maze. „The Myth of Ulysses – said Eliade to Claude-Henri Rocquet – is very important for us. Each of us will have something of Ulysses, and as him, we are in a search for ourselves, hoping to arrive, and then, undoubtedly, finding again the country, the home, we succeed to find ourselves again. But, as in the Maze, in any peregrination there is risk to lose oneself. If you succeed to exit the Labyrinth, to find your home again, then you become a different being”.

Asked how dialogues the polyglot, the peregrine of cultures, of the countries, of the houses in his inner self, Eliade answered: „For any exiled, *Patria*, the country, is the maternal language that he continues to speak (...) it is the language in which I dream and in which I am writing my diary. Therefore, it is not only an inner oniric country (...) and there is no contradiction, even more, there is no tension, between the world and the country.”

This calm and planetary emplacement of the self in space and time he explains also by the *Axis mundi*. „Anywhere there is a *Center of the World*. Once situated in this center, you are at home; you are truly within your genuine self and within the center of the Cosmos, too (...) And we continue: This „symbolism of the center” not only that I understand, I am also living it”. „I want to recognize myself – in a philosophical meaning – in my brother: as a Romanian, I was like him, thousands of years ago. Due to this thought, I feel the man of my epoch; if there is indeed any original and important discovery that could characterize our century then this is it: the historical unity of the human spirit. This is the reason why I do not „de-mystify”.

With the correctness and the consciousness of the limitation which is absolutely necessary to the researcher, Eliade shows that the great symbols that correlate the cosmic existence and the human existence contain a secret of the universe that is also the secret of the human condition, both expressions of solidarity and yet different for each human being, for each specific destiny. This fluctuation in individuation he explains by the fact that the „symbol is always open”. Even when”it is clearly my interpretation, and being my interpretation, I do not have to forget that it belongs to a contemporary researcher. An interpretation is never perfect.”

For closing I would choose a question with indirect scientific importance and one to which Eliade never intended to answer clearly! What does he believe in? *Is he a homo religiosus himself?* Petre Țuțea, his former colleague of generation and cordial disputes during the fertile '30 to *Corso* coffee shop in Bucharest, attempted to answer it. During the post-war period they met each other only in their mediated dialogues, in correspondence and memoirs, while Țuțea consecrated him a book, entitled *Mircea Eliade*.

The dominant idea of the author, a profoundly religious man, sounds as following: „The metaphysical man can search, but the religious man receives (...) the center at Mircea Eliade, that is, the sacred space, where the man exist, and his origin as well as the origin of the world are revealed to him, their order and unity being impossible to be conceived and phrased outside the divine logos, that is, outside creation.” And as Chesterton said to the end of his book „the ones who are religiously fulfilled «look alike everyone else», phrasing with reference to the great men of first rank, for example Shakespeare. Mircea Eliade is a religiously fulfilled man.”

And there is something else, too, – something that we should never forget: Mircea Eliade was the author of world fame who broadly, constantly and convincingly showed in his work that the ancestors of Romanians created one of the main religions of the ancient times, which is a sign of spiritual nobility, of cultural and civilization genesis, for the origins are decisive in the religious phenomenon and in the birth of a people. Eliade made our fundamental myths "hidden" in the pages of the Romanian lyrics with metaphysical resonances (*Miorița* and *Meșterul Manole*) known to the world and the remarkable Romanian laic or Orthodox philosophical currents, in modernity. Were it incidental that simultaneously with the prodigious creation of Eliade, starting in the '40s and until nowadays, the work of Dumitru Stăniloae saw the light of print in the West, a work of great consistency of ideas and a superb style of the Romanian prelate considered by several academic authorities from Paris, Tübingen or New York, the most important theologian of the Eastern Orthodoxy.

It was also the opinion of Olivier Clement, Jürgen Moltmann, and John Mayerdorff; the last also signed the New York editions' prefaces of his work, where he wrote, among other considerations: Stăniloae remains, by the example of his own life and the perseverance of the testimony, a theologian of hope (...) He is indeed a man of the Church, and his voice is worth to be listened everywhere".

The half of century of the universal creation signed by Eliade and Stăniloae was our moment of grace in the great flow of the *sacred time*.

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## **“PRAYER IN THE WIND” – CONSIDERATIONS ON RELIGION AT EMIL CIORAN**

Henrieta Anișoara ȘERBAN\*

*Motto:* “I have just leaped outside my destiny...”

**Abstract.** The study starts from the philosophical elements of religion found in a “prayer in the wind” entitled this way by Emil Cioran himself. In this prayer his philosophical being adopts a self-critical perspective and departs from hate to find again the path, the sky, and the sun into a philosophical and religious endeavour. His world can only begin then, after the fog of hate and disbelief has left the thought free for the “starts” and “sun”. People cannot live just to avoid death. With this observation Emil Cioran opens his personal road toward religion. On this journey the first stop may be crash and sufferance, but the next could be transfiguration and love. The interpretations selected in the study emphasise these particular elements of philosophy of religion at Emil Cioran.

**Keywords:** Emil Cioran, religion, philosophy, sufferance, and transfiguration

### **Introduction**

The exegesis of the theme and conceptualization of faith at Emil Cioran gains poetical accents beyond the philosophical ones. In his work entitled *The Twilight of Thoughts* he defined philosophy as a poetical meditation on the topic of unhappiness. The power of prayers and the power of faith are both challenged and rediscovered with Emil Cioran. *Per aspera ad astra* is the perfect descriptive for his philosophical approach. He wonders and he doubts. He strives for authenticity, but also for the higher status of the being: the creator. Within this context and from this perspective, the admiration and gratitude become from mere feelings, philosophical ontological categories. A prayer is for Emil Cioran a leap outside (his) destiny. “What is it going on with you, what has happened? – Nothing, I am all right, I leaped outside my destiny and now I do not know what to return to and toward what horizon should I run...” said Cioran in *The Trouble with Being Born*.

### **On the Grandeur and Delicacy of Creation in a Prayer**

The prayer in the wind sent by Emil Cioran unveils a great deal of the beauty, the profundity and the tragedy of his attempt of relating to Divinity. “Protect

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me, God from the great hate, the hate that makes worlds spring. Alleviate please the aggressive trembling of my body and unchain me from the clenching of my own jaws. Please make that black spot that fires inside me go away, not to encompass all my members, giving birth in the flames of the unending blackness of hate a death spreading flame. Save me from the worlds born from hate, release me from the unending blackness that decimates my skies. Open a ray of light within this night and make the long lost stars shine within the deep fogginess of my soul. Show me the way to myself, open the path in my woodlot. Get downwards with the son within me and begin my world".<sup>1</sup> Oscillating between Prometheus and Sysyphus, Emil Cioran describes in his thoughts the very complexity of an unprecedented perspective on life, but also the general profile of the philosopher who has to think and rethink the world for and into light and enlightenment and never surrender to the lure of the "ultimate thought."

Emil Cioran is the beneficiary of a special connection with the Being, and yet he has big problems with the current beings and with the process, complex and context of being-into-life and being-in-the-world. He loves the human beings and then he loves them not; he loves God, or at least he holds God extremely important— witness is his aphorism: "I could, eventually, have true relations with the Being; but never with the beings" – but he also revolts. He is a troubled being and he is, in turn, troublesome as person and even more in his writings. His position is uncomfortable, spiritual, serious and unbelievably playful at the same time. In the book entitled *The Twilight of thoughts* he mentions: "In Churches I often think what a great thing would religion be if the believers were nor, but the religious restlessness of God, narrated by the orgue." (Emil Cioran, in *Caiete I. 1957-1965*)

Unique personality that sprung from a small culture directly into the core of the great French culture where he left a deep mark, Emil Cioran, fought for intense life. This difficult man was first of all difficult for himself, and as he never wanted citizenship, enriched two countries, asked himself in *The Book of Deceit*, published for the first time in 1936: "How could anyone live only to avoid death? How come that some people cannot endure so much life? Fight back against the consciousness of fatality, because only then, whatever you live could be either the terrible falling or the transfiguration".<sup>2</sup>

At once, with this Romanian philosopher, the great philosopher of transfiguration, one could also talk about generosity and greatness of introspection. But if this force of the introspection is often commented upon, the generosity of certain ideas passes unnoticed. Nevertheless, at this anniversary time, at this anniversary of a small eternity – the first centenary – the generosity of Cioran's thoughts is worth emphasizing and it is only fair to be associated with

<sup>1</sup> E. Cioran, *Cartea amăgirilor*, Bucharest: Humanitas, 1991, p.104 [my translations].

<sup>2</sup> *Ibidem*, p.82.

greatness. The emotion triggered by his ideas seems ever stronger. Whether during his student years Hitlerism seemed the best form of prolonged teenage bravery, in the '40s he refused to become a member of the Romanian legionnaires, the extreme right-wing organization, as the extremisms of youth vanish under the sun of mature introspection and profound meditation.

The essayist modestly entitled himself "the secretary of his own sensations" but he decisively plunged onto the philosophical heights of despair, with a force of world creator of similar to that of Mircea Eliade and Eugene Ionescu. Although he has studied mostly himself, "man", "men" and the "other (being)" were always embraced by his thoughts. The Romanian philosopher Emil Cioran who has never been nominated for the Nobel Prize has probably wrote the most persuasive, complex and telling for the pacifist humanism: "Every man should want to be unhappy if he were to spare another of unhappiness. It is a thousand times more supportable to be saddened by another than to make someone else sad. And when you think that there are people in this world who are able to sleep when others suffer on their account! We should destroy the entire culture that allows it to talk of the ideals in a world where tears are shed. And how not to have the regret of purity in a world where you can *essentially* exist only in unhappiness?"<sup>1</sup>

The human quality, the being and the being-in-the-world are essentially situated in unhappiness, but the philosopher affirms paradoxically that we beings are by our nature essentially situated within the will of love: "The general dimension of knowledge and the abstraction of the truth (and even if the truth does not exist as such there is a drive toward the truth) are attempts to love and to our will for love. Would Eros eventually destroy the Logos?"<sup>2</sup>

The Romanian philosopher needs to exist different co-ordinates, those of greatness: "To those who, unwillingly, have overcome life, philosophy is by far too little".<sup>3</sup> Reminding us of the cry of the poet and philosopher Lucian Blaga – "Give me a body you mountains!" –, for him, the fact that philosophy has limits does not obtrude access to the awesome and challenging contents of life. "As individuals, we fatally have the consciousness of our limitation and of the edging of our individuation; and, for this reason, it hurts and it surprises us when the intimate tension explodes in such lively contents, so deep and tremendous, offering us the impression of the inner infinite in the consciousness of the fatal ending of any individuation".<sup>4</sup>

Emil Cioran is Prometheus. Yet, the philosopher is a Prometheus in a special hyposthesis; he is chained by the cliff, his flesh and liver are picked by the vulture and still he yells at Zeus, confronting the absolute. He is as critical with people as

<sup>1</sup> *Ibidem*, p.78-79 .

<sup>2</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 52-53.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibidem*, p.17.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 27.

he is with Zeus. The philosophical vision of Cioran is founded on the idea to bring the entire world on the brink of agony, to realize a purification of life from scratch, through the burning and insinuating flames of his sufferences, back to the roots, not to destroy them, but to renew their sap and their warmth. The fire put by Cioran to the world would not bring its wreckage, but a transfiguration of cosmic dimensions.

Cioran is also a revolted Titan: "To carry through Chaos my lonely laughter" (was all that Prometheus desired in Al. Philippide's vision). Prometheus, as embodied by Emil Cioran, wants but transfiguration. What does animate him is: "A tense hunger, with states of exaltation and visions, here is what a sad man cannot refuse himself, as a temporal delice, a hunger by which to win over the material attraction, a hunger to produce pleasures of flight, aerial pleasures, light and floating lonelinesses – lonelinesses of flight. All paths must be tried not to fall overcome by pain, sadness and disease. And our fight against all the above mentioned must be our heroism."<sup>1</sup>

Driven by love and by knowledge, but unpleasantly impressed by mercy, Emil Cioran hopes in a triumph of knowledge, which is nevertheless a source of rich and diverse discontempts, because the philosopher comes to acknowledge, attack after attack, solely the horrors of the fight and the number of positions to be reconquered, ever increased. Within this context, in such a fight, a Prometheus is required to bring back the mortels the contradictory and hazardous fire of both knowledge and love: "Of momentum should our soul die, of momentum we should all die. Irresistible should be the enthusiasm of life and the despair should burn inside it. Closed should the mission be, only inside our last twitch, or in the grand twitch of our enthusiasm. None of us trully lived, if we do not die of momentum."<sup>2</sup>

"God represents the initial source of sin and error. The fall of Adam is, first of all, a Divine disaster and only secondly a human one. God has placed His possibilities of imperfection, all the rotten matter and all the loss" (Emil Cioran in *Tears and Saints*). A momentum of a revolted Titan lays here the perfect engine to ensure the continuation of the fight and to undermine the mediocrity that obturates the ample breath of the absolute: "Unless the resorts of this mediocre and serene life burst off open, closed will be the avenue toward our absolute feelings. And the resorts of the renewed life so strained and tight should be that with their freedom any move should imply the absolute!"<sup>3</sup>

In his Prometheus state, Cioran sublimates the will to power in a higher vibration that of the ecstasy, within a framework of the absolute feelings: "There is not the *power* that should define the pulsations of this life, but the mutual

<sup>1</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 20-21.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibidem*, p.75.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibidem*, p.78.



ecstasies le of the human beings to bring them closer together with immaterial vibrations".<sup>1</sup> Revolted Titan, Cioran, embraces the holiness of life: "...life, the unique God, the unique reality and the unique cult; sin as crime and death as disgrace."<sup>2</sup> This is the imperative, but the reality discussed is a distant mirage vanishing before the current reality. The tearing apart experienced by Cioran is double: he is discontent with the condition of creature, and at the same time he is already deeply disappointed by the human accomplishments within this context of the humble condition of creature. In his despair, he stated: "The first condition of our freedom: emancipation from God; we cannot create anything as creatures. Until now, we did just compromise the work of creation."<sup>3</sup>

What is left, then, for the revolted Titan? The philosopher of deceit understands that all is left is a heroism of marginality. He assessed: "Life is only lived with intensity when you feel that your individual being cannot stand the unbearable richness of feelings. To live to the edge of the being is to move your center in arbitrary and in the infinite, in a total arbitrary."<sup>4</sup> The art of living at the edge of being is painful, paradoxal, heroic and damaging for the mediocre and banal existence: "From hereon existence starts to become a risky adventure in which you can die at any time and from hereon becomes painful the jump into the infinite. There is no jump into the infinite without the breaking of the barriers of the individualism and when you feel how you *are* too little in comparison to what you live. For the human being is meant to live sometimes more than he can bear: and are not among us some people who live with the feeling that they cannot continue living?"<sup>5</sup> The condition of deceit does not eliminate, but just renders more distant, dramatically, the dream of the absolute experiences: here is situated the source of Cioranian tragedy: "Whoever has understood that this world never surpasses the condition of deceit has but two possibilities to pursue: to become religious, saving himself from the world or to save the world, destroying himself."<sup>6</sup> Indeed, any disappointment is an ultimatum brought to God's attention.

Although thirsty for the absolute feelings, man can live merely with quarters of eternity – even when that man is Emil Cioran. "When man will be able to speak of deceptions as of reality, then he will be redeemed. When all it will be equally essential to him and he will be equal to the whole, then he will not understand anymore the myth of Prometheus."<sup>7</sup>

The art to live at the margin of being, with the fire of the Prometheic elan in the middle of the human experiences and feelings that aspire to the greatness of

<sup>1</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 79.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 143.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 137.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 37.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 223.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 146-147.

the absolute experiences retains a lot of the heroic stubbornness of Sysyphus. A symmetrical replies to the prometheic hatred of the gods, the hate of Sysyphus, the father of Odyseu; for gods and death reminds us, via a different set of co-ordinates, of the turmoil and the spiritual contorsions of Emil Cioran. For the guilt of making public the kidnapping of Aeginei by *Zeus*, Sysyphus brought divine hatred on himself. Cioran denounces this divine anger that maintains the being in this condition of creature. Cioran vindicates emancipation against the limitations and absurdities of the humane universe, atuned to the diapason of the absolute feeling, but enchained by the deceptions of the daily and experimentable world.

Albert Camus described within the person of sysyphus the absurd hero by excellence. From this perspective, Camus said: "I leave Sysyphus at the basis of the mountain. Always, someone could find again his burden. But Sysyphus teaches us what true faith means, the kind of faith that denies gods and erects the cliffs. He also concludes that all is well. The Universe, deprived of master from now on, does not seem either steril or useless to him anymore. Each of the atoms of that cliff, each of the mineral excrescences of that dark mountain constitutes a world in itself. The very fight for the heights is sufficient to fill up the heart of man. We have to imagine Sysyphus happy."<sup>1</sup> Cioran rebuilds the universe without a master. The metaphorical stone that he is rolling is precisely his condition as a creature; as we have explained previously, this is understood considering the limitations and absurdities situated at the heart of human condition, which he is always resenting, renewed, with a tragic acuity, with a sensible philosophical organ that is incapable of getting better adapted. This is the reason why life is always surprising for Cioran and it hurts him constantly. He is always awake, at duty, always taking the hits in full. His absolute aspirations roll downwards and the torture of acknowledging the limited, absurd and paradoxal human condition of creature is replayed. Paradoxically, love for the human being and for life transpires with every criticism, from each contempt and anxiety. As did Camus, Cioran also understood that there is only one philosophical matter serious enough: the suicide. This is a paradox: the separation from life, while ending the trap of limitations, also ends all possibility of creation, the only avenue to come closer to God and fulfilled life. This dance of ideas around the human limitations and the struggle with them only underlines the paradoxical nature of the happiness of Sysyphus.

In a similar manner with Sysyphus, Cioran enjoys – in all the meanings of the phrase – the lucid conscience of the destiny of being, as well at a personal level, as at a general and humane level. The philosopher is obviously conscious of the dimensions of this own unhappiness. This state of consciousness is precisely what transforms his drama into victory, in the heroism to focus on the source of

<sup>1</sup> Albert Camus, *Mitul lui Sisif, traducere*, prefață și note de Irina Mavrodin, București, Editura pentru Literatură Universală, 1969, p. 91.

freedom represented by his refusal to hope and by the consciousness of the absurde, developed though in different terms, of the prowess. Emil Cioran is Sisyphus, glad. Camus explained once that easily: Sisyphus is happy when he goes up the hill, when the world makes sense because he embraces his burden. He embraces it, literally, to move it toward the top, and figurately when he accepts it and when he assumes it as Cioran does. He considers himself a sort of revolted existentialist being and similar to Prometheus he intends to laugh at the supreme moment, in front of the absolute nothingness, of the final agony, and of the ultimate sadness.

We have at Emil Cioran the philosophical search oriented to the great unknown surrendering us at all times, that one can partially find in the Psalms of Tudor Arghezi. In the psalms the poet says: "Anyways, the lute can speak,/ Pushed with the bow, or pinched by the strings/A restless heavenly passion/ My arm throbs and my soul burns."<sup>1</sup> In a different psalm, transpires another facet of the welter and beat: "For faith or for denial,/I am looking for you, dignified and useless./ You are my dream of all, the most beautiful/ And I do not dare to shot ou off te sky in a huddle"<sup>2</sup>. In Cioran's prayer, as well, there is a determinate search for faith, as important as the sun and the stars, with a defining ontological mission, a fair dream that just starts a world. For Cioran's world cannot star but once with faith. More clearly, we have a similar comparative dimension also in the best known of Arghezi's psalms: "Alone, now, within your grand story/ I remain around to measure myself to You,/ Without the stark intention to win,/ I just want to feel you and to yell: "He is!"<sup>3</sup> The being-in-the-world gets closer to the absolute being through destiny and needs the absolute presence whose existence certifies his very reality.

As well Arghezi as Cioran have not established an idillical spiritual relation when they turned their beings to God. Their Christian philosophy understood the deep and problematic stakes of the relationship, the stakes of a confrontation with no hopes for a victory between the human and mortal creator and the eternal Creator of all things and the depressing consequences of this turmoil. But, if at Arghezi we have a philosophical and lyrical poetry, at Cioran there is a cynical philosophy that gains only closer to God its lirical accents.

## Conclusions

Emil Cioran does not have the pretention to hold the key to the ultimate truth, and he does not believe that he is the provider of equilibrium, nor he justifies his deviations, his drift, or sufferance since he has no such duty, for no

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.aboutromania.com/arghezi.html> - my transaltions.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibidem.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibidem.*

one. He claims his sufferance in the desert, for he does not recognize his brothers: "Any work is indebted to a deregulation. The writer is the parasite of his own sufferings", he said, in his *Notebooks I 1957-1965*.

Who would have thought that Prometheus meets Sysyphus? At Cioran, and partially at Arghezi, too, this happens, successfully. Cioran said: "Not only that the sun does not conquer darkness, but it increases to sufferance the nocturnal aspiration of the soul. If the deep blue would serve as our bed and the sun as our pillow, the voluptuous feeling of ending would call the night to fulfill the need for vast tiredness," said Emil Cioran in the *Twilight of Thoughts*. And, at all risks, we still find out from the prayer how important is the solar light of faith and how much need has the spiritual world for the solar light of faith. He prays for this light of faith to set away the hate that has the power to create worlds.<sup>1</sup> It could be a simple black spot, and yet, the hate is so dangerous because it can "light up" and "stretch and dissipate into all the members", conducing to the endless darkness that burns, with a "killing flame" that ends the skies of the philosopher.<sup>2</sup> The philosopher is a creator, borns skies, but in the absence of the redemption power of faith, his skies die, do not last, and they are put off by hatred, even when that hatred starts from a mere point. He prays to be saved first of all from aggressivity and bitterness, both signs of his bodily incapacity of rising.

"Open a ray into this night" asks the philosopher, hoping for his creation to last, benedicted by the spirituality of faith. Faith makes "the lost stars rise into the deep mist of the soul".<sup>3</sup>

Then and only then his creation will be complete, as a blessed creation, able to open for the flesh and blood creator the path to himself. This is also the meaning of the last phrase of the prayer: "Come downwards with the sun within me and start my world."<sup>4</sup> And if this prayer is made "in the wind" it is not by any means a lesser sign of greatness, for it gets closer the mortal creator the absolut One.

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<sup>1</sup> E. Cioran, *Cartea amăgirilor*, p. 104.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibidem*.

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<sup>4</sup> *Ibidem*.

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## THE CIORANIAN “FRAGMENT” AND THE STRUCTURE OF Gnostic REPRESENTATIONS

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**Abstract.** The Cioranian stylistics seems to belong only to a choice of the author, to a judgment of “efficiency” concerning the expressing of the thoughts, assumed, in fact, by the author, in some of his interviews or conversations. It is known Cioran had a good knowledge of mysticism, which, once, he systematically researched, and that he spent a long time researching the gnosis. My paper aims to bring to the light, by a simple outline of interpretation, the analogy between the structure of the Cioranian fragment and the structure of the Gnostic (symbolical) representations. The idea of a formal relation between both structures has a methodological sense for this study. The conclusion refers to the idea that the time is the ground for Cioranian philosophical attitude. The content of this attitude is the worry about his own existence.

**Keywords:** origin of the Cioranian thinking; pure lucidity; Gnostic representation; time and “second eternity”; worry

The temptation of speaking on Cioran’s thinking by means of the models of philosophizing is very attractive. This perspective of interpretation is used by many students in the horizon of the philosophy. But in the case of Cioran the things are more complicated, because he doesn’t belong to a certain philosophical place: a model, a method, a current etc. that has coordinates established in the history of the philosophy. Many researchers observe this fact and try to interpret the “fragments” of Cioran by relating them to his own philosophical, cultural, educational, political options. This represents a good way for a research, but it shows, however, a certain impossibility of an efficient interpretation, because it seems to imply a self-reference, that can be vicious. If we agree with this manner of putting forward the theme in what concerns Cioran’s work, then we can affirm there are two ways to discover the origin of Cioranian thinking, that are commonly presented in the exegeses of his work: 1) by identifying the relation between Cioran’s thinking and the models of the history of philosophy (for example, nihilism, skepticism, pessimism, Gnosticism); 2) by establishing the connection between the work and the philosophical, cultural, ideological etc. options of the author. The first way appears to be better in order to interpret Cioran’s fragments, because it admits from the beginning a characteristic of the

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work, namely a philosophical characteristic.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, we can use with success the method that presupposes, as a main condition, the rapport of this thinking with some models of philosophizing. But this method, as I showed above, is not fit formally to this case. Cioran's thinking seems to "participate" at many philosophizing models, but first of all it is shaped by its *origin*, which acts in any fragment and has an intense relation with the influences received by the author from the philosophical Romanian interwar milieu. Of course, it is not the question of an absolute influence that takes away the author's originality and the possible relation of his thoughts with some philosophizing models. Furthermore, Cioran was deeply influenced by Nae Ionescu – a well known thinker and professor of that period in Bucharest. If we inquire on the origin of this thinking, the two ways of exegesis can participate to a new space of interpretation. Moreover, both are possible only on a powerful base that offers the following concept: "origin of thinking", which in this case is, of course, the origin of Cioran's thinking.

I do not intend to insist on the relationship between the two thinkers mentioned above, though what I'm trying to show is that a certain reaction of Cioran against his professor had an important impact to his thinking, namely to the origin and structure of the aforementioned fragments. As a matter of fact, it is known that Cioran belongs to what's called the "Nae Ionescu School", as well as Mircea Vulcănescu, Mircea Eliade, Constantin Noica a.o. From this point of view, a debate on the relationship between Cioran and Nae Ionescu is not a difficult task. Nevertheless, it is not the question of a simple "scholastic" relationship, at least between the later thinkers, but of a significant attitude of Cioran, that belongs to the principle of his thinking, in both its matter and structure. Further on, I shall confine myself to the second aspect of this principle, namely the structure of Cioranian thinking put it in the fragmented form.

The thinking has its own rules and elements of operation. It is possible an action of a foreign principle, that is not a rule of thinking, just into its own structures? But any thinking contains an attitude, if its "subject" (support) is interested in the effect of his thoughts. Moreover, the thinking - or a philosophy - emphasizes its attitude in order to transform it in a principle, if its main problem refers to the individual existence. This is the case of Cioran's thinking. And it is naturally, I think, to speak of an attitude that characterizes the Cioranian thoughts. And precisely this attitude represents the origin of the thinking which I deal with in this study.

An attitude is not a fact that has immediate evidence. It is rather an element of the individual personality that remains hidden, although it belongs to the work

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<sup>1</sup> On this topic: Kees Bakhuysen (2007), *Cioran, comedian or martyr?*, [www.philograma.wordpress.com](http://www.philograma.wordpress.com); Tomislav Sunic (2004), *Emile Cioran and the Culture of Death*, [www.rosenoire.org/articles/sunic-cioran.php](http://www.rosenoire.org/articles/sunic-cioran.php); Michael Wiesberg (1995), *Hommage à Emile Cioran*, [www.planetcioran.blogspot.com](http://www.planetcioran.blogspot.com); Luis Fraga (1988), *Cioran: un hurlement lucide*, [www.planetcioran.blogspot.com](http://www.planetcioran.blogspot.com).



or writing both visible and knowable for any reader or student. But the interpretation has the task of revealing the hidden elements and projecting them on the "object", together with the interpreter's own techniques of self-seeking. The philosophers of the contemporary hermeneutics claim that the interpretation implicates its author. Since the interpreter asks a question, he thus questions himself (on himself). Moreover, the attitude that is implied in a philosophy "works" until the level of the expression. This is why we should reveal the attitude of Cioran's thinking while discussing it.

The two kinds of exegesis mentioned above are very important if we interpret them in relation to the idea of the origin of this thinking. In fact, they are not simple generalities about the philosophical work, detached just from the philosophical works that have a general sense. They represent rather the applications of a methodology to a philosophical reconstruction. On the one hand, the milieu in which a philosopher (thinker) grows up, by means of the influences he suffered (on his life, learning, thoughts and beliefs etc.), carries the conditions of possibility of his future thinking. This is why these conditions determine the very aspects of the origin of his thinking. On the other hand, the influences are filtrated by means of the philosopher's way of life. If we are taking this into account, we can observe that the two conditions formulated above don't maintain their "natural" senses. In Cioran's case, it is his own (personal) very strong and intense experiences which he remembers in his dialogues with various contemporary personalities. Among those experiences, the sleeplessness is the most significant because it is put in relation with the pure lucidity, concerning the fact that God cannot be accepted, that Cioran will practice later, in the French period.

Thus, the two ways of exegesis in Cioran's case become (or can be thought) not in an order of sense preservation, because precisely their sense changes, but in an order of an interpretation that must dislocate the "natural" sense: 1) the pure lucidity that denies God's validity (as well as the validity of being); 2) the impossibility of the belief (in act). The first is an acquired capacity or a skill employed by Cioran in all his texts.<sup>1</sup> The second is a characteristic of Cioran's individual existence. Both of them shape and structure the origin of his thinking and have a deep relation with the thinker's life in the Romanian interwar period. Of course, the first depends on this cultural milieu in a greater measure than the second.

We have in this moment an open way to our problem: the fragmentariness of the Cioranian thinking and the structure of the Gnostic representations. The origin of Cioran's thinking, as it is outlined above, must be used in our approach as a

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<sup>1</sup> Here is an example: "Quand je frôle le Mystère sans pouvoir en rire, je me demande à quoi sert ce vaccine contre l'absolu qu'est la lucidité." – E. M. Cioran, *Syllogismes de l'amertume*, Paris, Gallimard, 1976, p. 103-104.

starting point for an attempt of interpretation. Of course, if the fragment (and its structure) has indeed a relation with one of the two elements of the origin. I think there is a same relation; but only if we take into account the aspect of the origin which concerns Cioran's attitude against Nae Ionescu's attitude. In other words, the pure lucidity accepted by Cioran, that deny God's validity, and Nae Ionescu's belief. The Gnosticism represents for Cioran only an expression of his pure lucidity, but an expression that was searched and considered by Cioran one of the most suitable ways of life in a certain period.<sup>1</sup> It's the question of the middle French period, when the Romanian thinker published some of his important books.

Gnosticism became interesting for some of the Romanian thinkers, not as a historical hypostasis of heresy, as it emerged in the history of culture, especially in the Christian tradition, but as a form of resistance against the plays of the hope, detachment, and salvation. Against the hope in the detachment from "the trouble with being born", the detachment from the awareness of the lack of meaning of life, the salvation from this "second eternity", that is not opened neither towards the time, nor towards the veritable eternity from which the people feel. The Gnostic representations do not have directly the same "negative" characteristic; they do not have a direct relation with the threefold structure of Cioran's attitude: against hope, detachment, and salvation. However, precisely the last ones (hope, detachment, salvation) have the whole "negative" potentiality for Cioranian fragments, as I showed, and also for the Gnostic "attitude" that supports them. In what way?

There is a well known fact that Gnosticism is, in a sense, a heresy in the area of Christianity. But in this context this aspect is not significant in a great measure. The structure of representations of the world, divine and man is significant here. And the representation focused here belongs to the Gnostic fragment (writings). In fact, in this context what I directly take into account is only the representation of God. Why? Precisely this representation is important in Cioran's fragments in a certain period of his philosophical creation. There is a great diversity of Gnostic representations, ideas and beliefs. In this approach, I do not intend to expose them, but to unfold some of their characteristics, namely those belonging to the horizon of God's representation, in order to establish their structure and compare it further to the Cioranian fragment.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "I deal with gnosis, it is true. The result is the little book *Le mauvais d miurge / The Poor Demiurge*." – *Neantul se afla  n mine / The Neant there was in me*, in vol. *Convorbiri cu Cioran / Conversations with Cioran*, Bucharest, Humanitas, 1993, p. 123.

<sup>2</sup> For the characteristics of Gnosticism, vide: Adolf von Harnack, *Istoria dogmei. Introducere  n doctrinele creștine fundamentale*, București, Editura Herald, 2007; trad. rom. Walter Fotescu. Partea I, Cartea I "Pregătirea". Also, Ioan Petru Culianu, *Gnozele dualiste ale Occidentului*, București, Editura Nemira, 1995. Alexandrin, *Istoria filosofiei oculte...*; Hans Jonas, *The Gnostic Religion*, Beacon Press, 1963, Ed. II.

If we consider Gnosticism beyond the historical bounds of Christianity, its main features can be stated as follows: 1) the duality of the Divine, divided into a Good God (which is the True God) and a Bad one (which acts as a Demiurge); 2) the mentioned duality was shifted from cosmogony to the actual world, which thus became good and bad at the same time; 3) human itself is a dual being; there are two principles that work in his nature according to both hypostases of the Divine; 4) the major goal of the human being is not the immediate salvation, but the awakening from the causes for which man is a damned being; the salvation becomes possible through this awakening, that is through *gnosis*; 5) man is submitted to the fallen existence that follows his/her dual nature. All these characteristics are rooted on a duality since their fundamental meaning is conditioned by the duality of God's representation. Moreover, the duality becomes primary to the representation, and not to the thought, idea, argument, theory etc., because the main form of the Gnostic conception is a mythical one, and any myth relies on those "sensible ideas" we call representations. This is not a reason to reject the "theoretical complex" of Gnosticism in any of its form. All of its complex forms: thoughts, theories, problems, solutions, arguments, visions, etc., are based upon genuine representations.

Precisely this duality feature is to be recognized in the Cioranian fragments.<sup>1</sup> However, it is not the question of a dual representation, but of a dual expression, that comes from author's ideas and individuality. In the case of Cioran, the duality characteristic of his expression reveals itself not by myth or representations. In his fragments, Cioran expresses thoughts, judgments, problems, solutions, arguments, visions in a dual way. In his case, the duality becomes the structure of thinking whose expressions establish the structure of the fragment.<sup>2</sup> The dual way is only a form of expression. Its content – thoughts, judgments, problems, solutions, arguments, visions – is paradoxically ordered in affirmative and negative sentences that have the same "object".<sup>3</sup> But the paradox is not just visible anywhere and anytime; it is hidden in words, in the Cioranian style. For example: «Monsieur, que la nature nous a mal conçus!» Me disait un jour une vieille. - «C'est la nature elle-même qui est mal conçue », aurais-je dû lui répondre, si j'avais écouté mes reflexes manichéens."<sup>4</sup> Here is another example, that occurs in

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Simona Modreanu, *Le Dieu paradoxal de Cioran*, Paris, Éditions du Rocher, 2003.

<sup>2</sup> "Le démon est le représentant, le délégué du demiurge don't il gère les affaires ici-bas. Malgré son prestige et la terreur attaché à son nom, il n'est qu'un administrateur, qu'un ange préposé à une basse besogne, à l'histoire." – E. M. Cioran, *Le mauvais demiurge*, Gallimard, 1969, p. 12.

<sup>3</sup> This is what he wrote in a Romanian book: "On anything – and firstly on the solitude – you are forced to think negatively and positively at the same time." – *Amurgul gândurilor / Twilight of the thoughts*, Romanian edition, Humanitas, 1991, p. 26.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 135. Also: "Il est, tout compte fait, plus agreeable d'être surprise par les événements, que de les avoir prévus. Lorsqu'on épuise ses forces dans la vision du Malheur, comment affronter le Malheur même? Cassandre se tourmente doublement: avant et pendant le désastre, alors qu'à l'optimiste sont épargnées les affres de la prescience." / *Ibidem*.

the last fragment of *Le mauvais demiurge*: "Nous sommes tous au fond d'un enfer don't chaque instant est un miracle / We are all of us together on a hell's bottom where each moment is a miracle. / Suntem cu toții pe fundul unui iad unde fiecare clipă e un miracol." It is rather a literary paradox, but at the same time a "stylistic" one, and, of course, a philosophical one.

Many other fragments from the work just quoted are ordered in a similar manner. However, an analysis of other Cioranian texts results in the same conclusion: the fragment – as the unity of the Cioranian style – has a dual paradoxical structure, which reminds us of the structure of Gnostic representations, as it was shown above. We can accept this formal relation for two reasons: on the one hand, the confession of the author himself, who claimed he was inspired by Gnosticism; on the other, the attitude that Cioran opposed to Nae Ionescu's truth related to the indubitable existence of God, as well as his own incapacity to believe.

The formal analogy between the structure of the Cioranian fragment and the Gnostic representations is not a goal in itself. Its only purpose is to draw attention to a distinctive trait of the Cioranian fragment, and to open the way to a new possible interpretation. Therefore, my only aim in the present paper was to point to the relation between the two facts mentioned at the beginning (the pure lucidity that denies God's validity and the impossibility of the belief in act) and their place in the "origin" of Cioran's thinking. The period of his growing up, known as the Romanian period, is very important in this matter. By examining it, we can get some elements in order to understand an essential fact related to Cioran's thought, namely the meaning of the dual structure of the fragment and the negative attitude against hope, detachment and salvation. The relevance of this relation from any other perspective does not represent an issue here. In the present inquiry, I confine myself to outline a theme for further research. However, this formal analogy can also reveal some content aspects of the Romanian thinker's work.

The relation between the two structures – of the Cioranian fragment and of the Gnostic representations – seems to be founded on the researches of Gnostic literature, to which Cioran dedicated himself in the French period. But it is shown that the origin of his thinking is the most important fact in this respect. And the origin put together an attitude against a solution at the problem on the divine existence and a Cioran's individual characteristic, namely its impossibility of believing. This is how a negative attitude against hope, detachment and salvation becomes possible; further on, a certain phenomenality of life emerges. The (individual) existence consists in a flow of facts of the life structured by the worry (anxiety) about the own existence: but until the fall into the "second eternity" happens. In this case, the flow of facts of life seems to stop. Therefore, the ground of the latter (the life) is time itself. This image of the facts of life flow is close to the images derived from Gnostic mythology, whose meaning is related to the

struggle for an awakening that can make possible the salvation of man from time. And in this struggle, hope, detachment and salvation get a negative sense if they concern the given world and the common human life. This is the case for the Gnostic representations and also for Cioran's fragments.

The idea of time as the ground of human life is very important in Cioran's thinking, but it is emphasized especially in *La Chute dans le temps / The Fall into the Time* (1964), the work published by Cioran immediately before *Le mauvais demiurge / The Poor Demiurge*. From this perspective, Cioran is very close to the philosophers of his time, especially to those belonging to the horizon of phenomenology, existentialism, and hermeneutics. This last observation can be valid considering the meaning that time has. For Cioran, as well as for the representatives of the philosophical "schools" mentioned above, time is the individual human existence itself.

We arrived at a significant matter in what concerns both the Cioranian thinking and its place in the contemporary philosophy. Of course, this problem needs another plan of discussion, different from the one opened in this paper. But we arrived here on the base of the formal similarity between the structure of the Cioranian fragment and the structure of the Gnostic representation. The close vicinity of the latter does not transform Cioran's thinking in a code that can be revealed only by its comparison with Gnosticism. In fact, the first has a semantic movement, both at the level of words (expression) and thoughts ("philosophical" attitude). And the attitude, put in suitable expression, is structured by the worry concerning "the own". The man exists only by the subjective stream of worry. The constant element of our life - of our veritable life - is the worry (the anxiety). The Cioranian fragment expresses exactly this attitude.

But we can discuss about the constructive ground (principle), the term that supports the attitude which get a sense to the anxiety. What is the principle of anxiety? The early texts of the Romanian thinker keep it rather hidden. But in the late texts, this principle comes to light: it is connected to time. In the inner Cioranian thinking time is the fact that structures, organizes and grants meaning to both his thought, as a whole, and his "fragments". Finally, time is the man, as he is given in history and, therefore, in the second eternity, where he arrives through "the fall into time". Cioran's thinking is a philosophy of time structured by the problem of the human existence worried of his own, of his fallen condition.

In this paper, I merely intended to point toward a way of researching the Cioranian thinking on the base of its fundamental sense, given by the idea that time is after all the principle of this philosophical reconstruction.



**The Nineteenth Ecumenical Interdisciplinary Symposium: “Alienation and Authenticity in Environments of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Technology, Person and Transcendence”, Saturday, December 3, 2011, Bonhoeffer Room at Union Theological Seminary 3041 Broadway, New York, NY 10027**

**The organizers:**

*The Academy of Romanian Scientists, The Section of Philosophy, Psychology, Theology and Journalism, ARS New York Department*

Splaiul Independentei 54, Sector 5 050094 Bucharest, Romania tel. +40-21-314 7491, [www.aos.ro](http://www.aos.ro) USA Branch, ARS New York : 30-18 50th Street, Woodside, NY 11377, Tel. (718) 626-6013, [DamianTh@aol.com](mailto:DamianTh@aol.com).

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*Technology and Human Dignity*

As human society has been becoming more secularized and many new academic fields and disciplines have been appearing in the mosaic of the study of man, all kinds of approaches have been formulated, many conflicting with one another, many reductionist in nature, and have made it necessary for theology to reaffirm its stance, not by rejecting or ignoring the other approaches but by engaging them in fruitful conversation.

Theology presents the existence of man as a theocentric event. Being created in God's image or being posited as a self by God, in Kierkegaard's terms, and thus standing before God, man is bestowed with glory and honor, which are royal attributes, and from which worth and dignity spring.

Yet reductionist theories of the human being and dignity are taken by many as a basis for technological experiments, like in the case of biomedical, robotics, information and cybernetic technologies, which by others are seen as a profound assault on human dignity.

The coming of artificial intelligence (computer systems with human-like intelligence, or "thinking machines") with the prospect of the creation of computers that can rewire themselves and become totally different devices based on changing needs, combined with chemical and biological engineering and with the arrival of computer devices that will be parts of human bodies rather than being held in hand, and many other such revolutionary innovations, is raising the serious issue of what kind of being the posthuman man will be, when man will be part of the machine and vice versa.

It is in this context that this Symposium will explore the issues of authenticity and alienation, of personhood, technology and transcendence in the framework of an interdisciplinary dialogue that is expected to be a fruitful contribution to the interchange of ideas, knowledge and experience.

*Theodor Damian*

The aspiration of the one who accepts to become witness of Life, of Being, provokes the reaction of the little "I". At this point this one begins to grow and becomes capable to receive the great force that works starting from the night of the Mystery. "The night of the Mystery" expresses, of course, the point of view of the one who has not penetrated it, because the Mystery, when one realizes its presence, in itself, is Light, pure transparency. Thus one must begin with the opening... As for the structures that are revealed to us, once our vision ceases to embrace only the little "I", their study is entirely the object of mathematics. Meaning is the content of a new life, this one internalized, where our existence is finally in totality impregnated by Being. Being is the All which forms the One. This is also the Head of Creation from which the seed springs, the light-cell of matter.

*Anoushka von Heuer*

In some discussions of the posthuman there are strong religious resonances and ideologies at work, especially in some writers' expansive pronouncements on the mystical and metaphysical dimensions of cyberspace, their equation of new technologies with a kind of demiurgical power, and their expectations of technologies effecting the liberation of the human race from the limits of embodiment, finitude, and mortality.

*Elaine L. Graham*

## PROGRAM

### **Theodor Damian, Ph.D.**

Professor of Philosophy and Ethics. Metropolitan College of New York; President of the Romanian Institute of Orthodox Theology and Spirituality: *Man as Divine Gift: The Transcendent Character of Human Identity*

### **Richard Grallo, Ph.D.**

Professor of Applied Psychology, Metropolitan College of New York: *Digital Technology and Transcendence*

### **Louis Tietje, Ph.D.**

Professor of Ethics, Metropolitan College of New York: *The Phenomenology of Sin: What Lutheran Theology Can Teach the Unbeliever*



**Mihai Himcinschi, Ph.D.**

Professor of Missiology and Ecumenism. Orthodox School of Theology, Alba Iulia University, Romania: *Homo Technicus as Contemporan Missionary Challenge*

**Steven Cresap, Ph.D.**

Associate Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Metropolitan College of New York: *The Morality of Mayhem*

**Paul J. LaChance, Ph.D.**

Associate Professor, Philosophy/Theology Department, College of St. Elisabeth, New Jersey: *Authenticity and Education: Bellah on Formation, Critical Thinking and Existential Engagement*

**George Lazaroiu, Ph.D.**

Associate Professor of Philosophy, School of Journalism, Communications and Public Relations, Spiru Haret University, Bucharest, and

**Ramona Mihaila, Ph.D.**

Associate Professor of English Literature. Spiru Haret University, Bucharest, Romania: *The New Logic of Social Media*

**Gheorghe Dinu, Ph.D.**

Associate Professor of Law, Spiru Haret University, Constanta: *Direct Consequences of EU Regulations on National Courts*

**Mihnea Drumea, J.D.**

Associate Professor of Labor Law and Social Security, Spiru Haret University, Constanta, Romania: *New Liabilities for Persons According to the 2011 Romanian Labor Code Provisions*

**Alina Feld, Ph.D.**

Assistant Professor of Philosophy, Hofstra University: *Transcendent Man*

**Onorina Botezat, Ph.D.**

Assistant Professor of Legal English and French, School of Law and Public Administration, Spiru Haret University, Constanta, Romania: *EU Legal English in a Multilingual Environment*

**Fr. Nicolae Nicolescu, Ph.D.**

Director *Epiphania* Magazine, Jassy, Romania: *The Concept of Eros and Agape in the Works of the Holy Fathers and the Concept of Philia in the Thought of Father Pavel Florensky the Martyr*

**Sergey Trostyanskiy, Ph.D. candidate**

Union Theological Seminary, New York: *The Issue of Personal Identity in the Light of Social and Cosmic Evil; The Patristic Response to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Issues of Theological Anthropology*

**Cristian Dima, Ph.D. candidate**

Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova: *NBFI Factoring Market: A New Service in the Romanian Economic Environment*

**Alina Botezat, Ph.D. candidate**

"Nicolae Testernitanu" School of Medicine and Pharmacy, State University.  
Republic of Moldova: *Increasing Persons' Immunology with Bio-R Treatment*

## MODERATOR:

**Humphrey Crookendale, JD**

Dean, School of Management, Metropolitan College of New York

## DISCUSSANTS:

**Doru Tsaganea, PhD**

Associate Professor of Mathematics, Metropolitan College of New York

**Bert Breiner, Ph.D.**

Adjunct Professor of Religion, Hunter College, City University of New York

## SPECIAL EVENT: Book launching

Alina Feld, *Melancholy and the Otherness of God. A Study of the Hermeneutics of Depression*

**Session of the Academy of Romanian Scientists “Science, religion and society”, Monastery “Acoperământul Maicii Domnului” Dorna Arini, Suceava County, 23 to 24 September 2011**

The Session of the Academy of Romanian Scientists entitled “Science, religion and society”, was held at the Monastery of “Acoperământul Maicii Domnului” in the village of Dorna Arini, Suceava County, on 23-24 September 2011, and it was a scientific event of excellence, designed to highlight the link between science, philosophy and theology in the context of contemporary confrontation of ideas, marked by interference, mutual interdisciplinary loans and the dialogue between the scientific reasons and religious beliefs. Scientific communications presented on this occasion have proved a high theoretical level of scientific performance, anchored in current debates concerning the start, progress and end of the current state of the universe, both in philosophical, theological and scientific terms. The horizon of speculative theoretical approaches was completed by the consistent contributions of the researchers in related empirical sciences, such as history, archeology, ergonomics and management of religious institutions.

The Scientific Organizing Committee of the Autumn Session of the Academy of Romanian Scientists was composed by Vasile Căndea (President of the Academy of Romanian Scientists), Ion Basgan (Vice-President of the Academy of Romanian Scientists), Dan Schiopu (Vice President Academy of Romanian Scientists), Doru Sabin Delion (Scientific Secretary of the Academy of Romanian Scientists), Angela Botez (President, Department of Philosophy, Psychology, Theology and Journalism of the Academy of Romanian Scientists), His Eminence Theodosius, archbishop of Tomis and Dean of the Faculty of Orthodox Theology Ovidius University, Constanta, Michael Căruțașu (Head of Secretariat for the Scientific Departments of the Academy of Romanian Scientists).

This scientific session was opened by the plenary session communications, such as: General (r) Univ. Dr. Vasile Căndea, President of the Academy of Romanian Scientists (*Science and Spirituality*), Reverend Theodosius (*The Soul, the Expression of Eternity in a Finite World*), Academician Alexandru Surdu (*Religion, Science and Religiology*), Academician Ioan Scurtu (*Religion and Society in the Socialist-Totalitarian Regime in Romania*), Professor Angela Felicia Botez, PhD Full Member of the Academy of Romanian Scientists, President of the Department of Philosophy, Psychology, Theology and Journalism of the Academy of Romanian Scientists (*Romanian Philosophers About the Science-Religion Relationship*).

Further on, the session unfolded in three sections: the first section, “Philosophy and Theology”, had His Eminence Theodosius, Archbishop of Tomis

and Dean of the Faculty of Orthodox Theology Ovidius University, Constanta, as moderator the second section, "Religion, Science, Society", was moderated by Academician Ioan Scurtu, and the third section, "Romanian Philosophers About the Relation Between Science and Religion", was moderated by Professor Angela Felicia Botez, Ph.D, Full Member of the Academy of Romanian Scientists, President of the Department of Philosophy, Psychology, Theology and Journalism of the Academy of Romanian Scientists.

In the first section, "Philosophy and Theology", a series of interesting communications were presented by the following participants: Ovidiu Popescu (*A Historical Perspective of Convergence and Divergence Between Science and Religion*), Nicolae Constantinescu (*Science without Conscience is the Ruin of the Soul*) Dumitru Grigore and Marius Băcescu (*Knowledge and Spirituality – Patterns of Thought*), Claudiu Baci (Religious Act and Scientific Theoretical Thinking), Marius Dobre (*Religious Discourse Reset on Modern Logic*), Mihai D. Vasile (*Theology and Philosophical Analysis*), Cezar Jean Roșu (*Science and Orthodox Theology*), Nicolae M. Constantinescu (*Science without Conscience Is the Ruin of the Soul*), Virgil Răzeșu and Costache Andone (*Hatred and Envy, Burdens of the Soul*), Ghiorghe Mustață and Mariana Mustață (*Sacred and Profane: Decalogue and Anti-decalogue in Post-December Romania*); Virgil Răzeșu and Costache Andone (*Sins or Sin?*), Ion Solcanu (*Painting Wooden Churches in Maramures Between Sacred and Profane – 18<sup>th</sup> Century – Beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*), Gallia Butnaru (*The Role of Religion and Science in Shaping Human Being*), George Pufu and Elena Camelia Pufu (*Spirit and Matter in the Light of Christian Teaching*), Ion Chiuță, George Chiliment and Ana Maria Ștefănoiu (*Science and Faith*), Iulian Rusu (Presentation of the Publication "European Journal of Science and Theology").

In the second section, "Religion, Science, Society" among the original communications presented we mention: Vasile Cândeia and Alexandru T. Bogdan (*BIOS Update in Three-Compartment Relationship Science, Religion and Society: From Bioethics to Biotech and Bio in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*), Viorica Ungureanu (*The Role of Spiritual Ecology in Reconciling Science and Religion*), Mihaela Muraru-Mândrea (*Religious Freedom and Equal Opportunities*), Razvan Andrei Ionescu (*Theology, Science and Society: Investigating Possible Directions*), Ion V. Popescu (*The Evolution of the Universe at the Boundary between Science and Faith*), Ioan Iețcu (*Moral and Spiritual Ecology Beyond Borders. Romania and Moldova in Strasbourg*), Valeriu Cimpoca (*Human and Communications Links with the Universe*), Paul Sterian (*Science, Religion and Teleportation*).

In section three, "Romanian Philosophers About the Relation Between Science and Religion", have contributed the following speakers: George Ionașcu (*Illustrious Forerunners of Science, Religion and Society*), Victor Botez (*Mircea Eliade about Sacred and Profane*), Nicolae Georgescu (*Theological Meanings in*

*the Youth Poems of Mihai Eminescu*), Anișoara Henrieta Serban (“Prayer in the Wind” – *Considerations about Religion at Emil Cioran*), Mihai Popa (*Science and Religion at Cantemir*), Doina Rizea Georgescu (*The Recessive Science-Religion at Mircea Florian*); Serban Nicolau (*Religion and Science in "Eonul dogmatic"*), Gabriela Petrescu (*Neurotheology – The Ultimate Hermeneutics of the Religious Experience*); Ion Filipciuc (*Poet Vasile Posteuca's PhD – in 1962 – on the Religion at Rilke*), Adrian AluiGheorghe (*Freedom of Faith – Father Iustin Pârvu and the Morals of a Life Gained*).

Within the three sections of the Session some valuable communications were presented by the members of the Institute of Philosophy and Psychology “C. Rădulescu-Motru” of the Romanian Academy.

During the session were organized exhibitions of posters, books and magazines in the halls of the three conference rooms and two concerts of classical and opera music. The scientific session enjoyed the great interest of the audience and the most representative papers are to be published in “Revista de Filosofie” and the “Annals of the Academy of Romanian Scientists”.

*Gabriela Petrescu*

(translation by Henrieta Anisoara Serban)

