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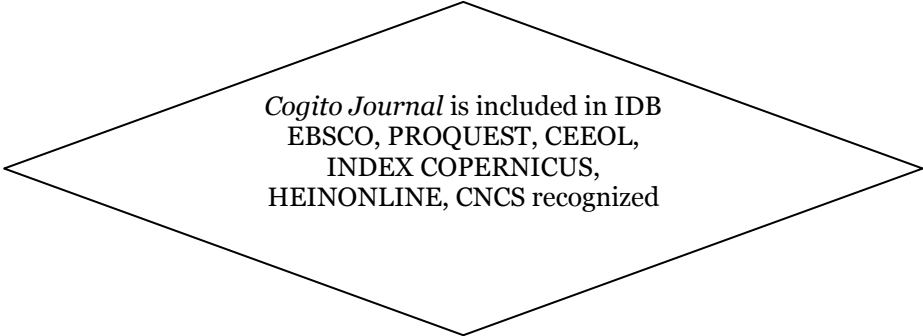
MULTIDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH JOURNAL

Vol. VI, no. 2/June, 2014

Bucharest, 2014
ISSN 2068-6706

**Review “Cogito” is published under the aegis of
“Dimitrie Cantemir” Christian University**

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Cogito Journal is included in IDB
EBSCO, PROQUEST, CEEOL,
INDEX COPERNICUS,
HEINONLINE, CNCS recognized

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MULTIDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH JOURNAL

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ABOUT EMINESCU'S UNIVERSE

Gheorghe Văduva

Eminescu was present again – as he is: profound, romantic, powerful, unpaired, immortal and incandescent – at the time of commemorating 125 years from his passing away and into eternity, a moment also recorded, in mid-June 2014, at „Dimitrie Cantemir” Christian University, in the presence of the Rector, Mrs. Corina Dumitrescu Prof. Dr., of important personalities in the culture and education sphere, professors, master students, undergraduate students of the University and from other institutions, such as a group of pupils from the schools of the capital city that the University works with. All people attending this event, together with two prestigious Eminescologists - Nicolae Georgescu and Nicolae Cheșu – were both creators and beneficiaries of a very special dialogue about Eminescu and, in remember, in the spirituality of Romanian culture light's age, an age from which the great poet, great journalist and great Romanian - Mihai Eminescu -, only had 39 springs, recalled with emotion, thought and word, a genius, a value and a symbol: Eminescus' Universe.

Eminescu is not only a poet, only a journalist, only a writer, only a fighter for keeping unaltered tradition, Romanian spirit, nation's soul and spirit, this Godly space's values or only a brave soldier in the war for nation's and union's survival, as a great people, on the old Dacia's territory, as those from „Carpathia” upheld, created by him specifically to revive to spirity of what he called „from Niester to the Tisa River”... Eminescu means all this together and it is very hard to understand how so much of a universe fitted, during such a tormented and narrow age, into the life, toil and soul of this man of an extremely special sensitivity and profundity that make him one of the most acute Romanian analysts of those times. Eminescu's creed and endeavour for it are in a sense subject to the epoch's spirit, particularly in the one of the German classical philosophy that was approaching its upmost fulfillment, in the spirity of pure reason and judging power, generated by Kant, of transcendental analytics and dialectics, its cosmological theory, but, somehow, through the force of volunteer type reasoning, Ego's role in the knowledge of the world, and the bravery of Schopenhauer who dared to tell Goethe that neither the Sun would have been up in the sky if he had not been there to see it.

Certainly, these are only connections. They may have not been unfamiliar to Eminescu, as he was educated by their school. But Eminescu is not a synthesis of the others, he is not a connection result, a text quotations repeater, a parlour encyclopedia. Eminescu is labour, bulldozer, a brilliant hack, on this realm of knowledge. Eminescu is himself in everything and all that he wrote, all he did within the space of written word and the one of the battle for truth.

Nicolae Georgescu, perhaps the most active and passionate toiling researcher on the complicated field of Eminescu's creation, the one that has sought to the highest degree not only Eminescu's texts, but also the connected texts of that times' publications that explained Eminescu's labour, emphasized, among others, the great poet's journalistic works value, his endeavour at „The Time”, his polemic with „The Romanian” Journal, but particularly the very special quality of this type of Eminescu's writings. One of the participants, in his intervention, also revealed the up-to-dateness of these texts, their clarity and huge force.

Nicolae Cheșu revealed Eminescu's uniqueness, especially as a poet, his writings' quality and irrepeatability, the universe of Mihai Eminescu the scholar and his role in generating modern poetry, enriching the language, in Romanian creation.

Prof. Dr. Gabriela Pohoată, the moderator of this roundtable, presented an interesting and new-fangled vision of Eminescu's philosophy, of Eminescu the philosopher. Certainly, Eminescu did not create a philosophical system, did not write major philosophical works either on the topic of ontology, or on gnoseology or logic and did not even generate criticism of the philosophical systems he knew so well. But Eminescu's entire oeuvre is philosophical, as it includes profound thinking (philosophy being, in its essence, a way of thinking, science, practice and method of thinking and knowing). Philosophy in Eminescu, is one of the implicit type, which is found in every text, in every word written on paper, is a *modus cognoscendi* and, for the great poet, even a *modus vivendi*. Great Eminescu lived intensely, just because he thought intensely, profoundly and creatively. For Eminescu, life, as short as it was, did not mean either „Où sont les neiges d'antan”, as Vilho meditated, or „Fugit irreparable tempus” or even as *Carpen Diem*, but a maximum concentration of the thought up to its essentialization in a leibnizian type of monad, as a place from where the source is regenerated... Eminescu's philosophy is a maximum concentration in the verb and a maximum expansion in the semantics of each word. Only a genius can do that. And the philosophy of a brilliant poet and journalist is not an explicit, but an implicit one, contained in the phoneme and semanteme.

Undoubtedly, Eminescu is the source of words and central axis of many of us in terms of education, irrespective of the time and circumstances in which we learnt de. The situations and conditions were different from one epoch to another, but Eminescu was and remained forever the same, unique and irrepeatable, as a beautiful and lonely fir tree somewhere on a mountain top. The big ones whipped him, shortened his life and even killed him, but most loved him and kept him immortal.

From the moment I read and memorized the first poem written by Eminescu, the great poet of any soul, the great journalist not of the moment but of the eternity, and the great Man, he remained in my life as a basic reference and heritage. Years ago, at the „Bibicescu” library from Drobeta Turnu Severin, in a copybook from Literary Talks, the large ones, with 200 lined sheets, kept piously by the people there, in the very „Special Fund”, as it was then, Eminescu cited two lines from Ovidius, in purple ink, with his small, neat and straight handwriting:

*„Donec eris felix multos numerabis amicos,
Tempora si fuerint, nubila solus eris.”*

And, below, he was translating them:

*„When you are happy you have many friends,
In dire straits, you remain alone”*

Below, his signature followed, with that unmistakable floral model, and, two more lines down, with the large and relatively calligraphic handwriting, like the one of a schoolboy, Creangă added:

*What's the world?
Call it world and be saved!*

So were people then, in the timeless times of Eminescu. The meditative, profound philosophy, somehow withdrawn in the text's pessimistic note of the poet exiled at Pontus Euxinus, on the same wavelength with Eminescu's feeling, but generous in revealing the world's saving facet, as Creangă saw it, remains one

essence of Eminescu's thought, reasoning and creation and of the four unfulfilled decades in which he lived and worked.

That is why, when we are sad, we cite Eminescu, as he cited Ovidius; when we are not sad, we adore him for the lights he lit on the heights of the Romanian language.

NEVER LIKE ONCE ...

Nicolae Georgescu*

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Abstract: *The author deals with the philosophy of language in Mihai Eminescu's poetry, referring to The Evening Star (Luceafărul), A Dacian's Prayer (Rugăciunea unui Dac), Separation (Despărțire) and The Years Have Passed (Trecut-au anii), taking notice of the time expressions in the poet's writings from manuscript to his best known editions. This philosophy of Eminescu is better reflected in the first printing that have the poet's consent than in the subsequent editions of his poems.*

Keywords: *Eminescu, Hegel, Al. Surdu, Petru Creția, Lucian Costache, The Evening Star (Luceafărul), A Dacian's Prayer (Rugăciunea unui Dac), time, negation, never, not once, not ever, writing, punctuation.*

When one regulates an ancient writing system he must be attentive to the meanings twice: first to the current usual ones – then to those in the respective system. The authors that have long thought about writing involve 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* in Eminescu. I am giving the first stanza of "Luceafărul" (*The Evening Star*) in the form from *Almanahul România Jună* (April 1883)¹:

There was once, like in the fairy tales,
As ne'er in the time's raid
There was, from a large famous royal family
A most beautiful maid.

*Convorbiri literare*² magazine resumes the poem in August 1883, as follows:

There was once, like in the fairy tales.
As never in the time's raid
There was, from a large famous royal family
A most beautiful maid.

Titu Maiorescu kept, for release in December 1883³, the form from the Almanac, in the second edition (1885) it is the same - but in the third edition

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¹ M. Eminescu: *The Evening Star, The „România Jună” Almanac of Social-Literary Academic Society*, Vienna, April 1883.

² M. Eminescu: *The Evening Star, Literary Talks*, Iași, August, 1883.

³ *Poems by Mihail Eminescu*, Socecu et Comp. Bookshop, Bucharest, 1884 /published 1883/, p. 277.

(1888) he put *A fost o dată ca nici o dată* (*There was once ... like not ever*) forms that he then abandoned. (It is not difficult to understand why he dropped them: when resuming the term, in the girl's words, he had: *Noi merge nici odată* (I will ne'ver go), so he also intended to correct here: *o dată* (*once*), but the proofreader misunderstood and this is how the mistake *Noi merge* (I won't go) appeared instead of *N'oi merge* (*I will not go*); usually near Maiorescu's corrections, new typographical errors appear. So, in the fourth edition he gave it up.) The publishers after him oscillated between *niciodată* (*never*) and *nici odată* (*ne'ver*). Today the text is like this, according to Perpessicius⁴:

There was once, like in the fairy tales,
As never in the time's raid,
There was, from a large famous royal family,
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. Botez⁵ (1930) had set.

As to the manuscripts, they do not clarify too much, “The Evening Star” laboratory being extremely broad. We find somewhere “A fost odată ca ‘n povești, / A fost ca nici odată” - *There was once, like in the fairy tales / As ne'ver in the time's raid* (Ms. 2277, 132, correlated with “N'oiu merge nici odată” – *I will ne'ver 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, like 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: who deludes himself the illusion that the manuscripts solve the most editorial problems is wrong: rather they 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 *Timpu*). I have shown⁶ 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, the correction was made and then it printing was resumed. (There

⁴ M. Eminescu: OEUVRE, I, *Poems publishing during poet's life, A Critical Edition*, edited by Perpessicius, Bucharest, *The Royal Foundation for Literature and Art, Vol. I*, 1939, p.167.

⁵ Mihai Eminescu: OEUVRE. POEMS. Tome I. Edited by Constantin Botez, Bucharest, National Culture Publishing House, 1933, p.152

⁶ N. Georgescu: *Eminescu and His Editors*, Floare albastră Publishing House, Bucharest, Vol. II, p. 78.

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 asked about the authorial will.

What does that 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 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 Vinereanu⁷, etc., etc.; in Romanian "ceasul rău" (*bad time*) is a Slavic-Latin mixture, it does not mean "misery", "malheure", but "bad luck", it is also related to the fatidic moment or hour – and it does not have a pair in "ceasul bun" (*a good time*) - the expression "să fie într-un ceas bun" (may you have good luck) seems singular and it is probably rebuilt on the cultured line: be of good omen, etc.. - since it also means something about luck: it seems that in our language the pair expressions system - pair has become unbalanced here because the rejection of the Latin *malus*, However evil is not opposed to good, see the phrase "e bine rău" (it's terribly good). etymologically: he is *accused* for 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

⁷ Mihai Vinereanu: *Etymological Dictionary of the Romanian Language* based on Indo-European research, Bucharest, Alcor Edimpex. S.R.L. Publishing House, 2009, Moldova, s.v.

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 toata" (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 junk, some junk*), language expressions appear to be aware of etymology)⁸. 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: "a large, royal" because relatives are great, and kingly, is an opposition, wouldn't be good to be pointed out? Here, however, no one makes it an opposition. 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.

In think nobody judges so simply the „overture” (Lucian Costache⁹) of "Lucafaurul" (*The Evening Star*), as they notice that the basic text, the one from *Almanah*, 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 "Lucafaurul" (*The Evening Star*) he acknowledges the definition given by Hegel in the introduction to "Science of Logics": *being is nothing* (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 emained in my mind, and I found the text in the translation of D.D.Roșca: „Being, pure being (...) is, in fact, the void.”¹⁰(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

⁸ Ion Coja: „ONE in the Romanian Language”, Semne Publishing House, 2009.

⁹ Lucian Costache: Mihai Eminescu. *Open Essays. Face of air and Face of clay*. Tiparg Publishing House, Pitești, 2009, p.15.

¹⁰ Hegel, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich – *The Science of Logic* (trad. Into Rom. By D.D. Roșca), R.S.R. Academy Publishing House, Bucharest, 1966, p. 62-63.

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 – atopos, kronos akronos*). *Luceafărul* (*The 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 one by one by all the editors). 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 told 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 there own. To this end *Luceafărul* (*The 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*). 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 clayfaces („Ce-ți pasă ție, chip de lut dac’ oi fi eu sau altul?” (*How much to you care, clayface, if it's me or another?*)) (with the original punctuation), unless by matching 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 recent published book (*Mihai Eminescu. Open Essays. The Airface and Clayface*)¹¹, the author reads Eminescu with the original punctuation and forms and comes to similar conclusions. This book is a real encyclopedia of Eminescu’s works, Mr. Lucian Costache consulting actively, for his analysis to „Luceafărul” (*The Evening Star*), a really impressive bibliography. To the „overture” 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

¹¹ See note 9.

Vianu: „it is not 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 estero-cosmical”¹². 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 cite the later one, i.e. he modernized after our norms, from nowadays. Thus, I will not confront them now, but I remind you that, in ancient times, they used to cite 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” (*The Evening Star*). We find *odată* (*once*) in many contexts in the works of Eminescu, for example in *Rugăciunea unui Dac* (*A Dacian’s Prayer*)¹³, 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. 1st, 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, 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 overpass “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 have seen you*

¹² Idem, *ibidem*, p. 66.

¹³ M. Eminescu: *A Dacian’s Prayer*, *Literary Talks*, 1 Sept. 1879.

never in my life), as we have an expression, probably a loan translation from French: „jamais de mai 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 șesuri
Și niciodată n-or să vie iară
(*Years have passed as long veils (=clouds) over the plains,*
And they will never turn back)

I read in MLR¹⁴ Edition the test established by Petru Creția, 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 (The Evening Star)*:

Trecut-au anii ca nori lungi pe șesuri
Și nici odată n’or să vie iară

(*Years have passed as long clouds over the plains,*
And they will not ever turn back)

The manuscript form uniforms especially the nouns: *years* and *veils*, both not articulated. But the disagreement with the title is still there: "Trecut-au *anii*" (*The Years Have Passed*). 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 Creția for „ani ca nouri” (*years like veils*), the 2nd verse is *Și 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 *ghicitori, eresuri* (*enigmas, superstitions*). Here, the negation is strongly

¹⁴ M. Eminescu: *Lyric verses. (Poetry)*. Edited by Oxana Busuioceanu and Aurelia Dumitrașcu. Coordination and foreword by Alexandru Condeescu. Romanian Literature Museum Publishing House, 2000, p.697.

underlined three times: *nici odată, nu, iarăși* (*not ever, no, again*). 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/once*), not even once, it is very solid, but the image of *nour* (*the veil=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=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* (*The 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, put it fixes in the Maiorescu Edition besides *nici odată* (*ne'er*). The play-upon-words made by Eminescu cannot be destroyed by choosing the manuscript form *nouri* (*veils=clouds*), no matter how expressive and grammatically comfortable it would be (and, with Eminescu, *nouri* (*veils=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* (*The 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 (pass) 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 Ad More Days to Yours*) (from the same manuscript area), that he intends to develop his own theory of the complete time.

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EMINESCU TRANSLATE IN ITALIAN LANGUAGE

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Abstract: *Eminescu's poems have been translated in Italian even during his life, and have become a constant preoccupation. Among the conclusions, the most relevant are: (1) the imperfect character of any translation is increased, in Eminescu's case, by the presence of numerous untranslatable forma mentis type expressions; (2) the efforts and successes of the Italian translators are the result of their direct contact with the Romanian culture. Some of them have become authors of certain excellent exegetics dedicated to Eminescu; (3) part of the translations in Italian were made by Romanians who saw the poet as an „artist”, as well as a „cultural ambassador”.*

Keywords: *Eminescu, universality, chronology, translation, accuracy, (un)translatability, Italian language.*

1. Similar to Mazzini and Leopardi in Italy, Goethe in Germany, Victor Hugo in France, Keats in England, Lermontov in Russia, Petöffi in Hungary, Mihai Eminescu (1850-1889) is considered „the national poet” in Romania. By writing in their own language, all these great poets have revealed, due to the innate talent, the huge artistic resources of their own wording, the „genius” of their language,¹ becoming, all the more, universal cultural values. However, one can say that the translations of the work of great poets had a different fate than the original, one of the reasons being that the transfer of a literary-artistic creation from one expression to another holds the role of a vehicle of the spirit, carrying, in different proportions, the initial values. The need of adapting to another linguistic environment makes the act of translation to be an artistic-type recreation, yet some of the expression treasures remain eternally hidden. In speaking about Eminescu, Tudor Arghezi noted: „Being very Romanian, Eminescu is universal. This is known by anyone who regretfully reads that *the lock of languages cannot be unlocked with foreign keys*. There have been many honest didactic attempts of translating the poet, some of them have been better, but Eminescu is himself only in Romanian.” This sort of opinions regarding the translations are common in all cultures. When speaking about translations, the Italians use a very well known pun, traduttore, traditore.² The idea is found in the expression les beaux infideles in French, while the British use the term of untranslatability, referring to the (un)characteristic of a text (phrase, word or groups of words from another idiom) of holding an equivalent in their language.

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¹ “Language, the first and greatest poem of one people” (Lucian Blaga).

² Esteticianul Benedetto Croce said that a translation may have three variants (a) “faithful and ugly” (b) “unfaithful and beautiful”, or, (c) at the highest risk, “unfaithful and ugly”.

Translating Eminescu's work in Italian as well as in other languages has mostly proved to be a failure. The fact cannot be argued, as long as the Romanians still consider him an aesthetic and stylistic benchmark (the creator of the Romanian poetry language), whereas, after the translations carried during a century and a half, the Italian readers are first introduced to the ideatic universe and fatally incomplete to the one related to the expressive characteristic of the Romanian language.

2. The effort of translating Eminescu perfectly illustrates this situation. Although this target has not been reached yet, the sum-up of this kind of struggles in a panoramic picture still offers the configuration directions, tracing several interesting aspects regarding the importance of the criteria accompanying the chronological line. For instance, the almost 150 years of translations can be split into two stages, the first one being extremely short, but with a special significance. The second, beyond the internal organization, might have at the core of all concerns the clearings divided into cultural components in order to highlight the artistic or cultural background of those endeavouring to translate the poet's works.

A. The first stage is but a biographical surprise being tightly linked to the fact that Marc' Antonio Canini translates, ever since the times the poet was alive, five poems included in the florilegium *Il libro dell'amore*. Venice, 1887. Until 1980, Canini's anthology comprises five subsequent issues, thing that comes to reinforce the statement that during the last years of his existence, Eminescu's work caught the Europeans' attention. It is worth mentioning a less known context, that Marc' Antonio Canini had visited Romania and, in many respects, had been involved in the Romanian cultural life from the mid-XIXth century.³ To select Eminescu's poems for an anthology of love is to reveal the esteem one had for Eminescu and, eventually, the translator's aesthetical sense.

B. The second stage is characterised by a very high number of translations, easy to understand if we take into account the time passed between the year Eminescu died and the contemporary moments. These speak both about the Romanian writer's poetry and prose works. Likewise, one has to state that many of Eminescu's translated creations can be found in works exclusively focused to the Romanian literature. Biographical detailed information on most of the authors who consecrated their endeavours to translate and promote some of Eminescu's masterpieces – publishing house, year of edition, or publications/newspapers to have issued – are provided by Roberto Merlo.⁴ Marc'Antonio Canini's translations continue at the beginning of the XXth century with others signed by Pier Emilio Bosi (Florence, 1906; Naples, 1908) and Romeo Lovera (Milano, 1908), to which one can add some poems transposed by the linguist Carlo Tagliavini (Rome, 1923) and Rina D'Ergin Caterinci (Rome, 1925). After all these issues, the Italian culture

³ Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani - Volume 18 (1975) www.treccani.it Dizionario Biografico. See also Rodica Chiriac, *L'attività letteraria di Marco Antonio Canini (1822-1891) e poeti romeni nel suo libro dell'amore*, Università Ca' Foscari Venezia (tesi di dottorato).

⁴ Roberto Merlo, „Un secolo frammentario: breve storia della traduzioni di poesia romena in italiano nel Novocento”, in „*Philologica Jassyensia*”, An I, Nr. 1-2, 2005, pp. 197-246.

catches the spirit of Eminescu's poetry due to Ramiro Ortiz, a Bucharest University professor of Italian between 1909 and 1937. He was the one to grant to the general public with a volume of poems issued from the well-known publishing house Sansoni (Florence, 1928). There followed Giulio Bertoni (Rome, 1940) and then Umberto Cianciolo (Modena, 1941), the later taught for a period at Cluj University and had his translation argued I. Giuglea, one of his University colleagues. Other names worth being mentioned are Gino Lupi (Rome, 1943), Pietro Gerbore (Bucharest, 1943), Mario de Michele and Dragoș Vrânceanu (Bucharest, 1961) and Mario Ruffini (Turin, 1964, whose translation received the Academy price), Miceli Fanara (Rome, 1974), Luisa Valmarin (Rome, 1981, 1983), Rosa del Conte (Rome 1967, 1990), Marco Cugno (Firenze, 1990), Elio M. Satti (Florence, 1990).

a. Just like in the case of other foreign translators, the relation with Eminescu's works of linguists like Ramiro Ortiz, Umberto Cionciolo, Rosa del Conte, Marco Cugno, grew on following periods of teaching Italian at the Romanian universities. Carlo Tagliavini's Romanist background is vivid when we speak reveal his translations of Eminescu's poetry. To all these we should mention the paper drawn up in 1925.⁵ A purely theoretic and very important contribution on Eminescu's works belongs to Rosa Del Conte, someone got very well acquainted to the poet and his people, since at the end of the fifth decade of the last century, that is until 1948, she was a member of the Italian mission in Romania and a lecturer in Cluj and Bucharest. Rosa Del Conte entered deeply Eminescu's works on providing a paper of an exceptional value, bearing an emblematic title, *Mihai Eminescu, o dell'Assoluto* (1962)⁶.

b. Yet, in this respect, there is another issue to draw attention upon. Many of the Eminescu's works conveyed into Italian belong to Romanian translators, no matter whether the works were produced in Romania or Italy: Petre Ciureanu (Turin, 1946) Mario de Michele and Dragoș Vrânceanu (Bucharest, 1961), Mariana Câmpean (Bologna, 1982), Marin Mincu and Silvio Albisini, 1989, 2000), Geo Vasile (Bucharest, 1989, 2000, 2008, 2012), Doina Condrea Derer (1993), Adrian Munteanu (Brașov, 2012). The papers come to conclude the general painting. It is thus necessary to distinguish between experiments conveyed by Romanians and the ones conveyed by foreigners. The publishing interest of the Romanian translators is justified by the intent of showing to the world an entirely national value. As follows, nevertheless they may be grouped in an "Italian" chapter on knowing Eminescu's works, these endeavors and achievements brought to the stage the national "criterion" which seems to prevail in front of the aesthetic value.

⁵ Michele Eminescu: l'uomo e l'opera, in „Studi sulla Romania”, Pubblicazioni dell'Istituto per l'Europa Orientale, Prima serie, Letteratura-Arte-Filosofia, Roma, Anonima. Romana Editoriale, 1925, pp. 281-337.

⁶ The paper signed by Rosa del'Conte was translated into Romanian in 1998. The very same year, the author signed the preface for the Spanish translations of Eminescu's poetry, edition published in Madrid through Fundacion Cultural Rumana.

3. We have to mention that until this very moment the poet's works have been translated in over 40 languages, number which increased constantly. In the jubilee years 1929, 1934, 1939, 1950, 1989, 1990, 2010 the interest towards translating Eminescu's works faced sudden intensity leaps. For instance, in 1964 when people celebrated 75 years since the poet's death, in the Romanian cultural newspapers one could read articles signed by Mario Ruffini and Giuseppe Ungaretti⁷.

On following the things stated above, there can be drawn some conclusions. Once grouping the texts according to the national languages (expressions), in this case the Italian language, it is, according to the statistics, a compelling occurrence. Although extremely rich and diversified, the same statistics turns the idea of an exhaustive analysis into pathetic, since it is neither possible nor enlightening. The high number of Romanians who translated into Italian reveals, beyond a purely creative deed, the desire of granting to Eminescu the title of "Ambassador of the Romanian poetry". Yet, the achievements did not rise to the intents.

The foreigners were able to get close to Eminescu's poetry due to the fact that they got familiar with the Romanian culture, as they say, on its own ground. Many of the Italian translators are easily integrated in this chapter, which became explicitly in manner for being the easiest path towards leading Eminescu to universality. If the Italian attempts can be interpreted as crop of one's attachment to the Romanian culture, these fact cannot substitute the qualities required a translator needs, once he himself paints in words. The chance of recognising the importance of his poetry does not consist only in a high number of translations, but also in their value. But the highly aesthetic value one can find in most of the translated poems which plays an exponential part, is, somehow, behind time.

This is why, on returning to translating Eminescu's works, we face a cold truth: between our Eminescu and Eminescu rendered into various expressions, the distance is, with very few exceptions, as one would say, from heaven to earth. We would call this a chance denied to Eminescu, although his works have been translated hundreds of times, in almost all languages spoken on Earth.

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⁷ Mario Ruffini, „Eminescu's faith in Italy”, *XXth Century*, 6th edition, 1964; Giuseppe Ungaretti, „Eminescu”, *XXth Century*, 4th edition, 1964.

THE EMINESCU CODE. FROM RIG VEDA TO THE BIG BANG THEORY¹

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Abstract: *The Eminescu Code epitomizes informations, knowledge, analogies, and interferencies. His work is a possibly infinite, assemblage of universes, a multiverse. Among these archetypes, myths, and metaphors, embedded in paradigmatic and syntagmatic relationships, there is an intertextual «image»: vedic spatium mythicum.*

Keywords: *multiverse, Golden Germ, Orphic egg, Big Bang Theory.*

1. In the myths of several cultural traditions, the universe is born of an egg. In the process of creation, the egg, also known as the cosmic or the universal egg, the mundane or the world egg, the Golden Germ, or the Orphic egg contains and reveals the genesis of life. This primordial seed is a microcosm, and represents all existence enclosed within, the potentiality, and the differentiation. In the Orphic mysteries (c. VII century B.C.), Time or Chronos creates a silver egg that gives birth to Phanes, the androgynous creator of the universe². Hesiod and Herodotus link the phoenix to Egypt's B(e)nu bird. The egg and the phoenix are, too, emblematic of Christian symbol. Brahma emerges from the Golden Germ (*brahman*) to initiate the creation. From a different perspective, the Big Bang Theory could be regarded as an analogue of these myths of creation.

2. *The Eminescu Code* contains and epitomizes all these informations, knowledge, analogies, and interferencies. Eminescus work doesn't include points of view or multicultural perspectives but multiverse portals. His work seems be a possibly infinite, assemblage of universes, a multiverse³. Among these archetypes, myths, and metaphors, embedded in paradigmatic and syntagmatic relationships, there is an intertextual «image»: vedic *spatium mythicum*.

3. In the XIXth Romantic century, Germany rediscovered the mystical, and irrational East. *Mahabharata*, *Bhagavadgita*, *Avesta*, and *Shakuntala* were translated into German. Franz Bopp (1791-1867), Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel (1772-1829), Wilhelm von Humboldt (1767-1835), Jacob Grimm (1785-1863) are the most important sanskritists in Europe. Arthur Schopenhauer (1845-1917)

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¹ This study is a fragment from our book *The Eminescu Code*, manuscript.

² G.S. Kirk, J.E. Raven and M. Schofield *The Presocratic Philosophers*. Cambridge University Press, 2003, pp. 24, 56.

³ Supporters of the multiverse hypotheses include Stephen Hawking, Steven Weinberg, Brian Greene, Max Tegmark, Alan Guth, Andrei Linde, Michio Kaku, David Deutsch, Leonard Susskind, Raj Pathria, Sean Carroll and Alex Vilenkin.

studies the Latin translation of the Upanishads (1858-1859), done by Anquetil du Perron (1788-1862) from the Persian translation of prince Dara Shikoh (1722), named as *Sirre-Akbar (The great secret)*: «It (*the Upanishads*, note, NZ.) is the most satisfying and elevating reading (with the exception of the original text) which is possible in the world (...); it has been the solace of my life and will be the solace of my death.»⁴ He called the opening up of Sanskrit literature «the greatest gift of our century». Eminescu will agree with these ideas⁵. He reads Schopenhauer and translates the Sanskrit grammar of Bopp⁶.

4. As Niels Bohr (1885-1962) and Schrödinger, the founders of quantum physics, readers of the Vedic texts, observed later that their experiments were consistent with what they had read in the Vedas, Eminescu discovers in *Rig Veda* the arcanae of his esoteric system. He found teachings of a secret doctrine, *rahasya*, in the ancient sense of the Greek word *mysterion*, something kept for the *mystai*, initiated in the «mystery schools». Under the «official» Eminescu work, hidden, there is his esoteric one, «palimpsested». Mapping this esoteric work is virtually impossible. Understanding esoteric discourse requires distinguishing patterns and processes, dissecting potential, contributions from both random and non-random mechanisms including genetic drift, selection, developmental unfolding, and mental constraints. Esoteric structures are generated by a recursive procedure that mediates the mapping between sign, forms and meanings, including semantics of words and sentences and how they are interpreted in discourse. The poetic system of Eminescu work offers a demonstration of discrete «infinity». Some keys (poetries, semantemes, etc.), generators of meanings and interpretations, could be the portals of the labyrinth: *A Dacian's Prayer*⁷, *Satire I*⁸, and «the seed of life» or «a bubble of sea spray».

4.1. In *A Dacian's Prayer*, the syntagm «the seed of life»⁹ is a complex symbol: «When death did not exist, nor yet eternity,/Before *the seed of life* had first set living free,/When yesterday was nothing, and time had not begun,/And one included all things, and all was less than one,/When sun and moon and sky,

⁴ A. Schopenhauer, *Parerga et Paralipomena*, Vol. II, p.427, 1851; M. Winternitz, *A History of Indian Literature*, 1927, Vol. I, p. 267. Also see, *New Indian Antiquity*, Vol. 1, No. 1. April 1938. p.59; John James Clarke, *Oriental enlightenment*, Routledge, p. 68.

⁵ Eminescu, *Opere (Works)*, t. XIV, Bucharest, Ed. Academiei, 1983; Amita Bhowe, *Eminescu si limba sanscrită* (Eminescu and the Sanskrit language), Bucharest, Ed. Cununi de stele, 2010; Idem, «*Gramatica sanscrită mică a lui Fr. Bopp în traducerea lui Eminescu*», <http://www.amitabhose.net/Articol.asp?ID=64>

⁶ Eminescu, *Opere*, vol. XIV, 1983; *Gramatica sanscrită mică a lui Bopp în traducerea lui Eminescu*, în *Caietele lui Mihai Eminescu*, vol. IV, București, 1977, pp. 68-79; Tudor Vianu, *Indian Influence in Romanian Literature*, în *Indo-Asian Culture*, New Delhi, vol. VI, nr. 2, oct. 1957, pp. 181-189; Arion Roșu, *Eminescu et l'indianisme romantique*, în *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenlandischen Gesellschaft*, Band 119, Heft 2, 1970, pp. 241-250; D. Vatamaniuc, *Eminescu și cultura popoarelor orientale*, în *Viața românească*, București, ian. 1985, pp. 11-31.

⁷ Translated by Corneliu M. Popescu. *Vedi*, Mihai Eminescu, *Poems*, English Version By Corneliu M. Popescu, Cluj, Ed. Dacia, 1980; Bucharest/Iassy, Ed. Cartea Românească, 1989.

⁸ Translated by Corneliu M. Popescu, *loc.cit.*

⁹ «The seed of life» shows up throughout many Christian Churches, Synagogues, Kabbalah texts, ancient temples and archeological sites, such as the Osirian temple in Abydos. *Vedi*, G. Maspero, *Art of Ancient Egypt*, Bucharest, Ed. Coresi, 2008, translation, introduction and commentaries by Narcis Zarnescu.

the stars, the spinning earth/Were still part of the things that had not come to birth/And You quite lonely stood... I ask myself with awe,/Who is this mighty God we bow ourselves before.» Also, in *Satire I*, the syntagm «a bubble of sea spray» is a complex symbol: «Into the time are things began, when being and not being still/Did not exist to plague man's mind, and there was neither life nor will,/When there was nothing that was hid, yet all things darkly hidden were,/When self-contained was uncontained and all was slumber everywhere./Was there a heavenly abyss? Or yet unfathomable sea?/There was no mind to contemplate an uncreated mystery./Then was the darkness all so black as seas that roll deep in the earth./As black as blinded mortal eye, and no man yet had come to birth./The shadow of the still unmade did not its silver threads unfold,/And over an unending peace unbroken empty silence rolled!.../Then something small in chaos stirred... the very first and primal cause./And God the Father married space and placed upon confusion laws./That moving something, small and light, less than a *bubble of sea spray*,/Established through the universe eternal and unquestionable sway.../And from that hour the timeless mists draw back their dark and hanging folds./And law in earth and sun and moon essential form and order moulds.»

4.2. The semantic field contains *the Seed of Life, the Flower of Life, the Egg of Life, and the Fruit of Life*. These semantemes can be organized syntagmatically or paradigmatically, synonymously or hierarchically. This multi-symbol can be found in all major religions of the world. It contains the patterns of creation as they emerged from the *Great Void*. This structure forms the basis for music, and it is also identical to the cellular structure of the third embryonic division. The *Seed of Life* is derived from seven circles being placed with six fold symmetry, forming a pattern of circles and lenses, which acts as a basic component of the Flower of Life's design. The Temple of Osiris (Abydos) Egypt contains the oldest symbol. Other examples can be found in Phoenician, Assyrian, Indian, Asian, Middle Eastern, and medieval art. The *Flower of Life* is hexagonal pattern (where the center of each circle is on the circumference of six surrounding circles of the same diameter), made up of 19 complete circles and 36 partial circular arcs, enclosed by a large circle. Da Vinci has studied the mathematical properties of *Flower of Life's* form and drawn geometric figures (the platonic solids, a sphere, a torus, etc.), using the *golden ratio of phi (sectio aurea)*, derived from *the Flower of Life* or *the Seed of life* design. The complete flower contains the kabbalah's tree of life, the fruit, the egg and the seed of life. This multi-symbol could be interpreted as the great power of Zero Point Field of Tesla, or *quantum vacuum zero-point energy*¹⁰, Akasha, or Ether: the power of space between the electrons and the nucleus.

5. The Eminescian «the seed of life», as «bubble of sea spray», is a symbolic synonym of *the cosmic egg* which is the nuclear symbol in *Brahmanda Purana* (Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa), one of the eighteen *Mahapuranas*, a genre of eighteen Hindu religious texts. The *Brahmanda Purana* gets its name from the account of *Brahmanda* (the biggest cosmic egg): in the beginning, there was a golden egg, and the *prapanca* ("Universe with its activities") was formed out of it. The

¹⁰ William James, *Zero point: power of the gods*, Bloomington, in Universe, 2009.

Hiranyagarbha Sukta (Rig Veda), the *Vayu Purana (Bhagavata Purana and Brahmanda Purana)* mention the «golden womb». The Cosmic Egg is sometimes interpreted as the *golden foetus* or *embryo*. Floating in a dark void, it contracted and gave birth to the universe, containing both male and female principles in union. A verse in the *Atharva Veda* describes the beginning thus: «In the beginning was Hiranyagarbha, The seed of elemental existence, The only Lord of all that was born, He upheld the heaven and earth together, To what God other than Him, could we dedicate our life?» The Hiranyagarbha, the Sun, is referred to as the soul or Atman of all Creation. The Sun or *Savitṛ* is also called *Prajapati*. Creation has been described as Existence or *Sat* and it is born of Non-existence or *Asat*, the dark void. Some verses in the *Rig Veda* describes the concept thus: «In the beginning, there was neither nought nor aught/ Then there was neither sky nor atmosphere above./What then enshrouded all this universe?/In the receptacle of what was it contained?/Then there was neither death nor immortality./Then there was neither day, nor night, nor light, nor darkness./Only the Existent One breathed calmly, self-contained.»

5.1. Indeed, the *point zero text* of Eminescu esoteric work, the «palimpsested», is *Rig Veda, Hymn CXXIX (Creation)*¹¹. Here is the first complete translation by Max Müller (1849-1873). Unlike the other translators of the hymn, Max Müller made no division into verses: «*Then there was not non-existent nor existent:/there was no realm of air, no sky beyond it./What covered in, and where? and what gave shelter?/was water there, unfathomed depth of water?/Death was not then, nor was there aught immortal:/no sign was there, the day's and night's divider./That one thing, breathless, breathed by its own nature/apart from it was nothing whatsoever./Darkness there was: at first concealed in darkness,/this All was indiscriminated chaos./All that existed then was void and formless;/by the great power of warmth was born that unit./Thereafter rose desire in the beginning,/Desire the primal seed and germ of spirit./Sages who searched with their heart's thought/discovered the existent's kinship in the non-existent./Transversely was their severing line extended:/what was above it then,/and what below it?/There were begetters, there were mighty forces, free action here and energy of yonder./Who verily knows and who can here declare it,/whence it was born and whence comes this creation?/The gods are later than this world's production./Who knows, then, whence it first came into being?/He, the first origin of this creation,/whether he formed it all or did not form it,/Whose eye controls this world in highest heaven,/he verily knows it, or perhaps he knows it not.*¹²»

5.2. It is important to observe how mental attitudes, beliefs, feelings, history and culture can change meanings, the 'reality' of the text, because virtually some types of mutation affect the semantic and the symbolic future of the poem. Krishnaswamy emphasized how little was known about the Sanskrit sacred texts: «When Western scholars first started studying the ancient Indian texts in the 19th

¹¹ Domenico Pacitti, *The Nature of the Negative: Towards an Understanding of Negation and Negativity*, Giardini, Pisa, 1991; http://www.pacitti.org/books_00199102.htm

¹² Max Müller, *Rig Veda Pṛthivya: An Ancient Treatise on Phonetics, Sanskrit Text, with German Translation and Notes*. London, Trubner and Co., 60, Paternoster Row, 1869.

century, they were clearly conditioned by the perspectives that they had gained from their early studies of the growth of Western thought, Those perspectives presented rational thought in Greece as a comparatively recent emergence at the time of Homer and Plato, preceded by a long antiquity marked by myth and superstition. This prompted these scholars to assume that rational thought in India emerged with the Upanishads from an antiquity of similar myth and superstition suggested by their literal understanding of the language of the Rig Veda»¹³. Griffith (1896) translation of *Rig Veda*, for example, can recover or lose textual markers of significance. Especially in this kind of text, an antique masterpiece, when a dead language mutates into a modern language, to observe responsibly can open a meaning or close a symbol¹⁴:

«1. *THEN was not non-existent nor existent: there was no realm of air, no sky beyond it. What covered in, and where? and what gave shelter? Was water there, unfathomed depth of water?*

2. *Death was not then, nor was there aught immortal: no sign was there, the day's and night's divider. That One Thing, breathless, breathed by its own nature: apart from it was nothing whatsoever.*

3. *Darkness there was: at first concealed in darkness this All was indiscriminated chaos. All that existed then was void and form less: by the great power of Warmth was born that Unit.*

4. *Thereafter rose Desire in the beginning, Desire, the primal seed and germ of Spirit. Sages who searched with their heart's thought discovered the existent's kinship in the non-existent.*

5. *Transversely was their severing line extended: what was above it then, and what below it? There were begetters, there were mighty forces, free action here and energy up yonder.*

6. *Who verily knows and who can here declare it, whence it was born and whence comes this creation? The Gods are later than this world's production. Who knows then whence it first came into being?*

7. *He, the first origin of this creation, whether he formed it all or did not form it, Whose eye controls this world in highest heaven, he verily knows it, or perhaps he knows not.*¹⁵»

6. Translating for understanding can be the esoteric “secret” of Eminescu. By translating he is able to understand the insight about the mystery, to understand the knowledge in the mystery. Finally, Eminescu understands *the mystery* of Rig

¹³ *This and That*, translation by N. Krishnaswamy, Preface, 2011, <http://www.vidyavrikshah.org/THISANDTHAT.pdf>

¹⁴ Griffith: «My translation (...) follows the text of Max Müller's splendid six-volume edition (...). Sayana's Commentary has been consulted and carefully considered for the general sense of every verse and for the meaning of every word, and his interpretation has been followed whenever it seemed rational, and consistent with the context, and with other passages in which the same word or words occur.» (Preface to the first edition, May 25th, 1889; <http://www.sanskritweb.net/rigveda/griffith.pdf>). *Rig Veda*, trans. Ralph T. H. Griffith, [1896], <http://www.sacred-texts.com/hin/rigveda/rv10129.htm>

¹⁵ *Rig Veda*, trans. Ralph T. H. Griffith, [1896], <http://www.sacred-texts.com/hin/rigveda/rv10129.htm>

Veda: the mystery is the text itself, hidden and revealed, simultaneously: «Atuncea neființă, ființă nu erau/A cerului mare, boltitul cort din ceriu/Ce-acoperea atuncea?...Și-n ce se ascundeau/Acele-acoperite....Au în noianul apei/Au în genune.../Pe-atunci nu era moarte, nimic nemuritor/Și noaptea-ntunecată de ziua cea senină/Nu era despărțită/Și fără de răsuflut sufla în sine însuși/Ne mai numitul Unul.....Și-afară de aceste/Nimic n-a fost pe-atuncea/Și-atât de întuneric era, ca un okean/Neluminat, și totul era adânc ascuns/În început. Și unul, învăluit în coaja-I/Uscată, prinde viață din tainica căldură/Ce singur el o are»¹⁶.

6.1. Post-Eminescu translations multiply the conceptual understandings and reveal multiplying mysteries, fragments of the *Eminescu Code*: «1. Pe-atunci nu era neființare ori ființă,/văzduh nu era și nici cerul de sus;/Ce oare și unde-ascundea?/Cui spre pază?/Sau apă era, un adânc nepătruns?//2. Nici moarte n-a fost pe atunci, nici nemoarte,/al nopții și zilei hotar nu era;/Prin sine și cel unic sufla făr' de suflu/Și-afară de el n-a mai fost altceva.//3. Dintâi s-a aflat beznă-n beznă ascunsă,/o apă era, un întreg netocmit;/Cel unic purcese prin forța căldurii,/el, matca ființării, în gol învelit.//4. Pe-acela întâi îl pătrunse dorința,/ce-a fost a gândirii primară sămânță;/Scrutând înțelept a lor inimi, profeții/Aflară a ființei legare-n neființă.//5. Ei funia lor în cruciș au întins-o:/era dedesupt, ori deasupra era?/Erau prăsitori, erau forțe fertile – /energie din jos și impuls peste ea.//6. Dar cine să știe și cine s-o spună/de unde e lumea, de unde-a venit?/Chiar zeii-s în urma creației sale – /Deci cine să știe din ce s-a ivit?//7. Acel de la care ivitu-s-a lumea,/de-a fost ori n-a fost cel ce-a pus temelii,/Al ei veghetor din înaltele ceruri,/Acela doar știe; ori poate n-o ști?»¹⁷

7. Being a continuous opening and a continuous ending, Eminescu Code generates meaningful games of “nonexistence and existence” symbols. The *last* beautiful «image» of the *incipit* of the *Rig Veda* genesis (X – 129) as Eminescu had been reading once upon a time, can be a new beginning of the game, a new opening of the Code, in search of *anima mundi* (*world soul*):

नासदासीन्नो सदासीत्तदानीं नासीद्रजो नो व्योमा परो यत् ।

किमावरीवः कुह कस्य शर्मन्नम्भः किमासीद्रहनं गभीरम् ॥ १ ॥

nāsadāsīnnō sadāsīttadānīm nāsīdrajō nō vyōmā parō yat .

«Nonexistence and existence were then not; there was not the air nor the heaven beyond. What did it contain and where and under whose protection? Was there be water, unfathomable, profound? (...) Perhaps there was a below; perhaps

¹⁶ *Manuscrisele Mihai Eminescu*. [Introducere la miracolul eminescian (fragmente), de Constantin Noica; Manuscrisele lui Mihai Eminescu, de Gabriel Ștrempele. Vol. I; II, 1-2; III; IV, 1-2; V-VIII; IX,1-2; X,1-2; XI,1-2; XII,1-2; XIII, 1-2; XIV. Ediție coordonată [și cuvânt înainte] de Eugen Simion, București, Ed. Enciclopedică, 2004-2007.

¹⁷ *Imnul Creației (Rg Veda, X.129)*, translate into Romanian by Constantin Făgețan (*Origini. Caiete silvane*, Revistă de studii culturale, Zalău, s.n., nr. 2, 2002, pp. 96-97).

there was an above. There were givers of seed; there were powers; effort below, impulse above».¹⁸

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¹⁸ N. Krishnaswamy, *The Rig Veda for the first time Reader*, <http://www.vidyavrikshah.org/THERIGVEDA.pdf>

EMINESCU AND THE PHILOSOPHY OF CREATION

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Abstract: *He is not the author of a philosophical system like Lucian Blaga or Hegel, but philosophy is everywhere in Eminescu's work, both in his poetic creation and in his theoretical one. Moreover, no poet can be considered great unless his poetry has a deep philosophy, an integral vision of existence. Even if he did not agree to the philosophical systems in the architecture of a systematic construction, he was rather concerned about the basic metaphysical ideas which could help him decipher the problems of the cosmos or relieve his doubts and inner turmoil. Our text highlights the philosophical aspect of his creation, which was perceived very differently along the 125 years of posterity, from denying the existence of a genuine philosophy in his work, being placed under the complete influence of the German philosophy, to his appreciation as "the full man of the Romanian culture."¹ The research of Eminescu's manuscripts leads us to the conclusion that Eminescu had a wide philosophical culture and a vocation of universality through which he came to lay the basis of Romanians' modern metaphysical thinking, illustrating its paradigmatic dimensions by joining reason with emotivity, fantasy with reality, history with present time, text with interpretation.*

Keywords: *philosophy, poetry, creation, metaphysics, Absolute, ontology.*

In 125 years of posterity fundamental ideas about Eminescu have been said and written. Those who did it along these years, Titu Maiorescu, M. Dragomirescu, G.I. Brăileanu, N. Iorga, T.Vianu, D. Caracostea, L. Blaga, D. Popovici, V.L. Streinu, Mircea Eliade - let alone George Călinescu himself and, in the past decades, E. Papu, Zoe Dumitrescu Buşulenga, G. Munteanu Sergiu Al George, Noica and others. We do not believe there is a Romanian thinker whose works have been, at the same time, read, interpreted, commented, disputed and criticized to a greater extent than Eminescu. Perhaps less understood, but undoubtedly, the most read poet and philosopher of the Romanians. Apparently he is within everybody's reach through the themes he approached, especially nature

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¹ C. Noica, *Eminescu or the Complete Man of the Romanian Culture*, in the Journal of Philosophy no.1-2/2000.

and love, but in reality his creative philosophy is overwhelming. He has such strength and depth that we can consider him: “poet of essences - philosopher of depths.”² “Regardless of all the interpretations made about his personality and his work, Eminescu remains a landmark for all the Romanian thinkers who followed him. Notable in this respect is Emil Cioran’s text asserting unequivocally: “Everything that has been created so far in Romania bears the stigma of fragmentation. Except for Eminescu, everything is approximative. None of us has boasted with him. And didn’t we declare him an inexplicable exception for us? What was doing round here the one that even Buddha could be jealous of? Without Eminescu, we would have known that we can be only essentially mediocre, that we cannot overdo ourselves and we have adapted perfectly to our minor condition. We owe too much to the genius and to the turmoil he poured into our souls.”³

Also, many interwar philosophers (Petrovici, Blaga, Vianu, Noica) referred to the determinations that Eminescu gave for the birth of that Romanian philosophy we are still aspiring to even today. Concerned about the philosophical expression in the Romanian language, he is the one who created mostly the modern philosophical language. Started by Dimitrie Cantemir and Samuel Micu, the creative approach of producing such a language reached a peak with Eminescu. It was a fortunate happening that the language and the German philosophical spirit matched Eminescu’s mental structure and emotionality. The way in which Eminescu brought the most profound achievements of a Kant, Schopenhauer, Hegel in the Romanian thinking and philosophy was primarily a linguistic one. Having a particular interest in the field of philosophy, about which he used to say that it could not be attended by everyone, he was keen to bring them close to Romanian language.⁴ In his manuscripts we find references to philosophy. In the manuscript 2306 philosophy is defined as the “settling of the new world being in notions for whose setting the judgment does not use any other authority except for its own”. In fact, this excerpt is much longer, being taken over from “Mihai Eminescu – Kantian Reading”, also quoted by Constantin Noica.⁵

Like any metaphysician, Eminescu wanted to find out a proper meaning of the absolute. It can be argued that the basic thesis of Eminescu’s metaphysics is the absolute, the unchanging background of the world, which remains and returns for ever into existence, the identity from possibility and reality as eternal things. **There is not, we do not know, a Romanian thinker with a greater thirst for the Absolute than Eminescu. This is also the reason why Rosa del Conte wrote “Eminescu or on the Absolute”.**⁶ This is the argument for which we claim without any reserve that Eminescu was, for the Romanian nation, even more than its greatest poet. Unquestionably, he was its

² T. Ghiddeanu, *Eminescu’s Philosophy*, I, the Journal ‘Cronica’, no. 2, Iași, 1983.

³ E. Cioran, *Transfiguration*, Bucharest, Humanitas Publishing House, 1999, p.78

⁴ A. Botez, *Eminescu between Kant and Schopenhauer*, the Journal of Philosophy, no.1-2/2010, p.18

⁵ Constantin Noica și Al. Surdu, *Mihai Eminescu-Kantian Reading*, Bucharest, the Universe Publishing House, 1975, p. XXXIII-XXXV

⁶ Rosa del Conte, *Eminescu or on the Absolute*, Cluj, Dacia Publishing House, 2003.

philosopher. And he was also the “full expression of the Romanian soul” (N.Iorga), who gave the highest and most powerful expression of the Romanian thinking” (Al.Vlahuță), “the round man of the Romanian culture” (C. Noica).

Longing, distance, melancholy are specific categories of his Work and they better account for the grounds of Eminescu’s vision than the problem of pessimism or romantic demonism, so assiduously researched some time ago. His philosophical flight acquires the supreme form of the metaphysical vision. Eminescu made use of philosophy throughout his whole creation, by attempting to create a theoretical metaphysics.

Poet’s workshop, Eminescu’s manuscripts include poetry, prose, historical, economic, philosophical and scientific remarks. They highlight his thirst for knowledge and depth of thought. We have in them, as C. Noica⁷ noticed, “the whole of a consciousness of culture”⁸. You open the 2258 manuscript containing the translation of Kant’s most difficult book, pass on to the manuscripts 2255, 2264, 2306, all with philosophical notes. Researching the manuscripts in their hidden intimacy, we can better understand “Eminescu’s lesson”, we can move through more problems from myth to reality. Eminescu’s translation from Kant reveals the fact that Eminescu grasps the Kantian message trying to express it into our Romanian language. Eminescu’s the comments on the translation are impressive. Thus, on the edge of the sheet 114 from manuscript 2258, as a commentary on a fundamental text or maybe on the entire *Critics of Pure Reason*, Eminescu writes down this thought, frequently quoted for its expressivity: “The representation is an absolute ball, one and simultaneously given. The simultaneous uncoiling of this ball is time and experience. Or, also, a spindle from which we spin the yarn of time, only thus being able to see its content. Unfortunately, both the spinning and the spindle last forever”.

He who can watch the spindle stopping from spinning has a philosophical predisposition. He who can look at the spindle... it seems as if Eminescu himself looked, in that moment, at the spindle of philosophy, of the reality reflected by philosophy, or of the time turmoil.⁹

With his philosophical propensity, Eminescu bends seriously on the Kantian text. Thus, we can better understand the praise he brings to Kant as to himself, somewhere in the manuscript 2255¹⁰ “our land is poorer in geniuses than the universe in fixed stars, and it is easier for a star to be born in the valleys of chaos than for a genius on the earth”.

Even though Eminescu follows the line of a fragmentarism in his theoretical work, his marks from the manuscripts having an eclectic note, we can assert that his relationship with the problems of philosophy is lighter, ampler and more profound than the term of ‘eclecticism’ or that of ‘commentary’ of Schopenhauer’s work can express it. We believe this relationship, in the whole of the poet’s creation, has two fundamental aspects: one of *influence*, another of *state* or rather

⁷ C. Noica, *Eminescu or the Total Man of the Romanian Culture*, Bucharest, Eminescu Publishing House, 1967.

⁸ Ibidem.

⁹ C. Noica, Idem, p.24.

¹⁰ Ibidem, *Forward to Kantian Reading*, cited works.

of *metaphysical attitude*. This complies naturally with the moral and the aesthetic option. Leaving aside the fragments that reflect and, somehow, account for Eminescu's theoretical concerns for philosophy, we find out that along with his academic studies, philosophy becomes the favourite tool he uses, but rather as a romantic poet of genius than as a philosopher. We emphasize this as a specific feature that confers the relationship with philosophy a certain specificity materialized in the craftsmanship in combining, in a sui generis way, his own reflection and fantasy with the philosophical, scientific, ethical and religious information to which he often adds sequences of myth and legend, folk beliefs, as well as elements of magic and transmigration, subject to any restrictions and rigor of the system, in the fascinating and boundless realm of the fantastic. The situation is the same even when the influences come from the field of the philosophy of Kant or Schopenhauer, or Plato Bruno ... But regardless of the source from which he starts, in his ample process of creation, Eminescu proceeds, with very few exceptions, by the selective retention of the material and, especially, of the spirit and terms of the various philosophical, ethical conceptions from the ancients to the representatives of the German classical philosophy, modeling, out of the magma of amalgamations, made at genius size, creations in which he brilliantly asserts, everywhere, his autonomy and originality. Older than the influences, the poet's metaphysical attitude manifests itself, above all, as an expression of some "natural propensities" for philosophy, propensities that can be felt even from the lines 1866 in the first version of the poem *Mortua Est*.¹¹

We also appreciate, in the line of highlighting his metaphysical attitude, the definition he gives to philosophy in the manuscript 2285, f/185v: "In fact", Eminescu writes, "philosophy is not something absolute. Man makes it himself and tailors it to the circumstances. It is the plan of the soul which knows to comfort us in the toughest situations in life, even by means of sophisms that our understanding itself disbelieves. It is the life that makes us believe that it still makes a sense, even when it does not have any. There is a philosophy of love, one of poverty, one of despair, and, besides all these, every man has a philosophy of his own. Relativism-relativism, visionary, this is all".¹²

Why do we love Eminescu so much?

We find ourselves in him, each of us, in Eminescu's creation merged, unequalled, the four world rivers: the integrality of the folk creation, the integrity of the Romanian historical being, the philosophy of all times and the brilliant uniqueness of feeling.

Eminescu saw the universe with the eyes of the land where he was born. In the moment of his birth, the Fates of this land gathered and the cradle of his being was watched by Logos. His great philosophical certainties, national and artistic ones, arose from the rich hidden resources accumulated in the soil of the original matrix of our spirituality along the centuries. Genius of noble attitudinal essence, devoured by an ardent thirst for truth, Eminescu addresses the world with words that seem to arise from the very center of the human existence, meaning our

¹¹ Torouțiu, I.E., *Literary Documents and Studies*, Bucharest, ELA, IV, 1903, p.102-105.

¹² *Ibidem*, p.106.

participation in the immortality of the eidos, our unalterable essence, our structural type. His visions are triggered by a world where the passions of his own heart and of his own blood capture the external relations according to his irreducible individuality, completely incorporating the Existence in himself and turning the existence into his own content.

It is hard to enter his fortress, the spirit spins at the root of a word and you wonder where you can mirror yourself, in what lake, in what turmoil, in which philosophy you can dive in order to get in touch with the Magus who has nothing left except for his found conscience. After getting acquainted with the realms of his childhood, after having breathed the dusts raised by the wheels of the carts driven by the theologians carrying books in their bags, after a glass of wine, a clean shirt, after some archaic or regional words, following them with his mind like a wind, he got in touch through wisdom with the Germans, with India, with the Assyrian-Babylonians, with Egypt, Athens or Rome, indulging in his devouring dreams, he settled on the exegetes' treaties, he turned the page in order to get to know him, becoming our obsession in time, remaining forever young, wrap up in "his cloak" of ice and charm, beyond the river Selena.

Eminescu is a thinker who will never become obsolete, just like Goethe, Shakespeare, Nietzsche and Leibniz. No matter how swift the evolution of the concept of poetry, of ideas in general might be, Eminescu will continue operating in ourselves a permanent transfusion of Existence and Meaning. The waving of Eminescu's longing is infinite. It reaches a supreme existential intensity and decision because he comes from a central and original core, from the very place where, through a miraculous coincidence of the one with the multiple, the spiritual feeds the real ceaselessly. Eminescu has linked forever the mystery with the expression, has made the light consistent with the language, has enlightened the syllables of the Romanian language, making them carry the meaning of the World.

No "evolution" will ever cast shadow on Eminescu's posterity; as time goes by, the deeper we discover him, the more we realize that he exists, that he is and will be contemporary in aeternum. And, being really "unpaired", he will never diminish anyone's Glory.

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MIRCEA VULCANESCU'S OUTLOOK ON THE ARCHITECTURE OF NATIONAL IDENTITY

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Abstract: *Many interwar Romanian thinkers addressed the issue of national identity from philosophical, sociological or psychological perspectives. Mircea Vulcanescu, a reference personality of his generation, along with Mircea Eliade and Emil Cioran, opens up a new angle of approach. He starts from the idea that in order to understand the soul and spirit of a people we must examine the fundamental component of its identity, namely the language. At the same time, he argues that the soul of a people is an architecture of temptations, of various inclinations and components, suggestive of the complex cultural identities. Vulcănescu's studies on this topic can be included in the wide orientation of cultural and linguistic relativism.*

Keywords: *cultural identity, language configuration, architecture of temptations, cultural and linguistic relativism.*

A thinker overlooked and wronged by history

Few personalities of Romanian culture have been so harshly wronged by history as is the case of Mircea Vulcănescu (1904-1952), a resourceful, profound and original thinker, who left behind several fundamental studies, ripe with fruitful suggestions and ideas. Vulcănescu was wronged first by the historical context in which he lived and compelled him to exhaust his energy in institutional and administrative activities, of course important, but which took most of the time needed to complete his creative projects. Undoubtedly, his vocation was the philosophical reflection, the inquisitive mind, in search of essences, as his texts show us and the colleagues from his generation testify to it (M. Eliade, C.Noica, E.Cioran), who spare no superlatives when portraying Vulcănescu. These testimonies made by his contemporaries avow that he was the soul of this outstanding generation and also „its clear mind”, since he believed that the spiritual mission of the new generation would be „to ensure the Romanians' spiritual unity” and „to express the Romanian soul in universal forms”.¹

Noica makes an important clarification in this regard. If Mircea Eliade was considered „the boss” of the new generation (called „the Generation '27”, after the article titled “The spiritual journey” published by Eliade in 1927 in the newspaper „The Word”), Vulcănescu „was he who legitimized it in all its profoundness” as its

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¹ Mircea Vulcănescu, “Generation”, study in the volume *Toward the being of Romanian spirituality. The Romanian dimension of existence*, vol. 3, selection of texts, notes and comments by Mircea Diaconu and Zaharia Balica, Bucharest, Eminescu Publishing House, 1996, pp. 25-26.

true “spokesman”. Moreover, Noica considered that he exceeded his colleagues of generation by his cultural horizon and his capacity to formulate ideas: “It was quite amazing and disarming to each of us: he knew better than us, sometimes, what we believed to be our problem.” Recollecting the great impression made to the first President of Czechoslovakia, Thomas Masaryk, or to the French writer Paul Morand, who was visiting at that time Bucharest, Noica concludes: “We all would have chosen him to represent us not only before the old generations or the foreigners, but also before any court (...) He had something of a Noah in him. He would have known how to fill in an ark.”²

From Noica’s assertions we can see the imposing image Vulcanescu had in the eyes of those who knew him closely. Well, the destiny of this brilliant intellectual, admired by his contemporaries, seems to confirm the absurd and the tragedy of Romanian history, as well as that strange saying, with a twisted meaning, that no good deed (especially for your country) goes unpunished. After the communist regime came to power, when history rolled over like an irrational mechanism across the country, Vulcănescu experienced the inferno of communist prisons, where he died at the age of 48, in a way resembling an act of Christian sacrifice (he endangered his life to save another inmate). Posthumous history was not favorable either. During the communist regime, the ideological censorship blocked for a long time the reprinting of his studies, and later on, after the 1989 changes, when his writings were published, Romanian intellectuals were concerned with other political issues and did not give due attention to a thinker who strove to decipher the unique and unrepeatable formula of the Romanian spirit.

It is important to mention that Vulcănescu was formed under the influence of two personalities who held a key position in the inter-war Romanian culture, but who were opposed in point of spiritual and ideological orientation: Dimitrie Gusti and Nae Ionescu. From Dimitrie Gusti he learned the discipline and rigor of scientific work, while Nae Ionescu nourished his metaphysical impulses and quests. In 1925 he took his degree in philosophy under the guidance of Dimitrie Gusti, with a work entitled *Individual vs. society in contemporary sociology*. The same year, he took part in the first monographic research initiated by the Dimitrie Gusti’s school in Goicea Mare settlement. He carried on his studies in Paris, between 1925 and 1928, after which he was involved again in the field researches conducted by the same school, being at the same time an assistant professor at the Sociology and Ethics Chair led by Dimitrie Gusti. Along with Henri H. Stahl and Traian Herseni, Vulcănescu made an important contribution to the development of theoretical and methodological foundations of the Bucharest School sociological system.

Finally, Mircea Vulcănescu was also he who coalesced and organized the „Criterion’ Association, between 1932 and 1934, and which brought together many intellectuals from the new generation. The “Criterion” strategy resembles the

² Constantin Noica, „Recollections of Mircea Vulcanescu”, in the volume *For a new philosophical spirituality. The Romanian dimension of existence*, vol. 3, selection of texts, notes and comments by Mircea Diaconu and Zaharia Balica, Bucharest, Eminescu Publishing House, 1996, pp. 6-7.

Junimea. The conferences held by “Criterion” debated the basic issues of the time, approached from different perspectives, representing a “communion over ideologies”.³ To fully grasp the opening and the cultural universe of this generation, we mention some of the topics discussed in these conferences: Freud, Lenin, Gandhi, Charlie Chaplin, Marcel Proust, André Gide, Henri Bergson, Picasso, Stravinsky, the state of contemporary novel, the new musical trends, Asia seen from the West. The group had an impressive success through these conferences and so the new generation of intellectuals made a spectacular entry into the cultural life. For various reasons, the group broke up in 1934, but to maintain its spirit, Mircea Vulcănescu and other contributors continued to publish the “Criterion” magazine, only in 7 issues between 1934 and 1935. We should also mention Vulcănescu’s contribution to the work *The Encyclopedia of Romania*, in four volumes, for which he wrote the chapter on the World War I and the achievement of national unity.

Therefore, Vulcănescu stood out as a reference personality of his generation, by the full-range and insightful thinking, his vocation as an organizer and spiritual mentor, his conduct always guided by the sense of responsibility and his proverbial human generosity, qualities that defined him throughout his lifetime. His philosophical work remained for a long time spread out in the papers of the time, where from today’s editors and commentators have tried to bring it to light. Mr. Marin Diaconu deserves a thought of appreciation and gratitude, since, after years of researches through the publications of the time and the archives of Vulcănescu family, he managed to gather together the thinker’s writings and edited them, with explanatory notes and comments. For him, Vulcănescu was a personality having “an encyclopedic, bright mind, a man of great modesty and vitality and also of a boundless optimism”. With regard to Vulcănescu’s “inexhaustible optimism”, Diaconu quotes a 1967 text by Eliade (from the “Prodromos” magazine no. 7) in which Eliade argues that such a tenacious and motivated optimism on the destiny of the Romanian people “was unmatched by any of the prophets or spokesmen of Romanian politics and culture.”⁴

“The configuration of the language” - a mirror of cultural identity

Many interwar Romanian thinkers approached the question of national identity from philosophical, sociological or psychological perspectives. Vulcănescu finds however a new angle of approach, a unique perspective to illuminate this sensitive issue. He starts from the idea that in order to understand the soul and spirit of a people we must examine the fundamental component of its identity, namely the language. The architecture of the factors shaping up the identity of a nation grants a key place to language, as a constitutive factor and also the expression and mirror that transfigure and encode the other factors of identity. This is the methodological and philosophical assumption from which Vulcănescu

³ Lucian Boia, *The traps of history: the interwar intellectual elite between 1930 and 1950*, Bucharest, Humanitas, 2011, p. 36.

⁴ Marin Diaconu, “A spiritual face of the time”, in the volume *For a new philosophical spirituality. The Romanian dimension of existence*, vol. 1, selection of texts, notes and comments by Mircea Diaconu and Zaharia Balica, Bucharest, Eminescu Publishing House, 1996, pp. 46-47.

begins his demarche. The reflection on language held a privileged place in the movement of ideas that led to the formation of our national consciousness and Romanian thinkers passionately investigated the particular role played by language in our national identity configuration. It should be noted in this context the ideas embraced by B.P. Hașdeu or Eminescu on the organic correlation between language, the peoples' lifestyles and the mechanisms of collective thinking. Hasdeu examined language as a complex "document", in which the historian, the linguist, the sociologist and the philosopher can "decipher" meanings about "the people's life as a whole", since language is a total social phenomenon and linguistics is „the algebra” of historical and human sciences. "There is nothing more social than language, the strongest knot, if not the foundation of society".⁵

By formulating this thesis and by arguing the idea that language ciphers and stores meanings about the community life and its way of thinking, Hasdeu was a precursor to the new relativistic perspectives. The principles of cultural relativism were laid down by the American anthropology in the first half of the XXth century. Edward Sapir enshrined the idea that language is a "filter" through which we perceive, understand and interpret reality. Like languages, „human culture is endowed with an extraordinary flexibility”⁶ and the diversity of cultures can be understood by analyzing the expressive relationships between the peoples' linguistic patterns, the collective unconscious structures, the ways of thinking and the basic attitudes toward the world. "In every language there is an implicit metaphysics",⁷ said Lucian Blaga, in agreement with the relativistic orientation, also embraced by Mircea Vulcănescu. Words are first a pattern in which thoughts are born and become afterwards a vehicle for spreading them to our fellow creatures. The connotative and hidden meanings of a language encode and „bury” a particular vision of the world. For Vulcănescu, the identity of a people is manifested and expressed in "the pattern of its language", where it can be deciphered through a complex linguistic, historical, and philosophical hermeneutics research.

The studies in which Vulcănescu endeavors to determine the specific vision of Romanian spirituality are: *The Romanian man* (1937), *The Dacian temptation* (1941), *The Romanian dimension of existence* (1943) and *The concrete existence in Romanian metaphysics* (an unfinished study, 1943). In *The Romanian dimension of existence*, a reference work by the novelty of interpretation and its methodological value (the subtitle of the work is *A phenomenological outline*) Vulcănescu applies on the Romanian language a hermeneutic and phenomenological analysis in order to extract from its established phrases and syntagms a particular way of perceiving and understanding the world. Vulcănescu's novel perspective comes from the fact that, in order to grasp the vision and specific attitudes of the Romanian people, he does not examine the philosophical systems developed by Romanian thinkers, but he looks into

⁵ B.P. Hasdeu, *Words from the Old*, Vol. III, Bucharest, Didactica & Pedagogică Publishing House, 1984, p. 8.

⁶ Edward Sapir, *Anthropologie*, Paris, Editions de Minuit, 1967, p. 145.

⁷ Lucian Blaga, *The upsurge of the isalnd*, Cluj-Napoca, Dacia Publishing House, 1977, p.180.

language structures “that preexist the thinkers’ demarches” and directs, in a vague and unconscious way, their outlook on the world and their thinking lines. Vulcănescu writes that “the material” he will investigate is given by “the configuration of the language and the structure of the expressive symbols with a general circulation in the Romanian people, in other words, the thinking moulds the words are shaped up”.⁸

Based on this principle, the author analyzes the specific meanings taken in the Romanian language by the philosophical categories of existence, being, human nature, essence, space, time, real, possible, present, disjunction, negation, and many others. For instance, while debating on the distinction between “being” and “being something”, between the fact of being and the way of being, Vulcănescu claims that the Romanians kept “the predicative meaning” of the verb „esse” (“being something”), therefore “the old essentialist attitude”, they did not adapt themselves, as the Westerners did, under the pressure of civilization changes, to the existential, abstract meaning. For Romanians’ representation, reality as presence, “*hic et nunc*” has a “low importance”, being in disagreement with the “actualist metaphysics of the West”. For the Romanians, the expression “it is happening” is essential, that is the Being shows up, manifests itself, namely that it exists only through “its appearances and happenings”, but which are solidary with the plan of eternity, from which they all spring forth. This metaphysical plan means “a continuous presence”, “eternity”, existence “throughout ages”, beyond space and time. Existence overcomes the actual, to include the possible too, in the same way as between “the world here” and “the world beyond” there is no ontological rupture, an opposition between being and non-being, but only a threshold, “a customs point” and “a passageway” between two ways of being. Developing this idea, Vulcănescu believes that the forms of negation in the Romanian language express a certain attitude toward the world. In the Romanian vision, says the author, there is no absolute but only relative negation. “The Romanian negation does not have an existential but instead an essential character. The Romanian always fights against a way of being and not the fact of being”.⁹ The idea of non-being, of nothingness, of non-existence are foreign to Romanian mentality. Negation is never absolute, but instead refers to a certain way of being”, a particular character, not to existence in general.

Vulcănescu’s work is very complex and contains many interesting analyzes and reflections about Romanian identity. In this framework, we can point out only some of these ideas. For instance, when referring to the relation between real and possible, actual and virtual, Vulcănescu appreciates that our way of thinking is characterized by the emphasis on virtuality, on “possibility”, to the detriment of “actuality”, of present reality, of the act as such. “At the root of the Romanian conception of being, we find this virtual supremacy of the actual, the idea of a

⁸ Mircea Vulcănescu, “The Romanian dimension of existence”, in the volume *Toward the being of Romanian spirituality. The Romanian dimension of existence*, vol. 3, the selection of texts, notes and comments by Mircea Diaconu and Zaharia Balica, Bucharest, Eminescu Publishing House, pp. 165-165.

⁹ *Ibidem*, p.184.

breast carrying all virtualities”.¹⁰ The prevalence of the virtual over the actual is associated with “the absence of a pragmatic attitude” towards life, a feature that can be also deciphered through the frequency of verbal forms showing speculations on the possible (such as: “What would have happened if ...?”). Vulcănescu focuses on the very important “consequences” arising from “melting existence into possibility” and he lists them as follows: “The first is that there is no nothingness, the second that there is no absolute impossibility, the third that there is no existential alternative, the fourth that there is no imperative, the fifth that that there is no irremediable”.¹¹

The author examines in-depth the special meanings these philosophical attitudes and ideas acquire towards life. Here is a comment on the idea that there is no irremediable: “The Romanian does not have the feeling of absolute loss, the feeling of the irremediable. For him, nothing can be spoiled forever, nothing is condemned without appeal, nothing is definitively lost, nothing is irreparable”.¹² In other words, even in the face of limit-situations, the Romanians live with the feeling that nothing is irremediable, nothing is forever lost. Therefore, the Romanian is “so good a plan doer and a hypotheses combinator”, but he encounters difficulties whenever „moving on to action”.

Moving on to action means the exit from the sphere of the possible and the entry into the sphere of the real, namely a descent from the plane of eternity into the plane of history. The analysis of this moment and of the psychological states generated by this imperative takes a special place in Vulcănescu’s studies. He introduces a lengthy passage that explains the particular way in which the Romanian answers to the summons of history and “moves on to deeds”, as the national anthem calls: “Now or never, cast yourself a new fate”. The Romanian is committed to such major deeds, with historical and geopolitical implications, only „when he cannot do otherwise”, “when he cannot bear any longer” his condition. The move to action would be fuelled not by the projection of a hope or the commitment to a well-defined alternative program, but by a sense of urgency, born out of collective despair. The negative mood that pushes man to action, in desperation, is often called in Romanian “bitter”, a word that evokes the fact that the sufferings and humiliations someone endured over time exceeded a certain limit and required a solution. This course of action awakens in Vulcănescu a disturbing reflection: “Is not strange this «move on to action», not by virtue of the circumstance that «you can», as it happens with everyone in the West, but by virtue of the condition that «you can no longer bear»”?¹³

The author’s interrogation suggests that the action “when you can no longer bear” has also the meaning of the action taken when favorable circumstances were consumed, when opportunities were wasted. Few texts from Romanian culture translated more profoundly and expressively this “impractical” way of acting in history, which would be specific to the Romanian spirit. Vulcănescu’s opinion, criticized by other analysts of the Romanian identity, is that “this acute sense of

¹⁰ Ibidem, p.188.

¹¹ Ibidem, p. 187.

¹² Ibidem, p. 192.

¹³ Ibidem, p. 194

history”, which calls you to act “under the threat because otherwise you lose some possibilities, forever and irrevocably - is not, in its essence, a Romanian feeling”.¹⁴ It is a “pragmatic haunting”, a temptation that regularly troubles the Romanian soul.

The national soul: “an architecture of temptations”

Vulcănescu also opened up another interesting perspective for the interdisciplinary research of cultural identity, based on the idea that peoples interacted throughout history, influenced each other, and these influences, some deeper, some shallow left „traces” in their identity structures, in language, in the modes of thinking and behavior. Under the pressure of these multiple influences, national identities appear as complex and relative structures and not absolute homogenous entities. Given these intercultural contacts, Vulcănescu summarizes his thesis in the following statement: “Every nation is such an unrepeatable synthesis of events. And if every contact leaves a specific precipitate in the popular soul, it can be said that the soul of every people is only a given architecture of temptation.”¹⁵

In the study entitled *The Romanian man* (1937) and *The Dacian temptation* (1941), Vulcănescu makes a historical excursus in order to grasp the complexity of the Romanian ethos through the “temptations” it experienced and is still experiencing, through the components layered up and merged into its “architecture”. The notion of “temptation” is defined by the author through a series of close terms, such as inclinations, tendencies, exhortations, ambitions, temptations, dimensions or components of ethnic and cultural structure, „the current residue of the trials a nation has undergone”, “the latent summary of past experiences”, but also as possible developments, trends „to get out of oneself to be completed by the addition of an outside reality”.¹⁶ The national soul is seen as “the outcome of the encounters” with other nations, as a synthetic reality, which merged different silts and trends in a particular dosage and shaped up “a configuration unity”.

Some of these ideas are to be found, in more sophisticated formulations, at other Romanian thinkers who analyzed the influences exerted on modern Romanian culture, but Vulcănescu is the one who outlines a systematic program of research in this regard. For him, Romanian identity appears as a complex and multi-layered “architecture” of various influences and components that generated “political and cultural currents” we can understand better if we put them in connection with “the temptations” from which they derive. The first element in the composition of our identity is the autochthonous Thracian-Getic substratum. Vulcănescu speaks about the „Thracian temptation”, the “Dacian temptation”, an “inner” residual temptation, which periodically resurges into the collective

¹⁴ Ibidem, p. 193.

¹⁵ Ibidem, p. 168.

¹⁶ Mircea Vulcănescu, „The Dacian Temptation”, in the volume *Toward the being of Romanian spirituality. The Romanian dimension of existence*, vol. 3, the selection of texts, notes and comments by Mircea Diaconu and Zaharia Balica, Bucharest, Eminescu Publishing House, pp. 132-134.

imaginary and mythical projections of the Romanians. In an historical order, the first temptation / external influence is the Greek one, coming from the south and prevalent mainly in the sub-Carpathian area, before the penetration of commercial and economic agents from the Roman world.

The conquest of Dacia by the Romans and the formation of the Romanian people through the symbiosis between the Dacians and the Romans are real historical events, but they have been processed and transfigured by popular imagination and have fueled the Romanians' identity myth in the modern era. To illustrate "the Roman temptation", prevalent and generative of "the modern cultural history of Romania" Vulcănescu refers to the chroniclers and the Latinist current of the Transylvanian School, the religious union with the Church of Rome and the pro-Western orientations of the modern era. Throughout history, the Romanians have had contacts and intercultural interactions with many peoples. These interactions have left traces in the configuration of the Romanian soul and mentality. Vulcănescu draws up a list of these temptations: Slavic, Byzantine, Turkish, Phanariote, French, German, Hungarian, Polish, until the most recent temptations, Hebrew, Gypsy and Greek-Bulgarian. All these temptations / components are in latency and can be updated depending on circumstances.

In Vulcănescu's outlook, national identity is a complex structure, a whole in which various components and influences merged throughout history, on the support of a primordial ethnic background. The combination of these factors and components give rise to different identity configurations. To illustrate this idea, Vulcănescu makes an interesting comparison between Romanians and Poles. To this end, he uses the concepts from Dimitrie Gusti's sociology, namely the distinction between *constituent* (economic and spiritual) manifestations and *regulative* (legal and political) ones. Thus, unlike the Poles, who are Slavs in their constitutive categories and Latin in their regulative categories (due to their Roman Catholicism), "we are Latin Thracian in the fundamental categories of our soul through lucidity and measures, while our organizing and regulative efforts seem sterilized so much by the Slav superstructure that we come to think that, for our country, there is no greater happiness than not to have governors at all and to let things go unchecked. As the proverb goes: Good country, bad trading /organisation".¹⁷

Conclusions

The issue of national identity has been central in the Romanian thinking ever since the interwar period. It is a topic that has generated much ideological and theoretical controversy in Romanian culture. Vulcănescu's studies on the subject are in line with the prevailing approaches of the time, but also contain new elements, ideas and interpretations that reverberate as well in the cultural studies of today. Regardless of how we see the image he develops on Romanian identity, Vulcănescu is a trailblazer of Romanian thinking. Noica, who will continue Vulcănescu's hermeneutic effort speaks highly of the "admirable study *The Romanian dimension of existence*, without which I would have never written *The*

¹⁷ Ibidem, pp.132-133.

Romanian utterance".¹⁸ With caution, Vulcănescu states that his study is "descriptive" and not normative, that it has "rather a methodical than a dogmatic system-like character", not wanting to impose on creators "a program", but instead to open up a perspective, a reflection on the research methods of national identity and the result reached must be seen „more as a source of reflection, than the truth finally earned”.¹⁹ Indeed, his studies are a source of reflections, a repository of fruitful suggestions and ideas.

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¹⁸ Constantin Noica, "Recollections of Mircea Vulcanescu", *op.cit.*, p. 9.

¹⁹ Mircea Vulcănescu, "The Dacian Temptation", *op.cit.*, p. 167.

DISCOVERING THE CONSCIOUSNESS

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“Consciousness! Consciousness! Divine instinct, immortal and celestial voice; assured guide of an ignorant and narrow-minded being, but intelligent and free. Infallible judge of good and evil, which makes man like God”.

J.J.Rousseau

“Life means for us to transform constantly into light and flame all that we are, and all that we meet”.

Fr. Nietzsche

“A man who has not lived the drama of the consciousness is a naïve”.

Emil Cioran

Abstract: *This text focuses on the consciousness, the fundamental assumption of any philosophy, without which philosophy would not be possible. The discovery of the consciousness is the result of genuine self-knowledge, a spiritual event that raises man to a metaphysical plan of existence, where the real values are sovereign, leading towards understanding the essence of things. Through it, man actualizes what he is divine in him and operates a leap into transcendence. Thus, by discovering the consciousness, man reaches Truth, God, the very sense of existence. That is why, he who knows himself, knows everything in itself.*

Keywords: *consciousness, philosophy, transcendence, happiness, Truth, God, the sense of existence.*

Writing about consciousness is one of the most courageous acts a person may be capable of. The consciousness philosophers, from Socrates to Hegel, Husserl, Bergson or Sartre have lived the experience of consciousness, some of them having dedicated reference works for humanity concerning the issue of this phenomenon. We do not find it easy to look into the philosophy of consciousness from a philosophical-historical perspective, but the most difficult challenge is to relate to your own self in order to share with the others this great discovery that is the consciousness. The underlying elements of such an approach are: a life based on rationality and lucidity, a certain openness and love for others, a permanent inner dialogue, connecting yourself to a noumenal world of order and perfection, self-psychoanalysis and a permanent effort for self-improvement.

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Writing about consciousness is somehow the same with writing about life and about God, because it is the fundamental lever by which man participates in life. This act requires a capacity of penetrating ontologically into the essentiality of things and acceding to a state of enlightenment, of clarity that elevates you to another plan of existence, a metaphysical one, beyond the nothingness of everyday activities, of affects, of anything that could alter the human being. Of course, in this context arises the need to distinguish between psychological consciousness, intentional behavior that objectifies orientation and adaptation to the immediate reality and philosophical consciousness, which requires knowledge and self-knowledge, a general conception of existence. Not coincidentally, it was our great philosopher Lucian Blaga who wrote: “The philosophical consciousness when it accomplishes and comes into being becomes the highest awaking product of man, and its particular note is lucidity”.¹

Today, more than ever, such an approach is mandatory because man is absorbed by the material aspect of existence, the consciousness being an abstract concept, placed in an ideal sphere, not being comprehensible and, more often than not, undesirable for the great majority of people.

Each one of us has four faces: the one we show, the one we feel, the one we consider true and the true one. We seem to be aware only of the one we feel, unaware of the one show, and our subconscious would work with the real one.

Today, explaining the mind, the consciousness or the brain mechanisms is considered the last frontier of science.² A clear definition of the consciousness has not been found so far, the term being still very confusing, and its nature is not properly understood. The word “consciousness” derives from the Latin “cum scientia” which means “with science” and can be regarded as the feeling that each one has as far as one’s existence and actions are concerned.

Beyond this explanation, many questions, uncertainties, ambiguities and even contradictions hide, what raises insuperable difficulties in conceptualizing the consciousness.

The “consciousness”, with its multiple meanings, is one of the classical concepts of philosophical questioning, the ideal of self-knowledge having marked the history of philosophy ever since its dawn. If the approach of consciousness traditionally falls within the competence of philosophy and psychology, along with the spectacular progress of artificial intelligence, information technology and communication sciences, fields that have redefined the concept of knowledge in the second half of the last century, new research prospects have been opened as to the mind and conscious phenomena, that have become, especially in the last two decades, investigative articles for neuroscience, molecular nanoscience, quantum mechanics, subjects grouped under the so-called cognitive sciences.³

¹ Lucian Blaga, *On the Philosophical Consciousness* in the Knowledge Trilogy, Minerva Publishing House, Bucharest, 1983.

² Penrose Roger, *The Human Mind between Classical and Quantum*, Tehnica Publishing House, Bucharest, 1996.

³ Bogdan Popescu, *Qualia and the Philosophy of Consciousness*, Antet Publishing House, 2007, p.12.

The issue of consciousness requires today an interdisciplinary approach, which brings about “a state of uncertainty at the theoretical level”, its source being the fact that “more often than not we are not clear about the epistemic goal of our efforts concerning what we actually want to know when investigating the consciousness”.⁴

The consciousness is ontologically *a priori*, it pre-exists a cosmic consciousness, a protomental, and the achievement of this quantum state of the brain would correspond to a resonance between man and the Cosmos, between quantum and classical, a “kind” of discovery of the human mind and not a change in the ontological status. We have brought into discussion this observation⁵ in order to support the idea as to the *consciousness understood as state of mind based on self-discovery and a purely philosophical concept*, because the philosophy itself represents the activity of consciousness.

This research work is transdisciplinary as it transcends the contemporary scientific approaches, respectively the current ones, starting from the premise that the phenomenon of consciousness is a favorite theme of philosophy, perhaps the central concept, being common knowledge that the destiny of philosophy is indisputably linked to man. We concur with Nikolai Berdiaev’s position who claims that: “In man’s consciousness as the center of the world, hiding in itself the secret of the world and rising above all the things of the world, lies the assumption of any philosophy, without which one cannot dare philosophize”.⁶

The idea of this text is that man's greatest discovery is the consciousness, a purely spiritual event, produced by the divine nature, which was given to man to discover the meaning of his own existence. Freedom and conscience define man as a spirit.⁷ The knowledge of what exists never ends. Our consciousness is always on the go.⁸ Thus, it means freedom, destiny, our time in this world, the link towards transcendence.

Moreover, freedom and transcendence give rise to a fundamental consciousness. Consciousness performs a great work and in it there is light; it summarizes the life of the soul, but it has a miserable character and it is the source of suffering. There is not only an “unhappy consciousness”⁹, any consciousness is unhappy because the great metaphysical drama of the human being is that of existing simultaneously in two worlds: a phenomenal world and a noumenal one. The human being, in order to overcome his misery and suffering, is forced either to rise to a higher consciousness or to fall into the subconscious. The consciousness is the path followed by humans and it is found between the subconscious and the super conscious. The man suffers due to its twofold nature and lives simultaneously in the world of phenomena and that of noumena. The man is a phenomenon, a natural being which is subject to the law of this world,

⁴ Thomas Metzinger, *The Problem of Consciousness* in (ed.) *Conscious Experience*, p.20, apud. *Ibidem*.

⁵ Penrose Roger, cited works, 1996.

⁶ Nikolai Berdiaev, *The Meaning of the Creative Act*, Humanitas Publishing House, 1996.

⁷ G. Pohoată, *Philosophical Propedeutics*, Ed. Pro Universitaria, Bucharest, 2009, p.152

⁸ K. Jaspers, *Philosophical Texts*, Political Publishing House, Bucharest, 1986, p.112.

⁹ Hegel, *The Phenomenology of Consciousness*, the Hegelianism syntagm used by the German philosopher in the context of explaining the “vices of reason”.

but it is also “a thing in itself”¹⁰, a spiritual being, free from the power of this world. Consciousness is in an intermediate position, and this is the reason of double or aspect.¹¹

“The awakening of his consciousness” is the fundamental duty of man in this world. How can we take this leap in our own being?

By means of knowledge and self-awareness, by means of a full valuation of the human being. Without basic research, we risk to miss the significance of our own lives, to reduce everything to chance, to contingency, thus sliding into superficiality, routine and mediocrity.

In fact, *why do we live? What is the meaning of our existence?* By discovering the consciousness we can distinguish the real values: freedom, truth, justice, good. By their contemplation, we operate a leap into transcendence, and its consciousness is bliss - the fundamental purpose of our existence.

What is more, we believe that two things are essential in a man’s life, namely: self-knowledge, the greatest difficulty for man, an almost insurmountable one, and achieving happiness which is man's reason to exist. Both of them require the discovery of consciousness. A man who lives according to his own conscience is a happy man. Consciousness belongs to the absolute, to the internal order of a being and expresses itself in a certain understanding of the external reality. The consciousness has its status of objectivity, “the bilaterality of consciousness, its subjective-objective structure represents the very ontological structure of conscious phenomena: neither purely subjective nor purely objective”.¹²

From the point of view of its contents, the consciousness is made up of: immediate data and reflection, experience and judgment, intuition and reason, immanence and transcendence; it is enclosed in its own organization and, at the same time, it is open to the infinite influence of the world. It involves the natural world, the biological and non-biological - intentional one, the ideal, relational one. The consciousness is a transanatomic reality, non-biological but rooted in biology which is supposed to be either its support or its starting point or its finality. Through its functionality, the consciousness can set multiple perspectives, nuances, meanings in the world. In this sense, Bergson noted that “the living of the future is richer than the future itself, as experience is permeated by an infinite number of possible things, and this is precisely why hope gives rise to more excitement than the possession itself, the dream more than the reality itself.”¹³

The consciousness is described today not only through the complexity and diversity of its contents, its structures and functions, but also through *its unity and completeness*. None of the data, aspects, manifestations or structures of the psychic life has any meaning unless they are connected with an architectural organization of mental life, which is essentially temporal. Bergson found the

¹⁰ Imm. Kant, *Critique of pure reason*, The Scientific and Encyclopedic Printing House, 1964. *Thing in itself* means the basis of existence for Kant for Kant, it can somehow be identified with transcendence or divinity.

¹¹ Berdiaev, *Eschatology and Metaphysics*, Paideia Publishing House, 1999, p. 93.

¹² Henri Ey, *Consciousness*, Eiclopedic Publishing House, 1983, p. 46.

¹³ H. Bergson, *An Essay on the Immediate Data of Consciousness*, Dacia Publishing House, 1993, p. 27.

consciousness identical with the “pure duration” which “closed in the habitat of species escapes for a moment from automatism to create a new automatism. The prison doors open only to be closed right away.”¹⁴

The consciousness is like a field, as H. Ey¹⁵ calls it, which settles between the subject and the world. It has a function of organizing the world and giving it a meaning, that of setting ourselves in the world as a reality distinct from it. Concentrating in a single formulation the structural complexity of consciousness, Ey said that “being conscious means having a personal model of the world”¹⁶, providing the Ego with experience.

“Existing and having the consciousness of existence means one and the same thing for the consciousness” said Sartre. He used to believe that the “great ontological law of conscience” is the following: the only way to exist for the consciousness is to have the consciousness of existing.”¹⁷ But the French philosopher, although he developed a philosophy of consciousness, related the consciousness only to man, the man meaning its transcendence. What is the nature of consciousness, which are its roots, which is the link between human consciousness and inner experience are questions shrouded in mystery even for the philosophers of consciousness.

Thus, the philosophical problem of consciousness remains an open topic linked indisputably to the human capacity for knowledge and, especially, self-knowledge. Not coincidentally, Berdyaev emphasized that “the divine mysteries are hidden only in man’s self-consciousness and self-feeling”.¹⁸

The philosophers have always recognized this thing, either consciously or unconsciously. By means of philosophy, by means of self-knowledge, man can reach the consciousness and through it they can reach God. In this respect, the German philosopher Ah. Schopenhauer stated: “The state of mind, the nature of the consciousness are from all points of view essential for the happiness of our existence”.¹⁹

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¹⁴ H. Bergson, *Philosophy*, Oeuvres, edition du Centenaire, Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 1959, p. 134.

¹⁵ Henri Ey, *Consciousness*, Eiclopedic Publishing House, 1983, p. 59.

¹⁶ Ibidem, p. 60.

¹⁷ J. P. Sartre, *L’imagination*, Paris, 1936, p. 125

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A POSSIBLE LEGACY OF ALBERT CAMUS. A CRITICAL READING.

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It seems that to write a poem about spring today would be to serve capitalism. I am not a poet, but I should delight in such a work without mental reservation, if it were beautiful. One serves mankind all together or not at all. And if man needs bread and justice, and if we must do the necessary to satisfy that need, he also needs pure beauty, which is the bread of his hearth. The rest is not serious.

A. C.

Abstract: *The critical reception of Camus in Italy, mainly underlines the Mediterranean mark of the Camusian thought. In last years several works on Albert Camus have appeared in Italy, and all of them exhibit a crucial feature: the “Thought at the Meridian”. It is a sign that crosses the entire Work of the Author, since the first works of success, as *Le Mythe de Sisyphe* and, of course, *L’Homme révolté*, in which the last chapter is entirely dedicated to this theme. One century after the birth of Camus, I would like to offer a review of these Italian critical interpretations of the French thinker, and to show some very rich points in common with other important authors contemporary to him.*

Keywords: *Albert Camus, Mare Nostrum, Tempus Nostrum, Midi, Abend-land.*

1.

In the Italian common opinion Albert Camus is usually considered a literary man, in generic meaning. This is for the unsystematic of his thought and for the lack of using of a particular conventional style of expression. Contrary to this opinion, what I would like to argue here is that Camus is to be considered a proper thinker, one of the most interesting of the last century. In his overall thought is indeed present a kind of philosophical analysis of the human condition that, for its great actuality, can furnish a relevant contribution for interpreting our present and imagining a possible future. For this, in his thought are possible to find, inter alia, fruitful common points (which I will show) with other important intellectuals of the twentieth century, such as, among the others, Hannah Arendt, Pier Paolo Pasolini, Herbert Marcuse.

Camus, in his reception, is rightly considered a sort of father of the Mediterranean identity. This conception arises especially from the lecture he gave on the Mediterranean culture on 8 February 1937, to inaugurate a new *Maison de*

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la Culture in Algiers¹, and from *La pensée de Midi*, the concluding section of his 1951 politico-philosophical essay *L'Homme révolté*². Thus, I will begin pointing out in what consist this Camusian Mediterranean thought, and I will show then why may be so relevant nowadays.

The Camusian Mediterranean thought revolves around a particular idea of nature: that of the Ancient Greek. Nature is viewed as a great cosmos that contains life and for which it is natural to feel love. *This kind* of human nature shares solidarity with the land that hosts it, this relationship with the earth is at the ground of our civilization, the Ancient Greek heart, but has been shattered by the Judeo-Christian tradition.

The latter, indeed, replaces the harmonious relation between man and nature in a dramatization. This harmonic, peaceful, satisfactory relationship is translated in a dramatic opposition, because only if and where life is harsh, where the dimension of life is just waiting, in an unsatisfactory present one can (must) only wait for the end of time, only there the spirit can rise. So, in this dimension of permanent struggle, nature must be dominated. Now, says Camus, this “unhappy consciousness” is typical of both, Hebraism and Christianity, in spite of this, they engage two completely opposite trajectories with it; understanding this point is fundamental to understand our civilization. Indeed, Hebraism puts itself into the cage of the unhappy consciousness, Christianity puts the cage of the unhappy consciousness to the world. The first, isolating itself from the world, the second, isolating the world from the joy. Developing this dynamics, to expand itself on the earth, Christianity hellenized itself, using the Hellenization as a sort of Trojan horse for penetrating the world.

*Christianity was obliged, in order to penetrate the Mediterranean world, to Hellenize itself, and its doctrine then became more flexible. But its originality lay in introducing into the ancient world two ideas that are never before been associated: the idea of history and the idea of punishment. In its conception of meditation, Christianity is Greek. In its idea of history, Christianity is Judaic and will be found again in German ideology*³.

The latter quotation is particularly relevant because in its penultimate line outlines this kind of *escamotage*, the Hellenization of Christianity, and in its last line the crushing of it, preparatory to the rise of the so-called German Ideology, the idea of the infinite malleability of man that, as is known, for Camus is the opposite of the Mediterranean mind, that is present in countries such as French, Italy and Spain. Doubtless, the substitution of its Judaic nucleus with Hellenistic traces, allows to Christianity to produce admirable fruits, e.g. among other things the *Canticle of all Creatures*, but these are as wonderful as temporary fruits.

¹ A. Camus, ‘The New Mediterranean Culture’ in Thody P. (ed.), *Lyrical and Critical Essays*, New York, Vintage Books, 1970.

² Idem, *The Rebel*, New York, Vintage Books, 1984.

³ Ibidem, p. 190.

The love of the ancients for the cosmos was completely unknown to the first Christians, who, moreover, awaited with impatience an imminent end of the world. Hellenism, in association with Christianity, then produces the admirable efflorescence of the Albigensian heresy on the one hand, and on the other Saint Francis. But with the Inquisition and the destruction of the Albigensian heresy, the Church again parts company with the world and with beauty, and gives back to history its pre-eminence over nature⁴.

Now, it is absolutely fundamental to underline that the relation of man with nature is largely influenced from the place in which the relation itself occurs. In other terms, thought is not independent from the place in which it is born. This means that there is a particular place in which is possible to say “yes” to the world, in which lies Moderation, harmony and beauty: the Mediterranean, and so the Southern thought⁵.

At the other pole there is a dimension characterized by the struggle with the environment that presents itself immediately as hostile, a dimension in which man says “no” to the world, in which lies lack of Moderation, darkness, revenge: the Northern thought. The domain of Christianity over nature, so, discloses doors for the advent of another kind of domain on it, that of the Northern people who have no tradition of friendship with the world⁶, therefore bringing into it the lack of moderation.

It is possible to find a very clear example of this in Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel: in a famous page he writes.

Mediterranean is the focus of the whole of world history. With its many inlets, it is not an ocean which stretches out indefinitely and to which man has a purely negative relationship; on the contrary, it positively invites him to venture out upon it. The Mediterranean Sea is the axis of world history. All the great states of ancient history lie around it, and it is the navel of the earth. Greece, that resplendent light of history, lies there. [...] The Mediterranean is therefore the hearth of the Old World, its conditioning and vitalizing principle. It is the center of world history, in so far as the latter possesses any internal coherence. World history would be inconceivable without it [...] ancient history was strictly confined to the countries around the Mediterranean⁷.

But this is just a phase destined to be overtaken by the course of history (please, notes how many times the word history is present in the latter quotation) that is projected towards the future, the West, the ethical power of the State, the Absolute Spirit. So in this view, Mediterranean just plays a task: to lead the spirit

⁴ Ibidem.

⁵ F. Cassano, *Southern Thought and Other Essays on the Mediterranean*, Fordham, Fordham U.P., 2012, esp. pp. 63-84.

⁶ A. Camus, *The Rebel*, New York, Vintage Books, 1984, esp. p. 188 ff.

⁷ G.W.F. Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History, Introduction*, Cambridge, Cambridge U.P. pp. 171-172.

from an initial and rough level, to the perfect consciousness of itself, removing it from the identification with nature that was practiced when the old world, the East, was still dominant. For this 'world history travels from east to west; for Europe is the absolute end of history, just as Asia is the beginning [...] world history imposes a discipline on the unrestrained natural will'⁸. For Camus this is exactly the lack of moderation: the domain by history on nature⁹ (we could also say, in the first Frankfurt School's terms, the domain by man on man and on nature). Camus protests against the idea that everything culminates in the land of the evening, which is the West. A West, in truth, that is the overlap and the fusion between the northern cold and the western dark, which harden the spirit. Contrarily, the Mediterranean is a place of sun, light, harmony, and so, of *Moderation*. A moderation disappeared under the knocking of the *hubris* of the History.

'At the centre of my work there is an invincible sun'¹⁰. This is the answer to whom accuse Camus to be a pessimist or a nihilist. Indeed, it is true that Camus refuses any kind of constituted authority, like that of God, history, reason and even that of nature, not only if we take it in prescriptive terms (e.g. the Nazism), but also and especially because the sun has its black side too¹¹. But it is absolute false that for the lack of an authority all is permitted, until the extreme of nihilism. On the contrary, refusing the light of religious revelation, or that of the enlightened reason, or of the unavoidable progress of history, so refusing any kind of tutors or masters, any kind of teleology, does not open the doors of nihilism, but that of responsibility, this means, precisely, to receive the light of the sun. If any authority is to refuse, because all of them reduce man to a fund to handle, and so nothing can be expected from them, the only one possibility lies in the fragile human capability to recognize its dignity, not objectively neither in a thing nor in a definition and so not available for any kind of use, material (e.g. science and technology) or ideological (e.g. religion and politics).

*Historical thought was to deliver man from subjection to a divinity; but this liberation demanded of him the most absolute subjection to historical evolution. The man takes refuge in the permanence of the party in the same way that he formerly prostrated himself before the altar. That is why the era which dares to claim that it is the most rebellious that has ever existed only offers a choice of various types of conformity. The real passion of the twentieth century is servitude*¹².

⁸ Ibidem, pp. 197.

⁹ A. Camus, *Notebooks 1951 – 1959*, Chicago, Ivan R. Dee, 2008.

¹⁰ Idem, 'The New Mediterranean Culture' in Thody P. (ed.), *Lyrical and Critical Essays*, New York, Vintage Books, 1970, 351-352.

¹¹ This is the reason why, coming back from a journey in Italy, Camus said: 'Italy, like other privilege places, offers me the spectacle of a beauty in which, nonetheless, men die' (Camus 1970: esp. 93-106). Also, about Italy, linking his judgment on it to his general view of a Mediterranean thought, Camus stated that Fascism had a more human face in Italy than it does in Germany: 'it is a miracle of the Mediterranean that it allows men who think humanly to live without oppression in a country with inhuman laws' (Camus 1970: II/1323).

¹² A. Camus, *The Rebel*, New York, Vintage Books, 1984, pp. 202-203.

The latter quotation marks a deep touch point with the figure of Ulysses outlined from Theodor Wiesengrund Adorno and Max Horkheimer: modern subject emancipates himself from the totalizing power of myth, to then reproduce it once again in the history; from the authority of transcendental forces to that of immanent ones. History is nothing but relocation of the totalizing power of an alleged authority¹³.

It is fundamental considering moderation as the core of the Mediterranean mind, not only to correctly understand Camus, but also because this discloses at least two extremely rich perspectives; one about the *querelle* of Camus with Jean-Paul Sartre, and one on a relation between the thought of Camus and that of Hannah Arendt.

For Camus moderation is not simply a peaceful contemplation of the world, otherwise than a generic pacifism, moderation is ever allied with the revolutionary spirit.

Moderation. They consider it the resolution of contradiction. It cannot be anything other than the affirmation of contradiction and the heroic decision to stay with it and to survive it¹⁴. Moderation is not the opposite of rebellion. Rebellion in itself is moderation (...) It is a perpetual conflict, continually created and mastered by intelligence¹⁵.

Hence, moderation has a force in itself, with which can shape the world, for this, it is not a mere reconciliation with the given, a complicity with the quiet self-reproduction of the world. But this force ever moves from a consciousness sight on the world, that of the limits, and never from an ideological, dogmatic and so limitless position. This differentiates between revolt and revolution, allowing to the first to contain any totalizing and totalitarian drift. This is the reason why the man of Camus is not a revolutionary but a rebel, he rebels against suffering¹⁶, like Ivan Karamazov¹⁷. What he is seeking, it is not a political victory on it, what matters is protesting itself against suffering, though man knows that he is destined to be constantly defeated, just like Sisyphus; the experience of one's limits, far from begin a defeat, is the privileged antidote against any intoxication of omnipotence. Remembering the totalitarian drift in USSR, it is not difficult understand the distance from Sartre (of course also arisen by other factors) and from his Existentialism: 'Existentialism has retained from Hegelian thought its fundamental error which consists of reducing man to history'¹⁸.

¹³ Horkheimer & Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment: Philosophical Fragments*, Stanford, Stanford U.P., 2002; F. Sollazzo, 'Potere disciplinante e libertà controllata. Esiti morali della moderna configurazione del potere' in *Lo Sguardo. Rivista di Filosofia*, 13, pp. 249-266

http://www.losguardo.net/public/archivio/num13/articoli/2013_13_Federico_Sollazzo_Potere_disciplinante_e_liberta_controllata.pdf.

¹⁴ A. Camus, *Notebooks 1951 – 1959*, Chicago, Ivan R. Dee, 2008, p. 21.

¹⁵ Idem, *The Rebel*, New York, Vintage Books, 1984, pp. 300-301.

¹⁶ Idem, *The Plague*, New York, Vintage Books, 1991.

¹⁷ J. Grenier, *Albert Camus: Souvenirs*, Paris, Gallimard, 1968.

¹⁸ A. Camus, *Notebooks 1942 – 1951*, Chicago, Ivan R. Dee, 2010, p. 190.

And it is ever for moderation that Camus signed (with other French intellectuals, such as, among the others, Jean Anouilh, Marcel Aymé, Jean-Louis Barrault, Paul Claudel, Jean Cocteau, Colette, Daniel-Rops, Roland Dorgelès, Arthur Honegger, Thierry Maulnier, François Mauriac, Jean Paulhan, Paul Valéry, Maurice de Vlaminck) against the death sentence for Robert Brasillach, collaborationist of the republic of Vichy, executed in 1945 (in behalf of a sort of fraternity in guilt, Camus was been ever against the death penalty: not the criminal, but who cannot feel compassion for him threatens the strength of the society), and in 1944 he wrote an extremely interesting article on Pierre Pucheu, member of the Vichy government, executed in the same year. The article would have to appear in the issue of April of *Lettres françaises*, but for its content it will be postponed to the subsequent number. When it is published, it is accompanied by a note of Paul Eluard and Claude Morgan, in which they distance themselves from such article. What is so thorny in it? In the article Camus argues that the main guilt of Pucheu was his “lack of imagination” (we could also say, a lack of Mediterranean thought). He was indeed just an executive (an executioner; as all the mere executives are executioners) of orders, without the needed judgment to understand the real circumstances and the aftermaths of his actions, without the faculty to imagine the point of view and the feelings of the others (Camus will come back to this thesis in his 1946 lecture on “the crisis of man” by the Columbia University).

Well, in this article we find an anticipation of about twenty years of the main thesis of the banality of evil contained in the famous Arendtian book on Otto Adolf Eichmann¹⁹, in which Arendt imputes to the Nazi officer the guilt of what she defined as *Kadavergehorsam*, an obedience like a cadaver; taking this lack of judgment, and so of imagination, as the source of evil, any evil, thus, as radical as banal²⁰. An issue, that of banality of evil, still tragically present in our society, just think to managers and technicians; and an issue that we still find hard to penetrate, immersed as we are in a Jesuit civilization.

2.

What I would like to argue now is that in the thought of Camus there is a possible legacy for us, that we can take (if we well understand his words) and apply today, as possible solution to the crisis of the nowadays society, that is, verily, the crisis of the whole western civilization.

Camus indeed identifies two polarities that characterized the entire European civilization, which moves itself between German dreams and the Mediterranean traditions, *between the violence of eternal adolescence and virile strength, between nostalgia, rendered more acute by knowledge and by books and*

¹⁹ H. Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem. A Report on the Banality of Evil*, New York, Penguin, 1963.

²⁰ Flores d'Arcais, *et al.*, *L'intellettuale e l'impegno. MicroMega*, 6, 2013, esp. pp. 149-222; F. Sollazzo, 'La crisi della facoltà di giudizio' in Id., *Totalitarismo, democrazia, etica pubblica*, Roma, Aracne, 2011; Id. 'La questione della banalità del male in Arendt' in *Osservatorio filosofico*, 18/11/2013

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FDWSmTfrbO8>.

*courage reinforced and enlightened by the experience of life – in other words, between history and nature*²¹.

We can call these dimensions as: the *Abend-land* and the *Midi*. The dimension of the *Abend-land* is that of hardness. The dimension of the *Midi*, ‘where intelligence is intimately related to the blinding light of the sun’²², is that of moderation and equilibrium. More depth, the *Midi* carries with it the primacy of beauty that the West no longer knows how to recognize. Mediterranean mind preserves the capability, no longer present in the nowadays society, to recognize beauty. And pay attention: recognizing beauty is neither a *divertissement* nor a literary myth; very differently, and very much more deeply, it is a question of anthropology. Indeed, who is not able to recognize beauty is a completely other kind of creature than whom has this sensibility. Here lies a very interesting point of contact with Pier Paolo Pasolini and his conception of anthropological mutation²³. In other words, if Camus says (as we have already pointed out) that environmental circumstances play a central role in determining mind of people, now we can note that this role deals with beauty, and that the aftermaths of this question are fundamental for mankind. Here we are in front of an anthropological issue, different possible kinds of man, who feels and who feels not beauty, and as a result of that, different possible alternatives for the hereinafter of the civilization. In an analytical form we could say: environment – beauty – kind of man – kind of civilization. What is at stake here, is nothing less than our future.

Here it is important to remember that Camus argues that we live today in the age of the triumph of the lack of moderation, that presents its own supremacy as inevitable. In front of this, his perspective is neither to surrender to this alleged unavoidable supremacy, nor to substitute for what we called *Abend-land* with what we called *Midi*. Nor surrender, because nothing is inevitable, and all turns around possible consciousness choices about present and future. Not substituting a dimension for another, because it is not a question of clash and domain but of integration between dimensions, both significant, that of the strength and that of the beauty.

*Naturally, of course, it is not a question of despising anything, or of exalting one civilization at the expense to another, but of simply saying that it is a process of thought which the world today cannot do without for very much longer*²⁴.

²¹ A. Camus, *The Rebel*, New York, Vintage Books, 1984, p. 299.

²² Ibidem, p. 300.

²³ P.P. Pasolini, *Lettere luterane: il progresso come falso progresso*, Torino, Einaudi, 2003; Id., *Scritti corsari*, Torino, Einaudi, 2007; F. Sollazzo, ‘Brief Remarks on the Pasolini’s Conception of “Anthropological Mutation” in *Café Bohème*’ <http://www.cafeboheme.cz/?p=881>, 2012; Id., ‘L’ultimo Pasolini’ in *Orizzonti culturali italo-romeni*, 5

http://www.orizonturiculturale.ro/it_studi_Federico-Sollazzo.html, 2013; Id., ‘Pasolini e la “mutazione antropologica” in Pirvu E. (ed.), *Discorso, identità e cultura nella lingua e nella letteratura italiana. Atti del Convegno Internazionale di Studi di Craiova, 21-22 settembre 2012*, Craiova, Universitari, pp. 419-434.

²⁴ A. Camus, *The Rebel*, New York, Vintage Books, 1984, p. 300.

It is not difficult to note how this reasoning is still, and more, actual nowadays. We live under the mark of forces that harden and impoverish spirit: economy and technology (maybe it is not a mere coincidence that, at least in Europe, they come especially from the land of German ideology). But, following Camus, we could say that our task is not that to delete them from the world, but to refuse their current using, aimed to a blind efficiency (that of Eichmann), and to reorient them towards the critical capability to recognize and create beauty. And here lies another very interesting contact point with another thinker of the last century: Herbert Marcuse, and his conception of the Great Refusal of the *status quo* through a general esthetic reorientation of the economical and technological apparatus²⁵.

To conclude, what I would like to propose is that a possible inheritance of Camus consists in this: he describes the place in which the *Mare Nostrum* could become the *Tempus Nostrum*. If there is still a chance to invert the sense of our civilization, that clearly is in crisis, here it is. This seems to be the only believable possibility, despite the dominant cynicism says exactly the contrary oversimplifying discourses like this, to avoid the decline of *our* of civilization.

If we are still in time and, especially, if we will be at the highness of this possibility, it is a question that remains to be seen.

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THE ARCHETYPE AND POLITICAL BRANDING: CULTURAL BACKGROUND IN PERSUASION

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Abstract: *The political brand became a crucial concept in the science of political communication and the field of political PR. For a better positioning on the political arena, the political image has to become a genuine political brand. The political brand is a socio-political and cultural brand. That is why there is a direct link between the national archetypes and the political brand. A simple definition of the political brand states that it is represented by the totality of signs and personality features which mass-media refers to in the political audience towards a person constantly engaged in political activities. In fact, the political image brand is a simple synthesis, an image composed of two-three major features which have the role to position a political personality in the mind of voters once for all. The most common political brands are the heads of states. The present study analyzes the way Mircea Snegur, the president of the Republic of Moldova, became the parent of the nation, how the communist Voronin acquired the image of the rescuer during his office and euro-communist – at the end of his office by promoting an anti-Romanian rhetoric. In Romania, Ceausescu considered himself a national shepherd, Constantinescu – the president of procrastination and Basescu – the playful president.*

Keywords: *political branding, political myth, Basescu, Putin, Voronin, Timofti.*

The politics and persuasion – are two converging concepts in the public space. *Persuasion* is a form of social influence through which people are brought over to adopt a certain type of thinking or a certain attitude through some techniques of rational or effective nature. Even Aristotle, the most prominent theorists of ancient Greece, said that persuasion consists of two types of arguments - artistic and non-artistic¹.

As any other form of mass communication, persuasion has its own tools of influencing the public opinion. A dominant role in this regard lies on the political myth. Every society has its own myths which consoles or on the contrary,

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¹ Larson Charles, *Persuasiune. Receptare și responsabilitate*, Ed. Polirom, Iași, 2003.

mobilizes. For the American society, for example, the political discourse is based on the myths that unify the collective thinking, forming in this way the public opinion. Among these is the myth about „equal opportunities society”, „opportunity of success”, „the American dream”, „democracy and free entrepreneurship”. The presence of unifying myths can be easily perceived from the inauguration speeches of American presidents. Since the discourses of Obama are considered among the most powerful discourses of American presidents we shall support the above statements with some persuasion elements from Barack Obama’s victory speech which has been drafted according to the basic principles of persuasive writing:

„Tonight, more than 200 years after a former colony won the right to determine its own destiny, the task of perfecting our union moves forward.”² We can identify the call to *ad verecundiam* fallacy which signifies the return or recall of traditions through the evocation of the glorious past which has caused the rise.³

“It moves forward because of you... I want to thank every American who participated in this election...”⁴ Gratitude has a direct effect which emphasizes the role and importance of the decision made by a voter as well as undertaking the responsibility by the elected one towards the voter.

An undeniable persuasive force of political discourse is the theme of patriotism which is also present in Obama’s victory speech: “This country has more wealth than any nation, but that’s not what makes us rich. We have the most powerful military in history, but that’s not what makes us strong. Our university, our culture are all the envy of the world, but that’s not what keeps the world coming to our shores. What makes America exceptional are the bonds that hold together the most diverse nation on earth. The freedom which so many Americans have fought for and died for come with responsibilities as well as rights. And among those are love and charity and duty and patriotism. That’s what makes America great.”⁵

The political myth has a strong power of penetration in the consciousness of the masses. The political imaginary constantly intervenes to explore the past and legitimate the present – both in the totalitarian and democratic societies. In his work, „*Myths and political mythology*” by Raoul Girardet, it can be observed that the classical inventory of political imaginary which has been widely applied by the communist societies consists of the *Golden Age*, *Saving Revolution* or *Evil Plot myths*.⁶

Particularly influential in the perception of foreign policy is considered the *Evil empire* myth. It is a myth which was first applied to the Soviet Union during the Cold War by American president Ronald Reagan. According to this myth, in its attempts for arming, the Soviet Union rushes to compete with the USA and as a

² Barack Obama’s Victory Discourse on <http://unimedia.info/stiri/video-text-discursul-de-victorie-al-lui-barack-obama-54066.html>, accessed 7th November 2012.

³ Larson Charles, *Persuasion. Reception and Responsibility*, cited works., p. 225.

⁴ Barack Obama, *op.cit.*

⁵ Ibidem.

⁶ Raul Girardet, *Political Myths and Mythologies*, the European Institute, Iasi, 1997, p. 16.

result the soviet economy has to suffer. Decades later, the American president George W. Bush referred to the same phrase by calling it the „*Axis of evil*” which included Iran, Syria, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea.

One of the legends of American literature, which has a strong persuasive force, is the *Wisdom of the people*. When we choose our leaders, we trust modest persons. American presidents have put special focus on their modest origins. Reagan referred to his humble origin from Dixon, Illinois, while Bill Clinton mentioned that he saw the light of day in a simple house in Hope, Arkansas. The myth is valid for other cultures and political systems, too.

Simplicity, human virtues such as love, compassion, and the use of humor in public discourse have the aim to shape the image of a man of the people or common. This technique was also applied by Obama: „*Let me say this publicly*, - declared Obama in his victory discourse, - *Michelle, I have never loved you more*. In this way we can identify the *humanization of the image* of politician by showing his perfect man of family side who even after 20 years of marriage is capable to confess his love in public. The same man of family reference is directed towards Sasha and Malia: “*And I’m so proud of you guys. But I will say that for now one dog’s probably enough.*” We emphasize that for the humanization of the political leader’s image, the family circle is extended to domestic animals, inclusively. This is made because in a political show – as the French researcher Roger-Gerard Shwartzenberg considers – there are no accessories or valueless elements.⁷

The idea of patriotism is very close to the concept of American myth of *Opportunity of success*. Its protagonist is a young man who becomes successful through hard work, honesty and trust in the future. The myth refers mainly to the immigrants who came in the USA. It adopted a more general form which includes women, other categories of immigrants as well as those coming from Europe. The myth touches the values of hard work, sincerity, honesty, law and order. He who has given due consideration to these elements of American society was Alexis de Tocqueville:

“*All Americans feel the burning desire to advance the social ladder. All are constantly looking to acquire property, power, reputation.*”⁸ This myth has found reflection through the personification technique in the victory speech of Barack Obama: “*We believe in a generous America, in a compassionate America, in a tolerant America, open to the dreams of an immigrant’s daughter who studies in our schools and pledges to our flag.*”⁹

Politicians often resort to invoking myths to convince voters. Among the myths with great persuasive force, widely used during election campaigns, is the myth of *Big Time* or *Golden Age (Eternal recurrence)*. The author of the myth is considered professor of history of religions at Sorbonne, Mircea Eliade. He stated that people reject the specific historical time and in the same time crave for it and often try a “periodical return in the mythical times of the beginning, in the “Big

⁷ Barack Obama’s Victory Discourse, cited works.

⁸ Alexis de Tocqueville, *On Democracy in America*, Humanitas Publishing House, Bucharest, 2008, p.110.

⁹ Barack Obama’ Victory Discourse, cited works.

Time”. Thus we can evoke the idea of the two types of time. For example, when we say: “What leaves us periodically, shall return periodically” or “what goes around comes around” or “history repeats itself”. The *Golden age* or *pre times age* symbolizes the image of order, social harmony, they are images of a legendary past. The image of the *pre times age* assures that selection or transmutation process which is typical for remembrance. Therefore, the memory transforms some privileged times into legend. In the political imaginary, the constellation of *Golden Age* is considered the most stable and current. The *Golden Age* is nothing but the nostalgic evocation of a past happiness and what its return means.

The myth of the *Golden Age* has inspired and mobilized voters favorable to the communist left wing from the Republic of Moldova during the elections of February 25, 2001. After this parliamentary election the communist faction won 71 seats out of 101 in the legislature from Chisinau.

Another vital element of the mythological “constellation”, according to G. Ballandier, is the *Unity myth*. G. Ballandier considers that the Unity myth which refers to race, nation is the most widely used since it places the whole nation into the ceremony. In the context of political theatricalization, we can state that the Unity myth is nothing but a “delirious fusion” of a civil society.¹⁰

The Unity myth carries a special meaning in the totalitarian and socialist regimes where the state and the personalization of power prevail. In such systems, the celebrations are accompanied by parades, military or civil processions which are forms of dogma and power of governors. The day of May 1st in the USSR signified more than the celebration of work. It reunited, assimilated and associated the crowds with their leaders. In the case of the Republic of Moldova, one of the most fascinating and symbolic arena for the political theatre was undoubtedly the Great National Assembly Square from the centre of Chisinau. It gives a certain meaning to the city – the city of power and heart of Moldovan country.

The Unity myth is present in Obama’s discourse: “*We are an American family and we rise or fall together as one nation and as one people.*”¹¹

The Pro-Europe meeting of November 3rd from the Great National Assembly Square which was organized by the Pro-Europe coalition parties and was attended by more than 100 thousand citizens represents, as well, a revocation model of the nation’s unity myth and of the ruling class with persuasive effects.

According to Murray Edelman, when we speak about power, the myths are not just fiction but widely accepted beliefs.¹² What is relevant in the case of a political myth is that it always relies on effects and rarely on the cognitive and rational aspects. The dominant function of the political myth is to ease, to temper the crowds which may be panic-stricken and confused by contradictory social stimuli.

The political myth lacks essence without tradition and political culture. The interdependence between political culture, the mentality of the masses and the electoral process give rise to another phenomenon of positioning the political

¹⁰ Georges Ballandier, *The Power Scene*, AION, Oradea, 2000, p.21.

¹¹ Barack Obama’ *Victory Discourse*, cited works.

¹² Murray Edelman, *Politics and Use of Symbols*. Polirom Publishing House, Iași, 1999, p. 101.

actor – the political *brand*. Brand has many meanings. This is how, for instance, the Romanian journalist, Claudiu Săftoiu, the former adviser of President Traian Băsescu, defines this socio-political and cultural concept in his book “*Political journalism – manipulation of politicians through mass-media. Mass-media manipulation by politicians*”: “The image brand is represented by all personality signs and features which are included by mass-media in the political audience regarding a person engaged in constant political activities. In fact, political image *brand* is a simple synthesis – a caricature, an image composed of two-three major features which place a political personality in the minds of voters once and for all.¹³ Once it has been created and the political personalities are heavily positioned in the conscience of political audience of a country it is hard to change the perception they have among the voters.

The Romanian political branding is described very well in the book of Vladimir Tismaneanu and Cristian Patrasconiu, “Presidents’ book”.

In this book, the *brand* is associated with a doctrine which comprises 2-3 options, political projects. For example, Constantinescu’s doctrine.¹⁴ Constantinescu was the *president of procrastination*.¹⁵ The elimination of the effects of communism was then a historical contingency. What prevented President Constantinescu to create a commission to study the crimes of the communism? What Corneliu Coposu underestimated, and not only him, relates to the human weaknesses of the character: a hypertrophied vanity, unmeasured pride, a determined opinion towards their own image which we call narcissism.¹⁶ The legitimacy of Emil Constantinescu was created from his relation with Corneliu Coposu. Even though he is compared with Walesa and Havel, he was not involved in the dissident actions during the communism. Constantinescu lacked charisma.¹⁷

In the authors’ opinion, there are similarities between the Presidents of Romania and other state presidents in the world: Iliescu - with Andropov, Constantinescu with Gorbachev, Băsescu with Yeltsin.¹⁸

Ceausescu considered himself chosen by history, he blindly believed in his grand destiny, he considered himself the *liberator* of the nation and *national guardian*.¹⁹ On the other hand, Iliescu accommodated himself as the chameleon, imitated the democracy but remained attached to the byzantinism of the party and state. He had a magnetism he knew how to use. While Traian Basescu had a strong ego. He undertook a big risk when he decided to condemn the communist dictatorship. He became popular due to the address made on December 18, 2006. What makes Basescu human and interesting is his nature of *rebellious plebeian*

¹³ Claudiu Saftoiu, *Political Journalism -- politicians’ manipulation through media, media manipulation by the politicians* on <http://www.markmedia.ro>

¹⁴ Vladimir Tismăneanu, Cristian Pătrășconiu, *The Book of Presidents, Talks, Correspondence, Portraits*, Humanitas Publishing House, Bucharest, 2013, p. 196.

¹⁵ Ibidem, p. 142.

¹⁶ Ibidem, p. 144.

¹⁷ Ibidem, p. 229.

¹⁸ Ibidem, p. 221.

¹⁹ Ibidem, p. 227.

and courage to spill out inconvenient things. Basescu knows how to win the trust, how to convey an image of strength and power.

The referendum held in July 30th, 2012 to dismiss Basescu made a mess of a job. The huge efforts of the mafia oligarchy trusts, the hysterias of Antonescu and the lies of Ponta did not lead to the expected results.²⁰

Ceausescu was formed in a bolshevik dogmatic universe but he gradually went towards primordialist nationalism, cultivated and promoted the Thracian - Dacian mythology, tried to develop the image of the Communist Party in Romania as a promoter of medieval voivodes, such as Burebista and Decebal. Ceausescu wanted to become the *reincarnation of Mihai Viteazul*. But remained a committed communist and died. His doctrine was the *national stalinism*.

Traian Băseșcu is a pragmatic spirit who understands that the real modernization of Romania lies in the promotion of pluralistic values and separation from the totalitarian, fascist and communist past. His doctrine is related to his political project: state of law, respect for the Constitution, fight against corruption, the authentic Euro-Atlantism, not an imitation, and fight against Leninist legacies.²¹

According to other approach, the *brand* represents a sum of values that a certain products has. In our case – a political leader. For example, Che Guevara is a brand?²² Undeniably, the image of this political leader has passed from the phase of product to that of brand. Che Guevara organized revolutions and this is how the idea of rebellion, opposition and anti-system appeared. This value developed during the times and became brand. Each brand comes on the market by assigning a certain quality to the product. In this case, the communism may become a brand, too. Thus, Lenin has been associated with the idea of political utopia since he represented the idealist communism. Stalin is the symbol of repression, while Gorbaciov – embodies the idea of reform utopia. The Romanian communism gave birth to one single brand – Ceausescu brand: the *genius of the Carpathians*, for foreigners – *Ceausescu the dictator*, for Romanians – the *great son of the nation, Hero among heroes*. In the West, he managed to create the image of a socialist independent leader of the USSR. That is why, the slogan used in the period of Gheorghiu Dej: „Stalin and the Soviet nation brought us the happiness!” was removed after 1965 by: „Ceausescu and the people, nation and the flag!”²³

For the mentality of Moldovan voters, the communist period created the political brand of Ivan Bodiū, hence the phrase *Bodiulist epoch* which left beautiful *architecture* prints as a reminder of the Golden Age. Ceausescu gave to Romanians the metro and the House of the Nation, while Bodiū gave to Chisinau – the famous Organ Hall, the Opera and Ballet Theatre, the road that joins Botanica District with the center of Chisinau, etc.

The image of political leader, according to the Russian researcher V. Pizin, is the social and inner experiences echo of the individual. The image, in fact,

²⁰ Ibidem, p.235.

²¹ Ibidem, p.225.

²² *Consumption Communism*, No. 142, 13-19 October, 2006, p. 9.

²³ Ibidem, p.9.

represents a political projection of the voter himself. The *homo politicus* becomes the mirror of his voter where the latter tries to discover what is hidden in the depths of his soul (perceptive equilibrium theory). Thus, the political leader brand can be treated as a model of “*projection of the archetype*”.²⁴

The political brand puts on the first place the individualization and not the utility of the political actor. In the context of space complexity and political offers used in electoral campaigns, the voter has to identify and choose easily the personal favorite of the campaign. The elaboration of the strongest national brands is based on the archetypes of national culture. In the Russian culture one may identify 12 types of archetypes: *Durak* (idiot) *archetype*– the thickhead – which is associated with simplicity; the archetype *Bogatiri* – associated with heroism. Among Russians, the archetype *Ivan-Țarevici* is very popular, which means devotion, power. The archetype *Василиса Прекрасная*/ the Beautiful Vaselisa – means transformation and love. The archetype of the *Golden fish* – magic, the archetype of *Beldam (Baba Cloanța)*, the archetype of *Koscei the immortal* – means rebellion, etc.²⁵

For comparison, we can conclude that the Moldovan political arena does not involve an inter-dependence between the fairy tales and popular legends on one hand, and the political branding, on the other hand. Therefore, the Moldovan political show does not involve Prince Charming or Ileana Cosinzeana. However, there is a puppeteer. It is namely this way that the vice-president of the Democratic Party, Vlad Plahotniuc has been named. According to the leader of the Liberal Democratic Party of Moldova, Vlad Filat, this happened due to the backstage actions Plahotniuc undertook.

The Russian sociologist Dmitrii Olișanski proposes a comprehensive typology of archetypes²⁶:

The *tzar* – is the leader who has a special energizing power. It is the image of Yeltsin „the *tzar Boris*”, politician number 1 in Russia who had taken the power from the ideological and undetermined M. Gorbaciov. Currently, there is the *red tzar from Kremlin* - Vladimir Putin.

Sobar – this role has been awarded by Olisanski to the ex-mayor of Moscow, Iurie Lujkov who was in power in Moscow for 15 years from the collapse of the USSR. The notion of „sobar” can be associated with *купец/merchant*. His expansive energy develops not vertically but horizontally, being interested to conquer „new territories”. The mayor of the city or the *градоначальник* can not be a *tzar*.

Папмпоз (party organizer) – is the archetype of Ziuganov, who became the shadow of B. Yeltsin in 1996. He is the unprepared man to take the power in his hands. It is believed that in the elections of 1996, Ziuganov feared more about his victory, than Yeltsin about his failure. It was namely this reason for moderating the electoral actions of the communist candidate in the Ist and IInd rounds of the voting. Yeltsin suffered from health problems, while Ziuganov simply retired for a

²⁴ Аруд. Кошелюк, М. *Технологии политических выборов*, 2 –е изд. Питер, 2004.

²⁵ Иудин А.А., Иудин А.И., Чернышов А.В. *Архетипы в современной рекламе: возможности и перспективы*, Н. Новгород: Изд-во НИСОЦ, 2010, p.72.

²⁶ Аруд. Кошелюк, М. *Технологии политических выборов, op.cit.*, p.169.

while. He was probably aware that it was not the appropriate moment for the communists.

The *marker archetype* – is the person who bets during the card playing. As a rule, they “light up” very fast in the public, while backstage they look different – exhausted, tired (the image of the Russian Liberal, Vladimir Jirinovski).

The *defrocked priest* – is the model of Mihail Gorbaciov, the first and the last president of the USSR. He left the power so he could afterwards reason his mistakes. “He destroyed the power, - Olisanskii writes – and all the life has to justify himself as a *defrocked priest* who started to give lectures about the scientific communism.”

The birth and preservation of a brand means the observance of certain rules. If we were to transcribe the immutable laws of branding, according to All and Laura Ries, we would get the following formula: if you want to build a powerful brand in the mind of voters, it must be constrained (the *Law of expansion*). The essence of the brand must be reduced to one single idea or component. Once a brand gets hold of a word, it is hard for the opponents to steal it (Mitterrand – *the quiet power*, Mercedes-Benz – *prestige and authority*). There is a need to find a codified word for prestige (the *Law of the word*).²⁷

The Moldovan political imaginary

It is important, in our opinion, to estimate that not all the political actors become political brands. After an analysis of the portraits of political actors we came to the conclusion that it is very difficult to identify two-three elements that can characterize and convey a synthesis of his/her political performances. The only actors of the political arena that comply with the requirements of political branding are the heads of states. A brand of national politics is the first president of the Republic of Moldova, Mircea Snegur. By referring to the immutable laws of persuasion, it is clear that for a brand is important the presence of the qualifier *the first*. Mircea Snegur was the first president of the Republic of Moldova after the independence and state sovereignty were declared in August 27th, 1991. The name of Snegur is associated with the Tricolor and Sovereignty. Due to his ruling style and presidential nature, the first president fairly deserves the name of nation’s parent.²⁸ On 15 January 1992, in the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, the first president of the Republic of Moldova gave the oath of office towards the people of Moldova. After the independence has been declared, the Republic of Moldova was the first country of the CIS that became member of the UN. The president Mircea Snegur was the person who signed the accession protocol on 2 March 1992. In the same day, in Dubasari District the Cazachs and the guards attacked the police station.²⁹ The Transnistrian conflict, in the spring of 1992,

²⁷ Al Ries, Laura Ries, *The 22 Immutable laws of the Brand brandului –how to turn a common product or a service into a world one*, Colecție Curier MK Publishing House, Bucharest, 2003.

²⁸ The law on the election of the president of the Republic of Moldova was adopted on 18 September, 1991.

²⁹ Aurelia Peru, *Crearea brandului de imagine politică*, Moldoscopie, Probleme de analiză politică, Partea 4 (XXXIV), 2006.

caused serious damage to the image of the president. The consequences of the military conflict, the economic crisis that hit the Republic of Moldova have created favorable conditions for the accession to power of his electoral rival, Petru Lucinschi. One of the strengths of the Snegur's brand was the abandoning of the Agrarian Democratic Party of Moldova, which was considered the party of random people³⁰, and his initiative on the amendment of art. 13 of the Constitution of the Republic of Moldova regarding the language. On 25 April 1995, from the parliamentary tribune, Snegur declared that the correct denomination of our language is the Romanian language.³¹ After abandoning the Agrarian Democratic Party of Moldova, Snegur took the lead of another party which helped him in the presidential elections of 1996, the Party of Revival and Reconciliation of the Republic of Moldova.

The second president of the Republic of Moldova, Petru Lucinschi, remained in the history of the formation of the Moldovan political system as the president-player. In 1996, on the eve of the presidential elections the Movement for a Democratic and Prosperous Moldova was created by D. Diacov. This was the party which promoted Petru Lucinschi in the presidential competition which brought him the victory. The formation of the governing coalition, the Alliance for Democracy and Reforms (1998) and then its collapse (1999) after the vote of no-confidence was submitted towards the Cabinet lead by Sturza, by the vote of the members of Popular Christian Democratic Party which was a component of the Alliance for Democracy and Reforms and of the Communist Party of the Republic of Moldova. Even now when he is not a politician anymore his name is associated with the formation of political parties and political doctrines. Therefore, the Liberal Democratic Party of Moldova is considered by some analysts the "creature" of Petru Lucinschi. It should be mentioned that the son of the former president is member of the Liberal Democratic Party of Moldova, president of the Parliamentary Commission for culture, science, education, mass-media. Some publishers call the former president as *Chirilovici-Șmekerilovici*. If in the case of Mircea Snegur we can say that the environment has created the image of the president, then in the case of Petru Lucinschi – the president was that who has created the environment.

Voronin – *the Savior* and Vladimir Voronin – *the euro –communist*. Is the image double brand of the Moldovan president perceived by Moldovan voters. After 2001, when Voronin becomes the leader of the Communist Party of the

³⁰ On 4 August 1990, M. Snegur announced his retreat from the Communist Party of Moldova. On 27 June 1995 he announced his retreat from the Democratic Agrarian Party of Moldova. The Declaration states: "Some members of the Executive Board of DAPM question the correctness of the course of economic reforms initiated at the beginning of 1992 and the desire to integrate our country in the western economy by making frequent allusions to the impossibility of existence and development of our country in terms of independence outside the former USSR". *Republic of Moldova: Political history (1989-2000)*, Chisinau, 2000, p.143

³¹ It was on 5 December 2013, when the Constitutional Court has declared the Romanian language as the state language. Therefore, the phrase „Moldovan language based on Latin alphabet” of art. 13 of the Constitution of the Republic of Moldova shall be removed with the phrase „Romanian language”, according to the text of the „Declaration of independence”, which has primary force.

Republic of Moldova, as a savior of the nation by promoting the accession to the Eastern economic space, in 2002 – 2003 the staff of the communist Voronin elaborated and promoted the strategy of European integration vector. The Anti-Russian political rhetoric, the rejection of the Cozak Memorandum, the meeting with the most powerful president in the world, G.W. Bush in the Oval Office, during his first office, allowed him to adopt the *euro-communist brand*. This decision was supported by the election and meeting with Traian Băsescu on the eve of parliamentary elections in 2005. In this case, the accent was put on the transfer of image. After the events of 6-7 April 2009, the image of the president received a death blow. From a euro-communist, Voronin - as the leader of the CPRM – regained the image of *Парморг*. Voronin has created for himself the image of *protector of Moldovenism* and stationality using a sarcastic and aggressive discourse against the European Commissioners, and namely against the Romanian president, Traian Băsescu.³²

The president of the Republic of Moldova, Nicolaie Timofti (2011 – pending) cannot be associated with the proper traditional image of a head of state – parent of the nation. This is because the election of the president, after a long period of constitutional crisis which hit the Republic of Moldova and caused by the inability of the Parliament to elect the head of the state, was the result of negotiations between the ruling political parties and the compromise of some representatives of the parliamentary opposition.³³ If to refer to the French brands, the current president may be described as “an old baby”.³⁴ This happens with the development and consolidation of parliamentarism in the national political system. The authority of the president is *de jure guaranteed by Constitution (art. 78)*, while *de facto, it is clear that the final decisions are made by someone else than the president. This fact was repeatedly confirmed by the leader of the Liberal Party of Moldova, Mihai Ghimpu*.³⁵ Mihai Ghimpu, who was the interim president of the Republic of Moldova (during the period 11.09.2009 - 28.12.2010) and currently the president of the Liberal Party of Moldova has the political image brand. He may be associated with the following tags: Romanianism – unionism, nonconformist, sarcasm, humor. He is a direct and categorical politician. He uses a colloquial and populist language. He is the author of the following paramount events and decisions: declassification of KGB archives, aggressive rhetoric against Kremlin, including the decree (non-constitutional) declaring June 28 the day of soviet occupation, the correct denomination of the Romanian language.³⁶

³² Aurelia Peru, *Creating the Political Image Brand*, cited works

³³ On 6 March 2012, 62 MP have elected Nicolae Timofti as president, putting an end to presidential deadlock which lasted over 900 days.

³⁴ Roger Gerard Shwartzenberg, *op.cit.*, p.89.

³⁵ Emisiunea Politica, pe www.tv7.md, 12 februarie 2014.

³⁶ In September 11, 2009, the president of the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, Mihai Ghimpu became the interim president of the RM. This decision was taken as a result of the dismissal of the President Vladimir Voronin on 11 September 2009 which was announced by the public TV channel. The application for dismissal was submitted with the Secretariat of the Parliament and based on the majority of votes of MPs, the position of President of the Republic of Moldova was declared vacant. Therefore, following art. 91 of the Constitution which provides that „the position of interim president of the RM may be held by the President of the Parliament”, Mihai Ghimpu

Conclusions

The completion of the creation process of political image, its consolidation aimed to obtain the effect of political brand is inextricably linked to the use of persuasive tools. A priority tool of persuasion is the political mythologization which has the aim to falsify and artificially strengthen the role of power, the role of a political actor, either by comparing them with heroic models of the past or by inducing hope in an illusory future which can be the result of the actions of power or the respective actor of the political show. The mythologized power is undeservedly vested with special qualities, in flagrant contradiction with its prosaic and little interests. Manipulation through mythologization tries to convince on the efficiency and morality of the power.

An important factor of the persuasive dimension is the political branding. In this study, we have outlined the premises and the circumstances when a political character slowly turns into a political brand. There are arguments in support of the statement that the political image is a political product designed for the mass psychology which is vulnerable towards clear “images”, that is an information code, bound in a well defined person and positioned in the mentality of people. For example, Petru Lucinschi was nicknamed by mass-media “șmecherilovici” (tricky) or political “fox”; the Russian president, Boris Yeltsin was nicknamed the Russian “bear” or “tzar Boris”; the president of USA, B. Clinton - Bill “the tricky”, etc. These mythological codes reveal features of character, the style of their political behavior. Moreover, the use of these symbolic – mythological interpretations significantly facilitates the perception of the electoral audience about the political actor, making its image more accessible and clear. It is true that the psychology of the masses is more interested to simplify the surrounding world. Living in the century of speed and information hegemony, the political image brand has the aim to emphasize and transmit complete information about its protagonist. In these circumstances, the voter will perceive the mythological context and not the real one which should be neglected by PR advisers within the electoral and political communication campaigns.

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becomes the interim president of the RM until the election by the Parliament of the new president. As president of the Parliament and interim president of the RM, Mihai Ghimpu declared the provisions of the Constitution shall be adjusted according to the Declaration of Independence which states that “the official language of the Republic of Moldova is the Romanian language”. In June 2010, Mihai Ghimpu, as interim president of the RM, adopted a presidential decree to condemn the soviet occupation of 28 June 1940 and organized a day to commemorate the victims of the soviet occupation of Bessarabia. The decree also stipulated that the Russian army, as successor of the soviet army, must withdraw immediately from the territory of the Republic of Moldova. The decree sparked many contradictory comments, including among the members of the Alliance for European Integration, however it has been labeled by the majority of political analysts as an unprecedented act of courage made by a leader of the Republic of Moldova.

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RELIGION AND POLITICS IN PRE-COLONIAL NIGERIA

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Abstract: *Religion and Politics was a prominent feature in the political history of pre – Colonial Nigeria. It was a major factor responsible for maintaining peace, stability and order. It discusses the interaction between politics and religion in Nigeria and how the country sustained peaceful coexistence, cooperation and harmony. Religion and politics was the basis of authority and power for the rulers and religion was used to maintain law and order. Religious sanctions help to check criminal behaviours, to promote good and law abiding citizens.*

Keywords: *religion, Politics, Pre-Colonial, Nigeria.*

Introduction

This paper examines the place of religion as an instrument of maintaining peace and stability in the pre-colonial political history of Nigeria. Although limited information exists on the role of religion in maintaining peace, there is sufficient evidence on the interaction of religion and politics. Before the advent of colonialism, political power was a sacred trust, exercised for the common good of the society.¹ Institutions such as kings, age-grades, guilds, associations, secret societies, and open societies were religious organizations as well as political agencies that helped to maintain law and order by suppressing tension and clashes of interest among the people.²

Traditional religion and Islam predated colonialism, but Christianity became a force to reckon with at the end of the nineteenth century when the Europeans penetrated several parts of Nigeria. Before the introduction of Islam and Christianity, traditional religion was fully integrated into the political systems of all Nigerian societies.³ In Yoruba, Hausa, and Benin communities, the ruler, chief priest, and elders of the town usually decided how to improve the life of the community through consultation of the oracle. Among the Yoruba people, the *Oba* (ruler) usually sought advice of the *babalawo* (*Ifa* priest) on how to improve the well being of his people.⁴ Traditional religion became an instrument used as check

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¹ J.A. Atanda, "Collision and Coalition in the Politics and Society of Western Nigeria in the Nineteenth Century," in *Evolution of Political Culture in Nigeria*, ed. J. F. A. Ajayi and B. Ikara, Ibadan, Nigeria: University Press Ltd, 1985, p. 85.

² A.A. Oladiti, "The Prison System in Southwestern Nigeria: The Example of Agodi Prison in Ibadan 1800-1960," Unpublished M. A. Thesis, University of Ibadan, 2003, p. 26-27.

³ R. Hallgreen, *The Good Things of Life: A Study of Traditional Religious Culture of the Yoruba People*, Loberod: Hallgren and Bokforlaget, 1988, p. 3.

⁴ E.A. Adegboye, "Traditional Religion in West Africa," in *Traditional Religion in West Africa*, ed. E.A. Adegboye, (Ibadan, Nigeria: Ibadan University Press: 1983), 4-5.

and balance in the political system. The priests often mediated in the rights and claims of various individuals and groups in the society by ensuring that political leaders did not abuse their power.⁵ In the Yoruba tradition, if an Alaafin used his political power arbitrarily, he could be removed. The process began with the Oyo Mesi (Council of Chiefs) in consultation with the Ogboni society, the Alaafin would be presented with a white calabash with the words: “the earth rejects you, the gods reject you, and the people reject you.” The implication was that the Alaafin had to commit suicide, and this happened on a number of occasions.

On their own part, the people ensured that security of lives and property were protected, law and order was upheld, and peaceful co-existence was maintained with neighbors.⁶ Traditional religion also provided a theology that linked local beliefs to the central government and its sovereignty.⁷ Since religion was partly utilized to legitimize political power, the ruler and the ancestors were responsible for the welfare of the entire people in the town.⁸

Traditional religion and Islam contributed to the political processes of the Nigeria societies. In the case of Islam, T. G. O. Gbadamosi pointed out that during the early contact with Islam in Yorubaland and Hausaland, Muslims were few and little organized. He further stated that they worshipped privately and secretly, in the course of time, their number grew and their position became stronger. The conversion of influential people who were close to political power helped in the quick spread of Islam.⁹

The earliest manifestation of Islam in political affairs was the role played by Muslim *mallams* and the *parakoyi*. In Oyo and Hausaland, *mallams* first patronized the ruler for permission to live in the town, to pray for the people, and to preach. *Mallams* often served as advisors to the ruler or as administrators and judges. The *parakoyi* were the spokesmen of the Muslims in Yorubaland, they led the Muslim prayers, and acted as liaison officers between the Muslims and political authorities. They were also in charge of commerce, collecting taxes, and maintained fair treatment and orderliness in market places¹⁰.

By the end of the nineteenth century, Christianity was not only introduced to Nigeria, but it also intermixed with colonial politics as Christian missionaries collaborated with colonial authorities for mutual benefits. Many Nigerians embraced Christianity not only because it provided an alternative religion and new doctrines, but also because it offered and promoted literacy opportunities. The support of the colonial authorities made it possible for Christianity to penetrate many societies in Nigeria.

⁵ Idem, “Managing Ethnic Conflicts under Democratic Transition in Africa: The Promise, the Failure and the Future,” in *Democratic Transition in Africa*, eds. Canon B, Gboyega A, and Osaghae E.E., Ibadan, Nigeria, Credit Documents in Social Sciences and Humanities, Series No. 1, 1992, p. 45.

⁶ Osaghae, 31.

⁷ E.A. Adegboye, “Traditional Religion in West Africa,” in *Traditional Religion in West Africa*, ed. E.A. Adegboye, (Ibadan, Nigeria: Ibadan University Press: 1983), p. 22.

⁸ Ibid., p. 23.

⁹ T.G.O. Gbadamosi, “The Imamate Question among the Yoruba Muslims,” *Journal of Historical Society of Nigeria*, Vol. 6, No 2, 1972, p. 229-232.

¹⁰ Ibid.

Religions in Pre-colonial Nigeria

Approximately 250 distinct ethnic groups exist in Nigeria with the Yoruba, the Igbo, the Hausa, and the Fulani as the largest and politically dominant. Others include the Edo, the Ibibio, the Tiv, the Nupe, the Kanuri, the Ijaw, the Itsekiri, and the Kalabari. They all have distinct customs, traditions, and languages, but they all adopted traditional religious beliefs and practices in the pre-colonial times.

In Hausaland, the traditional religion was organized on a clan basis. A hereditary chief priest maintained each shrine on behalf of the town. The *Kano Chronicle* shows that the traditional priests performed the various rituals and sacrifices, especially of food and animals. Through the sacrifices, the people believed that the community would have and maintain peace and stability. The Hausa religion was centered on a cult, which represented a belief system on a single deity, the god of Tsumburburai, also known as Randaya¹¹.

The Hausa religious practices transcended animal sacrifices. It also entailed the veneration of shrines located in groves and the use of charms for protection. Shobana Shanker¹² described the Hausa religion as a synthesis of many religious traditions, generally known as *bori*. With Islam gaining ground, the practice of *bori* was not only discouraged, but it was also denounced. Islam's objection to *bori* led to the outbreak of the jihad of Uthman Dan Fodio in 1804.

In Igbo land, there was a strong belief in ancestral worship, animal sacrifices, and ritual worship in groves. Sacrifices in the Igbo religion were performed in the town purposely to ward off evil spirits, for petition, expiation and thanksgiving. The Igbo people believed in a supernatural being who was worshipped through various deities or spirits such as *anyanwu* (the god of the sun), *Igwe*, (the god of the sky) and *ale* or *ane* (the god of the earth). Ancestors were believed to be contributing to the maintenance of solidarity in the community¹³.

The Igbo religion was a mixture of human and spiritual beings. The Human category consisted of the priests, diviners, and ritual elders who conducted religious worship and sacrifices to god and goddesses. The divinities included ancestral spirits, and spirits of national heroes, and other deities. The revered gods and goddesses varied from one society to the other, and the shrines could be found in rivers, trees, road junctions, and on mountains and hills. They were regarded as the guardian spirit who could be benevolent or mischievous, lovable or fearful¹⁴.

Although the Yoruba believe in the existence of a Supreme Being called Olodumare or Olorun, *orisa* is the general name for the large number of deities in their religion. These include *Ifa* (the oracle of palm nuts); *Esu*, often referred to as

¹¹ F. Fugelestad, "Hausa History before the Jihad," *Journal of African History*, 19, No. 3, 1978, p. 335.

¹² S. Shakar, "Religion, State, and Society in Hausaland: history and the politics of incorporation in the kano chronicle," *In Precolonial Nigeria Essays in Honor of Toyin Falola*, ed., Akin Ogundiran (Trenton, NJ, Africa World Press, 2005, p. 281 – 283.

¹³ O. Otite and W. Ogionwo, *An Introduction to Sociological Studies*, Ibadan, Heineman Educational Books 2006, p.102.

¹⁴ C. O. Adepegba, "The Essence Of Images in the Religious Sculptures Of The Yoruba Of Nigeria," *Nigeria Magazine*, 1983, p. 13 – 22.

the trickster and a divinity of mischief. Esu in the Yoruba religion possesses protective and benevolent powers and should not be mistaken for the devil or Satan in other religions; others include Obatala, also known as Oduduwa; *Ogun* the god of iron and war; and *Sonpona* associated with small pox. There are also *Sango*, the god of lightening; *Oya* Sango's wife and the goddess of thunderstorms; and *Orisa Oko* the patron of hunters.

Ifa was consulted on every social and political event. It was important to do so for its unifying force. The *Ifa* was usually consulted on matters concerning the choice of a new ruler and in important political decisions such as going to war, and in marriage. The oracle was the court of the people, and its judgment was binding on the people¹⁵. *Ifa* and all other orisas were propitiated for peace, progress, stability and success¹⁶.

Aside from the Supreme Being there were numerous divinities. Natural phenomena such as rivers, trees, mountains, hills, iron, thunder and lightening, were venerated in the traditional belief system but not in Islam and Christianity. There was the belief in an afterlife, which the people viewed as an extension of life itself. Many societies held the belief that the spirits of the departed had great power of intervention in the affairs of the living. The practice of each ethnic group was supervised by an organized priesthood, which could mediate between humans and the deities¹⁷.

A wind of change occurred with the penetration of Islam and Christianity. First, Islam was established in Hausaland in the eleventh century and had flourished by the fifteenth century. At its inception, Islam found its way into the palace and Muslims gradually wielded political influence. By the early nineteenth century, Islam had dominated the whole of northern Nigeria. The role of Islam in politics became apparent with the jihad of Usman dan Fodio in 1804. Although the jihad's initial motive was to purify Islam, politics became a major factor with the overthrow of the Habe traditional rulers of Hausaland and the establishment of a theocratic state. By the time the jihad was concluded, the Sokoto Caliphate had been established and Usman dan Fodio emerged as the religious and political leader. By the middle of the nineteenth century, Islam had spread southward to Yorubaland, but it did not have the same influence on politics as it had in northern Nigeria. The Yoruba were reputed for their traditional religion, which they did not want to give up for Islam. That was partly why a coalition of Yoruba and Borgu forces fought the jihadists during the Ilorin War between 1830 and 1835. It was only with the military assistance of Ibadan that the Oyo-Yoruba forces were able to halt the further spread of Islam at the battle of Osogbo in 1840.

The Portuguese were the first Europeans to introduce Christianity in West Africa, particularly in Nigeria. During the Age of Discovery in the fifteenth century, the Portuguese, in their quest to find a sea route to India in order to participate in the lucrative spice trade, established economic, religious, and political relations with some rulers along the West African coast. The Benin and

¹⁵ N. A. Fadipe, *Sociology of the Yorubas* Ibadan, Nigeria, Ibadan University Press, 1970, p. 261.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 40.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

Warri kingdoms benefited from this contact. To facilitate their economic interests, the Portuguese introduced Christianity of the Catholic version to the Benin and Warri kingdoms. This served as the first current of Christianity, which did not extend beyond the palace confines. The Portuguese relations with the rulers were short-lived because of clash of economic interests. The collapse of the economic arrangements led to the breakdown in religious and political relations. The Portuguese failed to send missionaries and very soon, all vestiges of Christianity were removed from both kingdoms. Since Christianity did not penetrate the interior, the Yoruba and Hausa people did not experience the religion. Hence, Christianity did not play any role in their politics until the nineteenth century when a more effective introduction occurred. However, Samuel Johnson noted that the missionaries in Yorubaland contributed in terms of a provision of military arms and ammunition to ensure that the Egba people defeated other neighboring towns during the civil wars. This partly explains why Oba Sodeke allowed Christianity to flourish in Abeokuta¹⁸.

Following explorers such as Mungo Park, Hugh Clapperton, and the Lander brothers (in the early nineteenth century) who penetrated the interior of Nigeria were Christian missionaries. Samuel Ajayi Crowther (1807 – 1891) a Yoruba clergy, along with European missionaries, spread Christianity into the interior through the Niger Expedition in 1845. Many Nigerian communities initially resisted Christianity because of some of its anti-African cultural practices. However, the support of the colonial authorities led to an effective evangelization, especially in the south. In Yorubaland, the missionaries were welcomed because they served as mediators and peacemakers in civil war that engulfed the whole region. The missionaries became peacemakers because of the support shown to traditional rulers in helping them fight neighboring towns during the Yoruba civil wars. The missionaries envisaged that the civil unrest would prevent evangelical activities. Hence, they decided to intervene and organize peace accord treaties and agreements with various communities. The missionaries were most successful in this regard¹⁹.

Religious and Political Organizations

In several Nigerian communities, individuals, lineages, and family units had their own deities through which they communicated with the Supreme Being²⁰. Sacrifices of different kinds were offered and annual festivals were held. Each divinity had its food preferences for sacrifices and worshippers ensured that their deities were well served. In times of serious trouble such as epidemics, famine, or drought, members of the community, including political leaders, came together to appease the gods²¹. Priests, rulers, and political office holders presided over

¹⁸ S. Johnson, *The History of the Yorubas: From the Earliest Times to the Beginning of the British Protectorate*, Lagos, Nigeria, CSS Bookshops, 1921, reprinted 1997, p. 22.

¹⁹ Ibid, p. 40.

²⁰ E. B. Idowu, *Olodumare: God In Yoruba Belief*, New York, Fredrick praeger, 1963, p. 4.

²¹ W.R. Bascom, *Ifa Divination Communication between Gods and Men In West Africa*, Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1969, p. 12.

religious matters and made pronouncements that were backed up by religious regulations²².

Various ethnic groups created political institutions, such as, the *ogboni*, the *osugbo*, the *ilari*, *age-grades*, the *guilds*, and *ekpe* primarily for maintaining peace and law and order²³. The *ogboni* cult was a powerful religio-political institution among the Yoruba. S. O. Biobaku asserted that the *ogboni* was a secret society to which prominent chiefs and elders of the town sought initiation in order to promote social harmony, peace, and cooperation for the social, religious, and political affairs of the people. Members of the cult took oath of secrecy²⁴. Although traditional religion did not have a written sacred book like Islam and Christianity, there was unwritten code of conduct, which had been transmitted from one generation to another. S. A. Adewale described actions of disobedience to the rules and regulations of the *ogboni* as a breach of contract to the society and the penalty was serious sanction to the offender²⁵. Similar to the *ogboni* in the Oyo-Yoruba group was the *osugbo* among the Ijebu. The *osugbo* and *ogboni* performed the same religious, political, and social functions.

The *ilari* was an important religious institution among the Oyo-Yoruba people. According to O. Adewoye, the *ilari* performed religious functions of administering oath on the plaintiff at the chief court in the palace²⁶. The *ilari* served as the king's bodyguard, intelligence officer, land arbitrator, and ambassador to vassal states. Each *ilari* had a special name, which expressed either the divine power of the king, his intention, or his disposition on a particular issue. It was the responsibility of the *ilari* to carry the staff of office of the king when going on important interstate functions or when representing the king at coronation ceremonies in other parts of Yorubaland²⁷.

The guild system was used as religious means geared toward the responsibility of strict obedience to law and order by way of punishment and reporting offences to appropriate authority. Examples of guilds included the hunters, warriors, women political associations, occupational, and mutual aid associations. Market women also formed guilds with their leader being addressed as *iyaloja* ("head of the market women")²⁸. These guilds usually regulated matters

²² J.F. A Ajayi, "Promoting Religious Tolerance and Cooperation in West African Region: The Example of Religious Pluralism and Tolerance Among the Yoruba", <http://geocities.com/agboleyorubaschool/sacred>.

²³ S.O. Biobaku, *The Egba and Their Neighbours*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1957, p. 50; E. A. Ayandele, *The Ijebu Of Yorubaland 1850 – 1950: Politics, Economy And Society*, Ibadan, Nigeria, Heinmann Educational Books, 1992, p. 268; Adewoye, *The legal profession in Nigeria 1865 – 1962*, London: Longman, 1977, p. 9; A. Fajana, "Age Group in traditional; Yoruba society," *Nigeria Magazine*, No. 98, 1968, p. 16 – 18.

²⁴ S.O. Biobaku, *The Egba and Their Neighbours*, Oxford, *op.cit.*, p. 5.

²⁵ S.A. Adewale, "Crime and African Traditional Religion", *Orita* 25, No 1- 2, 1994, p. 54

²⁶ E.A. Adegboye, "Traditional Religion in West Africa," in *Traditional Religion in West Africa*, ed. E.A. Adegboye, (Ibadan, Nigeria: Ibadan University Press: 1983), p. 9.

²⁷ R. Olaniyan, "Elements of Yoruba Traditional Diplomacy: An Assessment," in *Yoruba Oral Tradition*, ed., Wande Abimbola, Ile Ife, Ife University Press, 1975, p. 305 – 306.

²⁸ The women were active in the economic, political, and religious affairs of their communities. The *Iyaloja* represented the leader of the market women, the *Iyaje* was the political head of the women, and the *Iyalode* served as the military head of the women.

of members' professional interests, mutual help and taking of disciplinary measures against members who violated professional and fraternal obligations, and fulfillment of common religious obligations, which include observance of funeral rites for their members.

Age-grades existed as religious, social, and political institutions. They acted as watchdogs of public ethics and etiquette, and the guardian of public morality. They participated in various public works assigned to them by the political authorities. Their leaders arranged the tasks such as renovating the king's palace and construction of public roads and bridges. During public occasions such as the installation of a new king, people were arranged according to their age-grades. Age grades served as vehicles through which people acculturated and socialized. Members of each age grade had the right to discuss social and political matters, and they could present matters of concern to the political authorities. There was the provision for exchange and coordination of views by sectional groups of the same age in large towns. On the whole, age grades were important in the society for the performance of their duties as citizens of the community in which they resided.

P. A. Talbot described the *Ekpe* among the Ibibio to have been anchored on ancestral worship²⁹. He opined that the religious aspect was of more consequences even in those clubs where political activities now predominate. The *Idiong* were a cult of sorcerers and diviners. Members of this society are believed to have the power to see the unseen, to know the unknown, and to be able to communicate effectively with the spirits and the ancestors. Hence, anyone who had a misfortune sought prescription of necessary remedy from the ancestors. Some diviners combined divination with cure³⁰. Hausa communities were organized on clan basis and each clan recognized particular divinities or shrines. Hereditary chief priests interceded between the divinity and worshippers and maintained the shrines.

Nature of Political System

Political systems in pre-colonial Nigeria vary from one ethnic group to another. Before the introduction of colonialism, kingdoms such as Benin, Oyo, Kanem-Bornu, Hausa states, Nupe, and Jukun developed important political structures³¹. Politics was the affair of the ruler and his appointed officials. The society was run through an unwritten constitution, but guided by religious sanctions. This shows that in the precolonial times, religion and politics were inseparable.

Two major forms of political organization existed in the pre-colonial period: the monarchical system and gerontocracy. The monarchical system, operated among the Yoruba, Hausa, and Benin, was a centralized form of government. J. A.

²⁹ P.A. Talbot, *The People of Southern Nigeria: A Sketch Of Their History, Ethnology and Language*, Vol. 3, London, Frank Cass, 1926, p. 754.

³⁰ Ekong E. Ekong, "The Sociology of the Ibibio", A Seminar Paper Presented in the Department of Sociology, University of Ife, Ile – Ife, 1974.

³¹ J.F.A. Ajayi and B. Ikara. "Introduction: Nigeria's Evolutionary Political Culture: Issues And Processes," in *Evolution of Political Culture in Nigeria*, ed., J.F.A. Ajayi And B. Ikara, Ibadan, Nigeria, Ibadan University Press, 1985, p. 2 – 3.

Atanda, a Yoruba historian, pointed out that a king, selected from the royal family and whose right to rule was divinely ordained, headed the monarchical system. The king was assisted by an institutionalized council of chiefs such as the *ijoye*, *igbimo* or *ilu* among the Yoruba, the *sarakuma* among the Hausa, and the *uzama* in Benin. In theory, the ruler held absolute powers, but in practice, there were certain checks and balances. Gerontocracy, adopted by the Igbo, Niger Delta, and Benue people, was a non-centralized political system. Anthropologists refer to this system as stateless or acephalous because the elders and lineage heads performed religious and political functions since there was no institutionalized political authority³². W. Oyemakinde remarked that gerontocracy was a village democracy where the general will of the people was taken into consideration³³. Instead of royal courts and palaces, market centers were used for religious and political activities such as debate, and decisions on vital issues of public interest were taken there as well.

Political power in both systems described above was not absolute because there was divine intervention and people participation. Osaghae contended that political power was divine and almost mystical. It epitomized the unity of the people and was held in trust for the people by the ruler and elders of the community. The ruler could not enforce his personal will on the people indiscriminately. Osaghae further mentioned that there were two sources of political power. First, the concept of “divine right of kings,” made the ruler a representative of the ancestors as well as the spiritual symbol for the people. Second, the people were a source of political power since they selected the ruler. This indicated that religion and people constituted primary sources of political empowerment for the ruler³⁴.

Interconnected with religion and politics was the formation of associations geared towards promoting and protecting the common interests of the people. Fadipe and Fajana agreed that the tradition of having associations was common to all pre-colonial Nigerian societies³⁵. Associations were used as social-religious agencies for enforcing political policies and for maintaining law and order; they were sources of political empowerment³⁶.

Religion in Traditional Political System

Religion played important roles in the judicial systems of Nigerian early societies. According to J.R.W. Haffenden, rulers possessed supernatural attributes and they were invested with magico-religious powers in order to

³² J.A. Atanda, “Collision and Coalition in the Politics and Society of Western Nigeria in the Nineteenth Century,” in *Evolution of Political Culture in Nigeria*, ed. J.F.A. Ajayi and B. Ikara, Ibadan, Nigeria: University Press Ltd, 1985, p. 87.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ W. Oyemakinde, “The Derivation of Power And Authority In Nigeria,” *African Notes*. Vol. VIII, No.2, 1979, 32.

³⁵ Osaghae E.E., Ibadan, Nigeria, *Credit Documents in Social Sciences and Humanities*, Series No. 1, 1992, p. 34.

³⁶ N.A. Fadipe, *Sociology of the Yorubas* Ibadan, Nigeria, Ibadan University Press, 1970, p. 243; A. Fajana, “Age Group in traditional; Yoruba society,” *Nigeria Magazine*, No. 98, 1968, p. 16 – 18.

perform their political and judicial functions effectively³⁷. Powerful traditional fetishes were used for detecting and punishing criminals. Religion was employed as an instrument of providing and legitimizing security for the people. Individual and families were expected to be loyal not only to the king, but also to religious regulations and societal norms. A breach of religious or societal laws was punishable with sanctions, punishment by ordeal, banishment, or imprisonment³⁸. Actions of disobedience or deviant behavior in the community were considered anti-sacred and not secular; whatever religion disapproved, the society also condemned.

Religious and political laws were interwoven. For the purpose of peace, every one in the society was required to obey the laws and to respect constituted authorities. Violations of religious or societal laws received heavy penalty of affliction with terrible disease, financial ruin (on an individual or collective basis through poor harvests), or barrenness for women, or even death. There is a strong belief among the people that the ancestors and gods often rewarded good behavior or compliance with the law with longevity, peace, prosperity, and freedom from sickness. Because rulers and their subjects wanted peace and prosperity, emphasis was placed on satisfying the ancestors and gods through regular and annual sacrifices. In this respect, religion not only regulated the people's behavior, it also served as the bedrock of peaceful co-existence. In the *Rationale of Punishment*, H. Oppenheimer stated that:

Offences are viewed as affronts to the deities or the ancestral spirits, who will bring disaster to the entire community or tribe if violations are not appropriately dealt with? Death and expulsion from the group are common mode of punishment for the serious crimes as sorcery, witchcraft, sacrilege and other magico-religious offences. Responsibility is often viewed as communicable for action of its Members; criminal guilt may contaminate the offenders associates, his relatives and even his possession³⁹.

The above confirms J. H. Driberg's argument that there was collective punishment for crime and offences in pre-colonial Nigeria⁴⁰. Driberg asserts that only appropriate rituals could cleanse the community of the wrath or penalty since the ancestors or gods dictated the punishments for offences. For example, among the Yoruba people, the penalty for theft was referred to the gods for punishment. Such punishments included illness, paralysis, and partial blindness. In many cases the gods revealed the thieves publicly or forced them to confess. The culprits could return the stolen property to avoid further punishment and a propitiatory sacrifice would be offered to cleanse the thief and the society. Witches and wizards were usually stoned to death.

The Muslim community in Yoruba towns advocated for the appointment of Muslim *Qadi* (judge) in the local Courts to promote justice and equity in the political system. The *Ulama* (Islamic scholars) argued that it was their right and

³⁷ J.R.W. Haffender, *The Red Men In Nigeria*, London, Frank Cass, 1967, p. 223 – 225.

³⁸ S.A. Adewale, "Crime and African Traditional Religion", *Orita* 25, No 1- 2, 1994, p. 54

³⁹ H. Oppenheimer, *The Rationale Of Punishment*, London, University Press, 1913, p. 121.

⁴⁰ J.H. Driberg, "The African Conception of Law," *Journal Of African Society*, 34, Supplement, 1934, p. 238.

responsibility to practice their religion, but the traditional leaders rejected the approval of a Muslim judge in the local Courts. The reason was that the Yoruba people wished to preserve their traditional laws and customs and they were against any form of religious intrusion. This point shows why disagreement occurred between the Muslim groups and the traditional political authority. Also, in the Yoruba society, the Muslims were often prevented from erecting a central mosque. This affected the relationship that existed between the Muslim groups and the traditional religious worshippers in a negative way.

The Role of Emirs and Priests

Religious leaders occupied conspicuous places of influence in the administration and organization of pre-colonial Nigerian societies. In northern Nigeria, the Muslim emirs used the shari'a (Islamic Law) and promoted the spread of Islam. Indeed, the whole of Sokoto Caliphate adopted a theocratic form of administration. Islam became the official religion of the rulers and their subjects. The position of the emirs was very crucial to the existence and development of the Islamic political ideology because they enforced the rules and regulations of Islam with their political power. Alongside the emirs, learned cleric (Imam) were appointed to lead the community in prayers as well as teach and guide the people. Emirs also provided security and protection to the community against the opposition and persecution from the traditionalists. The collaborative efforts of the emirs, imams, and Muslim missionaries accounted for the rapid spread of Islam. Before and during the colonial period, Islam and politics went hand in hand and the concept of separation of religion from politics did not exist.

In Yorubaland, the *ifa* and *babalawo* priests were also very influential in the political system of their communities. Bolaji Idowu contended that the Yoruba believed that the priests served as intermediaries between divinities and their adherents⁴¹. Priests related very closely to the rulers because they provided spiritual advice and performed rituals for rulers. Like in the Hausa states where Islam and politics intertwined, in Yorubaland, traditional religion was deeply entrenched in politics. For the purposes of maintaining peace and stability, rulers and priests participated in religious rituals, festivals, and officiated in sacrifices in the major shrines of their communities.

Priests in traditional religion performed the swearing in ceremony for rulers and were in charge of oath taking as part of their judicial functions. According to Hugo Huber, the handling of oath taking was treated with discretion and moderation. The priests also offered propitiatory sacrifices to prevent or ward-off calamity. All Nigerian communities placed emphasis on order, authority, justice, and peace. They realized the importance of political stability and they used religion and priests as means of achieving their objectives.

Divine Rights and Political Authority

Political leaders in pre-colonial Nigerian societies were regarded as the representatives of the ancestors and divinities on earth. The leadership roles were

⁴¹ E. B. Idowu, *Olodumare: God In Yoruba Belief*, New York, Fredrick praeger, 1963, p. 56.

considered sacred and their authority to rule was preordained and could not be questioned. For example, among the Yoruba the oba was referred to as *Iku Baba yeye Alase ikeji orisa* (“Frightful as death, all-powerful, and second in command to the gods”). The Jukun revered the *akuka* (king of the Jukun Empire) and the *mai* (king of the Kanem Borno Empire). Because of the sacredness of the political position the rulers occupied, they lived secluded life in their palaces, and their subjects were not allowed to see them in public or communicate directly with them.

Rulers participated in offering sacrifices to the gods in order to bless their subjects with good harvest and to prevent drought and famine. Especially in Yorubaland, many rulers participated in the annual yam festival to commemorate the new yam season. It was a commonplace belief that the gods and ancestors endowed rulers with supernatural or mystic powers. They were regarded as owners and distributors of land, and they owned all the resources of the land. Rulers became wealthy because they controlled the economy of their societies. It was a common belief that rulers did not usually sleep because they were communing with the gods and carrying out day-to-day political activities of their societies. In Yoruba belief, rulers do not die like ordinary people, but are believed to join their ancestors. With a special reference to the Alaafin of Oyo, Julius Adekunle pointed out that:

The death of an Alaafin was often marked with elaborate funeral rites and sacrifices. In Yoruba tradition, it takes some days before the death of a ruler is announced to the public. As a semi-god, the Yoruba people would not say that the Alaafin died. Instead, they claim that he transposed to a new world. Thus, the announcement would be made to the public with the words *oba wa’ja* (“The King has transposed to the ceiling”)⁴².

As rulers were considered sacred on earth, they were also regarded as sacred at death. Sacrifices and elaborate rituals often accompanied their burial ceremonies.

In the Hausa society, emirs were seen as the *warastul- ambiya*, representatives of the prophet of Allah on earth. Islam provided the basic ideology of governance and selection of political leaders. The Shura committee began the process of selection and interviewed nominated candidates for both religious and secular positions. Most often the learned person in Islamic education and of good character would be appointed as the ruler⁴³.

A. E. Alagoa argued that although in Igboland and Ibibio communities the people did not have recognized heads of government as kings, they had political institutions that checkmated the excesses of people in the society. The earliest known local authority was the *Eze Nri* (related to the famous *igbo-ukwu bronze*)⁴⁴. The influence of the *Eze-Nri* was based solely on control of ritual activity over the title of *Ozo*. The Aro was an oracle that served to solve political problems, which proved intractable for the internal institutions of the town. Institutions such as the *Ekpe* secret society among the Ibibio were used for purposes of social control for deviance in the town.

⁴² Julius O. Adekunle, “Landmarks and Cultural Identity in Yoruba History,” *The International Journal Of The Humanities*, Vol. 5, No. 4, 2007, p. 185 – 192.

⁴³ Oral interview with Imam Taofeek Yekeen, at his residence in Ibadan on November 13, 2007.

⁴⁴ A.E. Alagoa, “The Indigenous Political Systems of the Igbo,” *Tarikh* Vol.4, No. 2. 1973, p. 13 – 21.

Since the ruler derived his political authority and power from religion, he was bound to promote social justice, harmony, and political stability. The powers and functions attributed to the state no doubt varied from one society to another because of their different sizes and cultural complexities. Some societies had a more elaborate administrative structure, ritual traditions, and social organization than others. Some rulers essentially acted as priests and presided over the community shrine, other derived their power largely from their military prowess, and yet others were ritual rulers whose functions were primarily religious. All categories, however, relied heavily on the support of the gods to succeed. For this reason, at the coronation ceremony, a new king was given the *opa ase* (“staff of authority”), and took an oath to promote peace and stability. Thereafter, he was expected to constantly commune with the gods and the spirits of his ancestors, must visit the shrines on regular basis, and must offer sacrifices at appropriate times. For example, the Ooni of Ile-Ife sacrifices to the gods and ancestors almost every day of the year.

Religion, Politics and National Development

Religion, politics, and national development were interwoven in the pre-colonial times. The state was seen as the moral agent that performed important functions of maintaining religious laws and sanctions. Traditional religion and Islam emphasized the cohesiveness of the society as the basis of a strong political organization. It seems that religion rather than politics constituted the fulcrum on which the fabric of the society rested. Religion was interconnected with politics, culture, military, and social life of the people. Religious belief and practices were injected into almost every activity. The idea of nation building among the various ethnic groups in Nigeria was viewed from the religious perspective that the maintenance of peace, unity, and stability was the collective responsibility of the people.

Religion was also tied to the security of lives and property. With the consultation with the gods and through political institutions, rulers maintained public order and discipline and pursued policies of national interest for national development. Example of such religio-politico institutions includes the *oro* among the Ekiti, *ogboni* among the Egba, *osugbo* in Ijebu-ode, and *Ekpe* in Ibibioland.

Educationally, traditional religion and Islam had different approaches and objectives of education. They both provided literacy services that helped to promote growth and welfare of the society. In the north, Islam introduced Arabic literacy, which made it possible to have some recorded history of the early Hausa states. Learned Islamic scholars were appointed as clerks, administrators, and advisors to the king. Qadis (Islamic judges) were appointed to judge various kinds of cases. Islam therefore contributed significantly to the national development of the Hausa states. The jihad of Usman dan Fodio in 1804 further accelerated the spread of Islam, its literacy, and its civilization to many parts of Nigeria. The political leaders of the Islamic states used the religion as a tool of national development.

Economically, the occupation of the people was closely tied to religion. For success in commerce and in a new business, and for good harvest in agriculture, religious rituals were performed and sacrifices were offered to the gods and

ancestors. Economic growth through religion made national development possible. Political leaders and wealthy people relied on religion not only for their own interests, but also for national development.

Conclusion

Religion has played significant roles in the political organization of the pre-colonial Nigeria. Religion guided the nature of leadership and the political tradition of the people. Religion had been a factor in politics and national development, and religious leaders used religion to maintain law and order and to achieve common good for the people. Political leaders were divinely ordained and their subjects could not challenge their authority.

Islam and traditional religion co-existed and influenced one another before the advent of colonialism. The interaction of religions in pre-colonial Nigeria was mutual and reciprocal. The main religions believed in one Supreme Being and they preached peace and stability. Islam and Christianity have written scriptures, but traditional religion did not. Also, the religions had days of festivals and special ceremonies. All of these gave meaning and cohesiveness to the community and strength to the political system.

From all indications, religion and politics were totally inseparable in the pre-colonial times. Religion was the basis of authority and power for the political leaders, and religion was used to maintain law and order. Religious sanctions helped to check bad behavior and to promote good and law-abiding citizens. Religion contributed to the national development of the pre-colonial states.

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ISLAMIC ECONOMY VERSUS CONVENTIONAL ECONOMY

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Abstract: *The purpose of this paper is to display, in a synthetic manner, the specificity of “Islamic economy” as compared to the so-called “conventional economy”. First of all, we will highlight the constitutive elements of the discourse of contemporary “Islamic economy” that essentially distinguish it from the discourse of Western economy, but we will also identify the religious and philosophical causes that play an important part within the shaping of this type of theoretical approach. Secondly, we will sustain that the expression “Islamic economy” signifies not only a social-political doctrine, which serves to an economic agenda, but also an “epistemological” project whose methodological framework may allow the evolution towards an “Islamic economics” on its own right.*

Keywords: *’ilm al-iqtisad, israf, ijma, riba, zakat, Sunnah, Shari’ah.*

We can identify some unsystematic and non-unitary economic concepts, theories, and practices that are conditioned by numerous moral, social, and political factors which were an important part of the history of social and moral philosophy of Islam from its pre-classical and classical period, but things have radically changed after WWII¹. Beginning with the middle of the last century, the experts started to take into account and more carefully and curiously analyze the origins, nature, and methodology of Islamic culture. Two interdependent evolutions played an important and encouraging part within the setting up of Islamic economics as a “science”: the first one was social-political, the second one was epistemological.

If we refer to the manner of setting up this theoretical construction during present times, the first remark must deal with the discourse of Muslim intellectuals regarding *Islamic economy*. This discourse is, usually, made up of certain particular contents and representations, either implicit or explicit, of

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¹ Abdulkader Cassim Mahomedy, „*Islamic Economics: Still in Search of an Identity*”, in *International Journal of Social Economics*, vol. 40, no. 6, 2013, p. 557.

Western “conventional” economy. Almost all papers concerning Islamic economy take the shape of a continuous dialogue, of a permanent relation to contemporary Western economy’s realities. The approach is focused on wide comparative-critical analysis over the practices, specific organizations, and objective social-economic structures that are specific to Western world, from the point of view of Islamic ethical-religious principles.

The assumed theoretical goal of Islamic economists is either to “Islamize” the Western economic system and the discourse regarding it, or to adapt Islamic economy to Western economic values without them losing their normative essence. No matter how we look at things, Islamic economy, in either traditional or modern interpretation, implies the existence of a process of “Islamization” of economic system and knowledge of it, which cannot be realized unless at the expense of the adaptation of specialized institutions that are mentioned in canonic Islamic texts to the nowadays economic realities.

The issue is not a simple one and it has serious theoretical consequences. If we refer to the interpretation of Western economy according to Islamic normative standards, we discover a new discourse regarding the economy that is complementary to the one we know, displaying new and surprising intellectual elements, which can stir the interest of the expert in “conventional” economy. But if we take into account the existence of a large project of islamization of the entire field of knowledge, in which an important part of some Muslim countries is involved, we find a radical approach onto economy, which is rather politically biased and serves some Islamic less “orthodox” interests. Unfortunately, it is precisely this stream of thinking – which aims towards the “islamization” of knowledge in general, and of economy, in particular – that stirs the lowest interest from Western experts or is wrongly understood because the lack of attention, as it is considered a type of discourse meant only to describe, from an Islamic perspective, the state of affairs from nowadays world economy.

The critique of the economic paradigm from an Islamic perspective leads, in fact, to the setting up of some images (stereotypes, even) about the “Western economic world”, both analytical and normative, that use a double system of reference – ethical and theoretical. This is why we find theologians, academics, attorneys, politicians, clerks, bankers, business men and other practitioners of Islamic economy who are criticizing the perspective of Western economy onto production and trade, services, revenue distribution and resources, in order to deliberately *describe* a reality that the Muslim world must avoid. Despite all that, the largest part of Islamic economic language is taken from conventional Western economy.

The method of construction of Islamic economy does not differ from that of Western economics, but its specificity, according to its authors, is the critique of the fundamental principles which underline, in fact, its normative character. This does not mean that Islamic economists do not accept the existence of a normative dimension in Western economy (the idea of ideal state, efficiency, distributive justice, etc.). As a matter of fact, they could not even avoid the influence which the dominant paradigm of economic thinking, meaning that of “conventional

economy” (generally referring to neoclassical theory, the Keynesian one and the monetary school of economy), exerted upon them.

The stake of Islamic economy is to set up a value equivalent or a viable alternative to conventional economy. If for moderate Islamic thinkers it is enough that the Islamic economy represent such a substitute, for the radical ones, that sustain the Islamization of economy, it *should* completely and definitely replace the dominant Western paradigm. This is why the Islamic economic discourse is so colored and nuanced, bearing the sign of orientation, of expertise in adjacent sciences, of ideological profile or cultural and political environment in which its author was born and raised. It is far from being unimportant whether the expert belongs to a double culture (Islamic and Western) or to the Islamic one only and, within the last one, whether he belongs to *Sunni* or *Shi'ia* lines.

In order to circumscribe Islamic economy discourse one must underline, first of all, what distinguishes it, regarding its contents, from conventional economy. There is a series of factors that determined the development of this discipline in the field of Islamic knowledge. Secondly, the definitions of Islamic economy that were established along time were always connected to a specific social-political context. Thirdly, the theoreticians of Islamic economy asserted and still do that *ilm al-iqtisad* (economics) represents a special paradigm as compared to the dominant one, in nowadays economy.

The discourse of Islamic economy contains, at first, references from the canonic texts - *Coran*, *Sunna* and *Fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence) – that aim towards reconstructing the definition of the main ethical principles of Islam, to further be applied to economic order. Depending on these, there are descriptions of Islamic early society and economic institutions aimed to adapt these components to present days (if they are convergent to Islamic teachings). The distinctive attribute of Islamic economy is represented by the fact that statements bearing on practices, real organizations and social and economic structures that belong to nowadays society are intended to apply to economy the ethical-religious Islamic principles (for example, distributive justice and the interdiction of squandering – *israf* in Arabic language) and to respect the particular economic requirements (the interdiction of *riba* and the obligation of *zakat*)².

Concerning economic institutions, the analysis has a double orientation: their evaluation according to their convergence with the “pure” teachings of the Islam and their adaptation to present day economic reality. On the other hand, the studies Muslims carried out onto Islamic economy do not ignore those economic facts that, under the influence of Western economic reality, may occur in society and which must be evaluated from an Islamic point of view. This matters draws on another one, probably of the highest importance: the classification of economic concepts, principles, methodology, theories, and structures that are associated to Islam accordingly or opposed to those that are specific to Western economy. Usually, the papers of Muslim professors are proposing an at least curious approach which, instead of clarifying *if* and *what* was the representative

² L. Boşca, „Le Riba et le Zakat dans le système économique islamique”, in: *Cogito. Multidisciplinary Research Journal*, vol. IV, no. 3/September, 2012, p. 99-106.

“economic order” of early Islam or *if* Islamic economic institutions have ever existed or functioned as one claims, they develop, instead, a critique – either moderate, or destructive – of economic system that are not Islamic.

Within the conscience of Muslim intellectuals, due to secularization and division of knowledge in Western social sciences, there is a need to unify the entire field of knowledge, unification that is synonymous with what we have called above “islamization of knowledge” or “islamization of science”. This intellectual movement, that first and furthestmost penetrates the economic discourse, represents a reaction against the secularization of science (Haneef³ and Hefner⁴). Hefner, for instance, tells us that: “The third and final influence underlying the recent popularity of Islamic Economics has been the related effort to bring about <Islamization of knowledge>. Not all Muslim intellectuals agree with this movement’s demand that science and modern inquiry be purged of their allegedly secularist and Western biases. (...) a leitmotif of modernist and liberal Muslim thought has always been that science and technology of <Western> provenance are best regarded as the fruits of God-given human reason, not things that are uniquely Western”⁵.

Thus, we notice that there is a difference of perspective regarding the true movement of Islamic rebirth during the last two centuries, which is taken either as a return to the project of classical Islam, both political and ideological, supported by thinkers like Sayyid Qutb in Egypt, Sayyid Mawdudi in Pakistan and Baqir al-Sadr in Iraq, or as a movement of modernization and openness of Islamic culture towards Western culture, as in the case of Indonesian modernist Nurcholish Madjid and Iranian reformist Abdulkarim Soroush. Among those who presently sustain the movement of islamization of economy one counts S. H. Nasr, al-Attas, al-Faruqi and Choudhury. Their contributions to the evolution of this intellectual movement in the field of economy were amended by experts in Islamic economy that have more liberal views, like Kuran, Chapra, Shephard and Wilson.

The coherent critiques against capitalism, communism or any other economic system that gathers together their elements are always normative, evaluative, and critical perspectives, which are issued from an ethical point of view and bear upon the economy or other domains of social reality. Islamic economists believe that they are “defeating” the Western ones by means of their own intellectual weapons: their argumentative strategy borrows from them the critical analysis they have set up, from within their own paradigm, onto Western economy. For instance, we find no paper that clarifies the issue of nature and goals of Islamic economy which does not blame the doctrinal liberalism of thinkers belonging to 18th and 19th century and liberal capitalism (regarding economic practices during the 19th century and the beginning of 20th century) for

³ M.A. Haneef, „Can There Be an Economics Based on Religion? The Case of Islamic Economics”, in: *Post-autistic Economics Review*, no. 34, 2005

(<http://i-epistemology.net/economics-a-business/149-can-there-be-an-economics-based-on-religion-the-case-of-islamic-economics.pdf>);

⁴ Robert H. Hefner, „Islamic Economics and Global Capitalism”, in: *Society*, vol. 44, no.1, nov-dec-2006, p. 16-22.

⁵ Robert H. Hefner, „*Islamic Economics and Global Capitalism*”, in: *Society*, vol. 44, no.1, nov-dec-2006, p. 17.

the “deplorable” economic situation of the West, characterized by the lack of social equity. Within this critical perspective, even if capitalist ideology is denounced as materialistic and hedonistic, its gravest sins are inequality and fake liberty (apparently guaranteed by Constitution). Communism is also criticized because, despite its loud noise on justice and equality, it is a system that flagrantly breaks fundamental liberties, which were guaranteed to mankind by God. Despite all these, there were voices who nuanced the perspective upon Western economy, admitting the theoretical and practical value of some of capitalist and communist practices and the permeability of Islamic economy to these. From this point of view, there are two groups of theorists, either Islamic or non-Islamic, that debate upon the Islam’s affinity with capitalism or, on the contrary, with communism.

If we analyze capitalism’s relation with the Islam, a lot of Islamic economists are accused by Max Weber of creating a false image on the so-called Islam deficiency in relation with Western rationality. This claim was rejected by Islamic and Western thinkers who strived to prove that the Islam is a “rational” and “reasonable” religion. Claiming that not only European culture can be a way towards an efficient modernization, they find within the Islam values that can play the role of economic efficiency generators. According to this, there is no incompatibility between individual rationality of the entrepreneur and Islamic religion. There are authors that found psychological, sociological, and institutional hindrances that might stop Islamic mentality to be opened or to favor to the development of capitalist spirit: the Islam cannot adequately answer to interrogations regarding individual freedom, restrictive character of Islamic solidarity, the lack of interest for economic risk, the interdiction of *riba*, etc.

On the other hand, Muslim economists consider that the capitalist economic model lacks equilibrium and moderation⁶. Personal interest and the search for profit at any expense destroy the ethical values that are imposed on all Muslims: humanity, solidarity, empathy, and cooperation. The radical character of this perspective is nuanced by authors like Naqvi, who even finds an area of intersection of capitalism and Islam, meaning the rejection of feudalism (anti-progresses) by the importance given to accumulation as an essential dimension of the dynamic of economic process⁷. Still, if the supporters of capitalism insist on the moral invulnerability of he who tries to maximize his personal interest and profit, in the Islam – although personal interest is acknowledged and can be pursued as such – the ethical-religious dimension is the determinant of all types of economic behavior.

The economic writings of Umer Chapra are the most obvious example of the “translation” of Islam’s ethical-religious principles in the language of Western economic conceptions, accompanied by the critique of secular ethical-economic philosophies and that of the “positive” economic ones. According to him, the neoclassical principles - *basic needs, growth with redistribution, efficiency and equity, poverty alleviation* etc. – did not succeed to realize in practice because the

⁶ R. Wilson, *Islam et capitalisme reconsidérés*, Maghreb-Machrek, nr. 187, 2006, p. 29-44.

⁷ S.N., Naqvi, *Islam, Economics, and Society*, Londres, Kegan Paul International, 1994, p. 76; S.N. Naqvi, *Perspectives on morality and human well-being, a contribution to islamic economics*, Leicester, The Islamic Foundation, 2003.

lack of ethical criteria functioning at the social, political, and religious level, conditions that the Islam comprises by its very nature. As a solution for introducing, within the economic system, of these criteria, there could be the setting up of a *socially-agreed ethical filter mechanism*, which would play the role to block the lack of moral of rationalist philosophical movements from the Enlightenment, but also that of nowadays theories that support the amoral behavior (consumerism, egoism, hedonism, etc.)⁸.

Another issue that stirred the interest of experts is Islam's compatibility to communism, found within the ideal of setting up an egalitarian society, with no social classes, that avoids the gaps of life level and which engender the absolute model of human solidarity. As systems of social-political administration, Islam and communism have, as a connection point, collectivism, the equilibrium between individual and general interests, the imperative of equitable distribution of resources. Lewis⁹ and Shariati¹⁰ thus sustained that there are strong resemblances between the Islamic and communist economic models. Still, there are hindrances that cannot be left aside. For example, communism does not accept that the pleasure of owning is inscribed in human nature. Also, the cancelling of all competition within communist society leads to exploitation of the individual by the authoritarian state. If we count also atheism, one sees why many Muslims declare themselves as anticommunists or anti-Marxists. Still, socialism was conceived, within Islamic political and economic thinking, as a body of ideas with a double function: either as an official ideology meant to justify etatist policies, social and economic reforms, or as a popular system of critical thinking upon some states of affairs that are unacceptable from an economic and social viewpoint. This is why a large number of intellectuals and politicians have used theological and historical Islamic references to defend the thesis of "Islamic socialism".

We find, according to the perspective on socialism, three groups of Islamic thinkers: a) the partisans of "Islamic socialism" who support Islam's compatibility to socialism; b) virulent opponents of socialism, especially of Marxism-Leninism; c) those who demand the final divorce of Islam from capitalism and communism and propose a global political and economic order that takes into account all benefits of present day knowledge. S. H. Nasr¹¹, for example, characterizes Islamic economy by the phrase "the third way", since this ideology may be defined by concepts gathered from capitalism and communism, without being either of them. It is important to understand that Islamic economy is less a science and more a social-political doctrine, an ideology that aims – under the restriction of its own axiological framework – to prove the principles and practices of all Western economic systems as contrary or opposed to the Islamic ones.

⁸ Umer Chapra, *Islam and the Economic Challenge*, Herndon-U.S.A., The Islamic Foundation and The International Institute of Islamic Thought, 1992, p. 20-23.

⁹ B. Lewis, „Communism and Islam”, in: *International Affairs*, nr. 30, Londra, 1954, p. 1-12.

¹⁰ A. Shariati, *Marxism and other Western Fallacies: An Islamic Critique*, Berkeley, Mizan Press, 1980.

¹¹ S.V.R. Nasr, „Toward a Philosophy of Islamic Economics”, in *The Muslim World*, Hartford, vol. 77, nr. 3-4, 1987, p. 175-196.

Besides all that, although they use the methodology and analysis tools of conventional economy, the studies in Islamic economy focus on the violent critique of “the economic man” (*homo oeconomicus*) of neoclassical economy. As compared to this one, *homo Islamicus* acts following ethical-religious norms that lead to altruistic, fair, “optimal”, and collectively “efficient” economic behavior. Briefly, although *homo Islamicus* follows his personal interest, keeping sight of the optimization of his life level and the application of the principle of rationality, he never goes beyond the framework of the value orientation imposed by the Islam.

The difference between these two human types is not pertaining to *nature*, but, as Daromir Rudnyckj notices, it is the result of a certain deployment of knowledge, of technology and infrastructure, etc. that shapes human actions and relations. From the point of view of Islamic moral economy, of what he calls “*Shari’ah* economy”, Valentino Catellan also notices that “(...) paradoxically, the more Islamic moral economy depicts *homo-Islamicus* in terms of an ethical opposition to the rational/secular *homo-oeconomicus*, the more it contributes to re-affirm the validity of conventional economics as unique ‘logic’ (i.e. as a rational discourse enjoying the status of a universal scientific paradigm), without disclosing, in contrast, the autonomy of *Islamic rationality*. As a result, *Shari’ah* economics is reduced to an ethical ‘particular’ of a ‘universal’ as they were ana-logues (from the Greek *ana-*, ‘again’, and *logos*, ‘discourse’ = ‘similar discourses’ resembling one another) when, in actual facts, they are not: in a classic default of anti-thetical reasoning, the ‘thesis’ is implicitly confirmed by re-naming its validity as starting point of the discussion. Thus, not by chance, the idea of *homo-Islamicus* always stands by opposition to *homo-oeconomicus*, which paradoxically remains, in this way, the real ‘protagonist’ of the discourse; IEF is explained ‘in the negative’, i.e. by rejecting the aspects of conventional economics prohibited by *Shari’ah* (e.g. the absence of interest-based transactions; the avoidance of activities involving speculation; ...), while *riba*, *gharar* and *maysir* are not described in positive terms, i.e. as expressions of a self-founding Islamic rationality; in the same way, even the principles ‘in the positive’ of *Shari’ah* economics, such as risk-sharing and the favor towards real economy, are conceptualized in opposition to the debt-based and excessively financialized conventional economy”¹².

On the other hand, the economic behavior of *homo Islamicus* must be set up not only according to factual economic consequences of decisions, but also in relation to possible results in “the afterlife”. This is why personal interest is always between natural pleasure of “owning” (avoiding squander and ostentation), the obligation of taking into account other people’s interests and the hope for redemption in the afterlife, according to *Koran* norms. Still, it needs further clarification how is *homo Islamicus intrinsically motivated* by altruism – this has not received yet a satisfactory explanation in any of the papers on Islamic economy so far. There are many papers that analyze human action as reported to

¹² V. Catellan, „*Shari’ah* Economics as Autonomous Paradigm: Theoretical Approach and Operative Outcomes”, in: *Journal of Islamic Perspective on Science, Technology and Society*, vol. 1, no. 1, 2013, p. 3-11.

the criteria of Islamic belief, but none that offers an insight into economic Islamic behavior, and this is noticed by many authors.

According to this, together with a specific methodology, used to achieve the theoretical setting of Islamic economy, there are many philosophical assumptions that found and distinguish Islamic economy. Firstly, this moral philosophy, that penetrates the core of Islamic economy, follows from the two main sources of Islam: the *Koran* and the *Sunnah* (prophetic tradition), on the one hand, and the Islamic Law (*Shari'ah*), on the other hand.

The *Koran* contains some verses, revealed during various stages of Islamic society, that were meant to introduce other governance criteria in social-economic structures of this type of community. *Sunnah*, known in the Western world as the "tradition" of Islam, is a source complementary to the *Koran*, that highlights and explain the words and practices of the Prophet Mohamed, giving details and clarifying the laws of the *Koran*. It represents, together with the *Koran*, the core of *Shari'ah*, of Islamic Law.

If *Shari'ah*, the *Koran*, and *Sunnah* are the sources of Islamic economy, its principles follow from the central character of some essential Islamic concepts: *tawhid*, *khalifah*, and *amanah*¹³. The Islamic philosophy of the *tawhid* or the unity of the world and Allah are some results for economic thinking: the uniqueness of the entire universe is integrated into the uniqueness of Allah, meaning that all that belongs to the created universe (all natural resources, for instance) cannot be used according to the maximization of own satisfaction, but only taking into account the interests of others and conservation of the creation according to the precepts of the *Koran*.

At its turn, *al-khalifah* is particularly important: man is the place-keeper or representative of Allah on earth, and he must act, at the economic level, according to the "professional ethics" ruled by the creator of the world: "Have faith in God and His apostle and give in alms of that on which He has made you vicegerents" (*Koran* 57:7, and also 2:30, 35:39)". El-Ashker and Wilson synthesize the meaning of this fundamental concept: "The use of these resources therefore is controlled by the rules of trusteeship and any violation of these rules would render the entrusted party, man, guilty of the abuse and misuse of the subject of trusteeship, earthly economic resources. Man is, therefore, accountable to God and by the virtue of the rules of trusteeship, or stewardship, any violation of these rules would merit God's attribution and punishment"¹⁴.

The third relevant concept for economy is the *amanah*. It is related to the ideas of responsibility and free will and it has a main part into the religious and philosophical ethics of the Islam. One acknowledges the fact that the issue regarding predestination is the most important intellectual challenge for Islamic thinkers so far, given the simultaneous presence, in the *Koran*, of verses which encourage, on the one hand, free will and individual rationality and, on the other

¹³ K. Ahmad, "Economic Development in an Islamic Framework", in Ahmad, Khurshid, (ed.), *Studies in Islamic Economics*, Islamic Foundation, 1980; S. Naqvi, *Ethics and Economics: an Islamic Thesis*, Islamic Foundation, 1981.

¹⁴ A.A.F. El-Askher and R. Wilson, *Islamic Economics. A Short History*, Leiden-Boston, Brill, 2006, p. 38.

hand, the idea that all human actions are rendered possible by divine will only. The debates of this matter in theological and philosophical Islamic thinking, carefully presented by H. A. Wolfson¹⁵, start from verses like “No soul can believe but by the permission of God (*Koran* 10:100)” and also “Their hearts and their ears hath God sealed up” (*Koran* 2:6). Man has a free will, is aware of the difference between good and evil, but is free to choose only in accordance to an imposed code. God “previously” knows the man’s manner of action given a situation or another, but this does not mean that Allah is the one that predetermines the type of behavior. Therefore, if we refer to economic responsibility, man is free to squander, thus breaking the *israf* interdiction, or to look for efficiency in the use of resources and social justice in their allotment, thus respecting the principle of moderation (*i’atidal*), and he is therefore to receive the promised divine punishment or gratification.

Indeed, these fundamental concepts lead to the establishment of essential principles of Islamic economy. The first one was just mentioned. *The principle of moderation* stipulates that all human behavior, either economic or different, must avoid the extremes. First of all, consumption must be moderate. Being neither a squandered, nor avaricious, the Muslim cannot assume an economic behavior that implies useless risks regarding the future or to leave aside the restrictions of the *Koran* regarding the “administration” of God-received resources.

This is why moderation is directly linked to another Islamic economic principle: *economic efficiency*, but differently understood in comparison to the Western world. From an Islamic viewpoint, being economically efficient means using resources at their best in order to increase the value of production as much as possible. The two terms that ground the discourse on moderation or temperance in Islamic economy are *israf* (squander, meaning “limitless”, ostentatious) and *tabzir* (literally, total and useless squander). This permanent equilibrium between the two that must be maintained within the economic behavior of the Muslim, makes some Western concepts, like “utility maximization” and “personal interest”, rather different. For the Islamic economist, the only possible “maximization” is that of complete obedience for the principle of moderation and all other ethical-religious principles that are relevant for the economic discourse. In other words, the Islamic economic man takes his personal interest as a continuous effort to apply the ethical Islamic precepts in his economic practice: *adalah ijtima’iyyah* (the principle of social justice).

Adalah ijtima’iyyah has two essential dimensions: the principle of general solidarity and the principle of economic-social equilibrium. The Islamic concept of solidarity is radically different from the one used in Western social and political sciences, since it has a fundamentally religious meaning. First of all, the Islamic community (*umma*) is seen as an ideal society, a unitary one, which displays this type of spiritual dimension, but also collective virtue. The meaning of the *zakat*, one of the pillars of Islam, resides in the very respect for the idea of social solidarity.

¹⁵ H.A. Wolfson, *The Philosophy of the Kalam*, Cambridge, Massachusetts and London, Harvard University Press, 1976, p. 601-719.

There are at least two issues of Islamic economy that are missing the *ijma*, the consensus of opinions: the ownership right and the allotment of income and resources. The aforementioned concepts and principles lead the economists to axioms that seem to be contradictory, starting from the same verses of the *Koran* and from the same prophetic tradition, and even applying the same methods of logical argumentation and juridical reasoning. Starting from the exegesis of the same verses, some authors believe that the Islam recognizes and guarantees private property, but others that public property is in question. Some believe that the state has the right to intervene in the allotment and distribution of revenues and resources, others that this intervention must be as low as possible. Therefore, the perspectives are various and start from the progressive and differentiated taxation for the rich, reaching even the nationalization of resources and seizure of large properties.

This very intellectual “need for clarification” of assumptions and structure of Islamic economy makes Abdulkader Cassim Mahomedy, in his broad study entitled *Islamic Economics: Still in Search of an Identity*¹⁶, to analyze the causes that led to the failure of constructing this matter according to present day science restrictions. First of all, he notices that Islamic economists themselves doubt the possibility of founding of an Islamic economy as a science (Kuran, Phillip, Haque, Behdad, Mehrdad), and take this as a mere symbol of an exalted campaign of preserving the Islamic culture and tradition in a world that goes into a different direction. To people like these ones, Islamic economy is merely a means or an failed exercise to find an Islamic political identity. Other experts, creators of more moderate critiques – as Nienhaus, Wilson, Pryor, Pfeifer, Shams, Hefner or Asutay – do not recognize, for Islamic economy, the role of economic paradigm equal as value to the one dominating the Western world during present times, although it possesses some elements that can serve to the setting up of particularized Islamic economic theories.

Despite all these, the claim of Islamic economy to replace or annihilate the Western economic paradigm did not realize. Either because its theoretical poverty, or because of a vice that affects the construction of its fundamental elements, or because a waste of energy for a lost cause, the Islamic economy is, indeed, in search for its identity. There is a major theoretical conflict between those who want to adapt it to classical economy, lending it its methods and concepts and adding the coordinate of Islamic philosophical-religious values, and those who demand the necessity of reshaping it into a completely different form, in order to become a science in its own right. Choudhury proposes the setting up of an ontological and epistemological framework with a unique profile, focused on the *tawhid* philosophy¹⁷. What remains to be seen is whether this project is theoretically and practically feasible.

¹⁶ C. Mahomedy, „*Islamic Economics: Still in Search of an Identity*”, in: *International Journal of Social Economics*, vol. 40, no. 6, 2013, p. 556 – 578.

¹⁷ M. A. Choudhury, *The Islamic World-System. A Study in Polity-market Interaction*, London Routledge-Curzon, 2004.

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PEACE CONFERENCE IN BUCHAREST IN 1913 AND THE POLICY OF THE GREAT POWERS (II)

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Abstract: *Peace Conference in Bucharest in 1913 has usually been analyzed in the Romanian historiography, in terms of conducting negotiations between former belligerents, so that the peace treaty concluded on this occasion was often presented as an act of South-East European states that had been involved in the conflict, done without any involvement of the Great Powers. The author of this study provides a new perspective approach, analyzing the policy of the Great Powers, located in opposite political-military groups, the Triple Alliance and the Triple Agreement, in order to influence decision making in line with their own interests in the region. In this context, the author highlights the unique role of Romania in restoring peace in an area that was seen by the contemporaries of the events as "the powder keg of Europe".*

Keywords: *the interests of the warring states, the interests of the Great Powers, "Knight problem", "Adrianopol problem", the problem of peace treaty revision, the problem of organizing a conference of the Great Powers, the issue of balance of power in the Southeastern Europe, the role of Romania in restoring peace.*

On August 6, 1913 Blondel informed Pichon that *"the agreement on all points is established and peace is concluded. Serbia gave up Stroumitza and keeps Ichtip, Kotchana and Radvichta. Greece keeps Cavala and Drama"*¹. The next day, Sir Edward Grey, having been previously informed of this fact, transmitted the following telegram to Sir G. Barclay: *"Without expressing any opinion on the merits of the terms of peace [...] you should congratulate the Romanian government that peace was signed in Bucharest"*².

On August 7, 1913, in Paris Panafieu transmitted the following telegram on behalf of the Bulgarian government: *"Driven by the desire to finally see peace restored in the Balkans, the desire which had been expressed several times by the Great Powers, the royal government just gave its delegates at the conference in*

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¹ *Documents diplomatiques français (1871-1914)*, Paris, 1929-1959, 3e série, tome VII, doc. No. 554, p 593. Blondel to Pichon, August 6, 1913. It will be cited *D.D.F.*

² *British Documents on the Origins of the War (1898-1914)*, 11 volumes in 13 tomes, London, 1926-1938 (It will be cited *B.D.O.W.*), tome IX, II part, doc. No. 1214, p.963, Sir Edward Grey to G. Barclay, August 7, 1913.

Bucharest the necessary instructions in order to sign the difficult peace treaty that was imposed. At the same time, giving a new proof of his love of peace, the Royal Government has decided to proceed immediately after signing to demobilize its army, despite the danger, the more threatening today than ever, of the Turkish invasion in southern Bulgaria. The royal government decision is determined by deep conviction that the Great Powers, who, as mediator, have called for the establishment Enos-Midia line border and will soon appreciate the true worth of the peaceful feelings of Bulgaria, and will impose Turkey to observe the Treaty of London, spoke under their auspices ...".³

The same day, Blondel informed Paris that "*yesterday, Minister of Russia, following the example of the Austrian minister, notified the Romanian Government that the Russian Government reserves the right to revise the treaty regarding Cavala*". The French diplomat added that "*it is shown generally less satisfaction with this measure and the newspapers this morning consider it as an unfriendly proceeding*".⁴

Noting the intentions of Austrian-Hungary and Russia to submit the peace treaty to be revised by the Great Powers, the French and English diplomacy have felt the need for consultation. In this regard, a meeting took place between Sir Edward Grey and Paul Cambon, French Ambassador in London on August 7, 1913. The French Ambassador reported the content of the discussion in a report to Pichon: "*I asked the Secretary of Foreign state if the British government has set views on this subject. Sir Edward Grey replied that he spoke in a general way about choosing a meeting place in case the conference will become necessary and that he himself indicated Paris, but it did not foresee any need for this meeting. As for now, he said, we must maintain the Treaty of Bucharest as valid, we reserve the examination and approval, but this test does not entail a complete overhaul, it must only aim to allow the Powers to make observations, on the issues of detail that they may believe that their interests are harmed. The natural shape of these observations is a communication to the Powers that will change their views on that issue through diplomatic channels. I remarked to Sir Edward Grey that his opinion is consistent with that of the German government and that, moreover, if Austria would insist on a conference we could oppose the precedent set by itself during the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, where it rejected any proposal of a conference when she claimed an endorsement by way of exchange of views between governments.*"⁵ Thus, **Britain and France agreed to drop the idea of a conference of the Great Powers, to revise the Treaty of Bucharest.**

The reasons for which Russia demanded the revision of the peace treaty of Bucharest were presented by Russian Ambassador N. Schebeko to his French counterpart, Blondel, who in turn told them to Pichon "*My Russian colleague explained to me his approach as follows: "We have to give satisfaction to our very excited public opinion, showing them that we will protest against the decision of the Conference that awards Cavala to Greece and reduces*

³ *D.D.F.*, 3e serie, tome VII, doc. No. 557, p. 597, Panafieu to Pichon, August 7, 1913.

⁴ *Ibidem*, doc. No.562, p. 601, Blondel to Pichon, August, 7, 1913.

⁵ *Ibidem*, doc. No.571, p. 607-608. Paul Cambon to Pichon, August 7, 1913.

considerably the length and importance of the Mediterranean coastline claimed by Bulgaria. Even if our intervention would remain futile, we were forced to do so. We think alike to let Bulgaria to accept the treaty leaving them the hope of a review." Besides these domestic political reasons and general policy that do not justify the zeal shown by the Russian Minister to act even before being formally ordered, continued Blondel, there are other reasons of more personal nature. Mr. Schebeko is longing to be appointed ambassador to Vienna; he received the promise and **his influence for several weeks had to be exercised in Petersburg for the purposes of an agreement with Austria** (author's underlining), which would prepare a warm welcome to Ballplatz. Secondly, my Russian colleague has often let me guess the explanation of his attitude in the sense that manifests in Petersburg and that he felt himself to see Romania managed to settle a matter that Russia tried in vain to settle (author's underlining). He has several times expressed his fears about the influence that Romania may seek to pursue successfully upon the Slavic peoples! These are - concluded Blondel - the genuine motives that inspired my colleague's feverish activity with which he was reproached bitterly by some newspapers in Bucharest and political figures who had known him." In this sense Blondel cites an article "quite violent" appeared in the official newspaper of the Liberal Party, signed by former Minister of Finance Costinescu, "the most considerable man in the party after Mr Brătianu" criticizing "foreign interference in matters of interest for all independent nations." It was equally concerned in that Article, the Austrian approach, "this friend who is shirking in critical moments and is thinking more about his own interests than those of Romania".

In the same report, Blondel notes that the press was "unanimous" in determining the outcome of peace negotiations and "the skillful manner in which Mr. Mairescu led the Conference discussions." Also Blondel stated that "all the logs in Bucharest highlight the moral support that France brought to Romania and note that in the critical moments of history it was by the side of Romania". The Romanian Prime Minister - specified Blondel - wanted to thank him personally for "the friendly and disinterested support" which he had offered "without officially interfering in the peace negotiations that had just ended."⁶

If in Romania France's attitude during the Peace Conference brought satisfaction, in Russia it brought more annoyance. Delcassé advised Pichon that "the Russian press presented the assignment of Cavalia to Greece as a failure for Russia", largely due to the support given by France to Greece. France was accused also of having prevented Russia "to compel the Turks, by quick action, to recoil Enos-Midia line." Sazonov himself, said Delcassé, criticized France that while he supported the idea of financial pressure on Turkey, by refusing any credit, "Turkey has achieved in France new resources".⁷

In response, Pichon denied the intervention of the French government in the development of some private agreements, regarding an alleged aid of France to Turkey⁸ and then he clarified the attitude of France in "Cavalia problem," not to

⁶ *Ibidem*, doc. No.572, p. 608-610. Blondel to Pichon, August 7, 1913.

⁷ *Ibidem*, doc. No.574, p. 611-612. Delcassé to Pichon, August 8, 1913.

⁸ *Ibidem*, doc. No.575, p. 612. Pichon to Delcassé, August 8, 1913.

Petersburg accredit the idea that the position of Paris would question the alliance between the two countries. Thus, on August 9, 1913, the French foreign minister wrote to Delcassé: "*The imperial government (of Russia – author's note) has never notified us with any suggestion regarding Cavala. It has never invited us to examine our common behavior that we might have in this business. We did not intervene at all. On the contrary, we gave Mr. Blondel precise instructions to not interfere and let the belligerents to treat conditions of peace between them without any interference from us. It is true that responding to government requests of Athens, the Government of the Republic confidentiality let him know that he will not make any objections to the assignment of Cavala to Greece and I have never kept secret to the imperial government this manner of interpretation, justified by our traditional policy, by careful Mediterranean balance, by the conditions of war between Bulgaria and Greece, by the victories and sacrifices of the latter, by the attitude towards Germany, and finally and especially by the certainty that I had about the resumption of hostilities in the event of failure of an attempted settlement of the dispute. But **our alliance was never called into question** (author's underlining) on this subject by Mr. Sazonov and only in very recent conversations with Mr. Izvolski it made me foresee a possible divergence in the policy of the two allied countries. [...] I have no doubt that a very complete explanation that you will give to Mr. Sazonov will dissipate this misunderstanding*"⁹.

England's position in "Cavalia problem" and hence a revision of the peace treaty was more nuanced and, therefore, gave the possibility of confusion in interpretation. Sir Edward Grey, therefore, wished to clarify his point of view during a discussion he had with the French ambassador in London, Paul Cambon, on August 8, 1913. The French ambassador reported thus in a report to Pichon: "*Contrary to what was announced in several newspapers, the British government did not instruct the Minister of Bulgaria to declare that the decisions of the Balkan states should be subjected to review of the Powers; he has not ruled on this issue put in a general manner, but only on the proposal of Mr. Maiorescu on August 1, reserving the final approval of the Powers for the assignment of Cavala, and, at the suggestion of the Romanian minister, the cabinet of London responded in the same way as Your Excellency (France – author's note): Minister of England in Bucharest, Sir G. Barclay, was authorized to rally to the proposal of Mr. Maiorescu, if all Powers accepted it. After receiving these instructions, it seems that Sir G. Barclay met with all his colleagues, except the minister of France, and that, in conversations with them, he concluded that their governments accepted the proposal of Mr. Maiorescu, to which he thought he could join on behalf of the government of Britain. This was the approach that was interpreted as a British statement that tended to review all the stipulations of the future treaty in Bucharest. The King of Greece was informed and he directly instructed his minister in London to express his vineyard wonder to the attitude of Sir Edward Grey; he replied to Mr Gennadios that he did not decide the review of the Treaty of Bucharest by the Powers and*

⁹ *Ibidem*, doc. No.584, p.625-626. Pichon to Delcassé, August 9, 1913.

telegraphed to the Ministry of England in Romania to ask for explanations. I read the reply of Sir Barclay; it is very confusing and leaves the impression that he misunderstood the very clear instructions Foreign Office".¹⁰

Indeed, the answer may create such an impression. Instead, the report by Sir G. Barclay, on August 8, 1913, and perhaps for this reason is of impeccable clarity. This document is a detailed overview of all meetings of the Peace Conference, including discussions behind the scenes, which undoubtedly influenced the decisions contained in the Treaty. From this point of view we consider the document as **a historical source of the utmost importance for the historical research of the issue of Peace Conference in Bucharest.** In accordance with the subject of this paper, we will refer only to aspects of "Cavalia problem" and hence, that of the revision of the peace treaty, not only to bring further clarifications on the position of England, but also to highlight **the attitude and role of ambassadors of the Great Powers in Bucharest, which were important undoubtedly for making decisions regarding the treaty of peace,** but, especially, to highlight **the exceptional contribution of the Romanian delegation to the conclusion of peace.** We believe, we can prove that **in fact belligerents shaped their attitudes during the talks according to the reactions of the Great Powers, and in our opinion, the idea historiography accredited, that the peace in Bucharest was exclusively peace of small states, without any interference from the Great Powers, was exaggerated.**¹¹ From this document it is clear that in fact the whole dispute over the issue of the review, regarding the port statement about Cavala, was based on diplomatic maneuvering imagined by Take Ionescu. Basically, fueling the intention of submitting the treaty revision of the Great Powers, but in one issue (of course, Cavala), Venizelos softened his intransigence, but this gave the Bulgarians the illusion of a possible revision. In this way it could overcome a deadlock that could disrupt the conference and the resumption of hostilities.

"Since the first time - told Sir G. Barclay in his report to Sir Edward Grey -it seemed that the issue of Cavala and of the district will prove to be the most dangerous obstacle. Cavala is desired by both countries, not only as a harbor, but also because of tobacco revenues without rival nurseries in the district and both sides seemed that they would not succumb till the decisive meeting of August 6, when the concession had been made easier for the Bulgarian delegation, in that the two Great Powers most directly interested in the Balkan problem made each of them a special reserve to Maiorescu regarding the right of Powers to review any decision taken at the Conference on the fate of Cavala.

¹⁰ *Ibidem*, doc. No.580, p.622. Paul Cambon to Pichon, August 8, 1913.

¹¹ See the opinion of Eliza Campus: *"Everything ran so fast that the peace negotiations in Bucharest took place only between the belligerent states, with no interference. The Great Powers faced the following situation: the small states that were at war, concluded peace, which should be a long lasting peace, because all signed the treaty of peace with no pressure from abroad."* Eliza Campus, *Small and middle states in central and southeast part of Europe in international relationships. First half of XX century*, Ed. Politica, Bucuresti, 1988, p. 58.

The circumstances leading to the action of the Austrian and Russian ministers are briefly as follows: in the second day of the conference had become obvious that the problem of Cavala will create many difficulties. Bulgarian delegation proved to be stubborn in this regard and Mr Venizelos has proven to not be willing to compromise. His Excellency told the Romanian delegates and some of my colleagues that although he will not succumb to the Conference, Greece will succumb to pressure of the Great Powers, if they were united in their insistence that Bulgaria should have Cavala. Under these circumstances, Mr. Take Ionescu suggested **during a visit to the Russian Legation** (author's underlignment), on July 31, 1913, that in order to prevent an interruption of the conference, the representatives of the Great Powers should be authorized to declare to Mr. Maiorescu that whatever decision that will reach the Conference on Cavala, the Great Powers reserve the right to revise the decision. At a meeting the same evening at the Russian Legation at which there were present all the representatives of the Powers, except the French Minister, it was decided that each should ask his permission to government to make the proposed declaration. French Minister telegraphed also to his government the next morning. Governments' responses to the proposal of the ministers were varied. German Minister had not received any authorization until that statement might be needed, and the French Minister was authorized to do so only if it is asked specifically from Mr. Maiorescu as President of the Conference. Both the French government and the German government are obviously keen to avoid any possible review of the arrangements reached in Bucharest. You, Sir, you were kind enough to authorize me [...] to join the proposed declaration, if all my colleagues will receive similar instructions, namely that the statement about Cavala could not hinder the Powers to review other points if they thought it was necessary. I informed Mr Maiorescu on this telegram dated August 3, leaving an aide-mémoire containing them. Italian minister had to make the declaration only if his colleagues did the same thing. Russian Minister had no instructions, but he received a telegram stating that his government was in favor of a declaration in a form similar to that which I have been authorized to use. Austrian minister was the only one of my colleagues who was unconditionally authorized to make the statement and did so on August 4 and the Russian minister followed on 6 August. The latter did not yet receive clear instructions, but since the most critical meeting of the Conference was to be held that afternoon, he assumed the responsibility and his action was subsequently approved.

The story that I told on the circumstances in which the proposal was made that the situation of Cavala to be reserved to the Powers makes me say - continued Barclay - a few words about the roles played by the representatives of the Great Powers in Bucharest during the Conference. German minister and I were just spectators, although, as I explained above, **I joined the proposal on Cavala, in belief that, even if it were partially adopted, as the case was, it would facilitate the conclusion of peace by making it easier for Bulgarian delegation concessions that otherwise would have been very hard for them** (author's underlignment). The attitude of my French

colleague was neutral and he frequently expressed his regret to me that this was not the attitude of all his colleagues. His opinion was that, in the interests of general peace, the states of the Conference should be able to solve problems without the interference of the Great Powers; he sincerely condemned the proposal to the Romanian government that any arrangement regarding the distribution of territories should be ratified by the Great Powers. As it has already been said, the attitude of Mr. Blondel was a neutral one, but I should mention that he seized an opportunity that arose during the decisive meeting of the Conference in the afternoon of August 6th of this month to impose the need for conciliation to the Greek Prime Minister. Mr. Blondel went to the Minister of Foreign Affairs at 18 hours, when the meeting is expected to be finished, in order to learn the outcome of the meeting. He learned that a deadlock occurred between Greeks and Bulgarians regarding a certain strategic position. The official meeting was adjourned to give both parties the opportunity to reach an agreement. By chance, they agreed. Mr. Venizelos met Mr. Blondel in one of the rooms. There were present Mr. Maiorescu and Mr. Blondel joined the latter in his attempts to make Mr. Venizelos to give up (author's underlignment), so that Mr. Venizelos agreed on condition that General Coanda, the head of the Romanian military delegation, to give assurances as a man of honor and military expert, that the Greeks will not be at a military disadvantage, if they accepted, instead of the disputed standpoint, an alternative that was suggested by Bulgaria. It was an assurance given by General Coanda and the Greeks and Bulgarians came to an understanding.

The remaining three representatives were all active, the Russian Minister by direct pressure on Serbs, and **the Austrian Minister by using his influence on the Romanian government to moderate, with his help, the claims of the allies** (author's underlignment). Both, as we have already reported, made statements regarding Cavala, and the Austrian Minister had similar reservations about Kochana, the problem of the situation of a city, also seemed to be an obstacle at a time. The Italian minister proved to be active in supporting Bulgaria, which infuriated not only Mr. Blondel, but even Mr. Schebekoy. I heard from reliable sources that at one point, he supported so much the Bulgarians that he urged on the Romanian representatives to threaten the Allies, that if they do not give up their demands, Romania will separate from their cause, and that later, on the eve of the decisive meeting on August 6th, he advised the Bulgarian delegation to continue to be stubborn for a period of time regarding Cavala in the hope that all the representatives of the Great Powers will soon be able to join in their reservations about that place – a dangerous advice given the fact that the suspension of hostilities was to expire in less than two days.

In conclusion - completed Sir G. Barclay his report to Sir Edward Grey - I would add a few words regarding the position of Romania. **Through its participation in the recent war, it not only won the frontier it had wanted, but it frustrated Bulgaria's claims of hegemony in the Balkans, and despite a harsh criticism of a part of the British press, I think that, in light of recent events, a more fair verdict would be that**

Romania deserved all the best from Europe (author's underlignment). There is no doubt that Bulgaria's appetite for conquest was increased by the success against Turkey. It made no secret that it wanted new victories and wanted to get all the territories inhabited by ethnic Bulgarians which remained in possession of the neighboring states. It might be claimed that the current understanding that stopped Bulgaria to become stronger than its neighbors ensured a lasting peace, but either way it were, the Romania's intervention had in any case the effect to shorten the current war or to facilitate the conclusion of peace. And as I ventured to remark [...], it had the role to reduce the risk of an active intervention from Austria. Romania did not take advantage of its favorable position to demand exorbitant concessions, and its influence at the conference was used to moderate the demands of the allies and to prevent an excessive rise of Bulgaria, a course in strict accordance with the principle that it aimed to keep - namely, the principle of balance of powers in the Balkans. Its intervention seems to me that it excluded a project as dangerous as a general review of the arrangement reached now (author's underlignment). I understand that Austria and Russia are the only Great Powers which are willing to insist on a review, but whatever language would be used by the media in Austria and Russia in this moment, I feel it is a reasonable assumption that the softness against Romania and the desire that each of the Powers has for closer relations with this country will make the two governments to give up to insist on a course that would be regarded by Romania as an affront to its sovereign and of itself (author's underlignment). In this connection, I should mention that the Russian minister, though bothered by decisions taken at the Conference on Cavala and on the Serbian border, it doesn't seem to anticipate that its government will insist on reviewing the reached decision by the Great Powers".¹²

The desire shown by the government in Vienna to review the Bucharest peace treaty caused great discontent in Romanian public opinion. It was proved that the Dual Monarchy was losing more and more of its political influence in the Romanian capital, and it was increasingly emphasized the anti-Austrian mood. Basically, at the level of the public opinion, there was prolonged, with a lower intensity, however, the trend expressed during mobilization of the Romanian army. It turned out that there were developments in the mood of Romanians entered on a course which became irreversible and dominated by a significant anti-Habsburg component. Blondel recorded in this regard on August 8th, 1913: "The Austro-Hungarian Government committed another mistake by taking a position in favor of a revision of the Treaty in Bucharest, which welcome all opponents of the old Romanian policy to take advantage of it." Reporting on anti-Austrian media campaign in the Romanian capital, Blondel also noted that "other newspapers, in a less brutal form, perhaps, but just as compelling, happily welcoming the signing of the peace treaty, begin a campaign in favor of an alliance between Romania, Serbia and Greece, an alliance in which, by the force of things, Bulgaria might be later interested, overcoming the disastrous

¹² B.D.O.W., tome IX, part II, doc. no. 1225, p. 970-975. Sir G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey, August 8, 1913.

situation that it had passed, and perhaps even the resigned Turkey. [...] Many Romanian statesmen are ready to pursue these efforts." If Austro-Hungary lost the sympathies of the Romanians, there were amplified instead the positive ones for France. "Thanks to its attitude during the recent events - continued Blondel - and especially during the discussions of the Conference in Bucharest, France saw a more fortified influence which the countries it had morally supported and defended were ready to recognize it, and for now, in Romania, as well as in Serbia, Greece and Montenegro, there existed sincere gratitude, that was confessed to me unanimously". Instead, Blondel recorded a decrease in the influence of France in Bulgaria, which "does not ignore the opinion of the Government of the Republic concerning the award of Cavala to Greece"¹³

Germany was definitely against the revision of the peace treaty. Manneville, French charge d'affaires in Berlin advised Pichon that the under-Secretary of State Zimmermann assured him that "in the German government thinking, Europe will have to accept the division of territories which the Balkan powers had already made between them." Zimmermann believed that "the review desired by Russia and Austria would not be possible unless the Powers could agree on the manner in which the review would be done. However, this cannot be determined on the basis of unanimity, as the review desired by Russia is not the one desired by Austria. All that Europe will have to do will be to take note of the decisions adopted in Bucharest". Zimmermann enjoyed the point of view of the German government coincided with that of the French government, and he hoped that Paris will be able to convince Petersburg to adopt the same position, as the German government will act in the same sense in Vienna.¹⁴ Regarding the problem of evacuation of Adrianople by the Turks, Zimmermann came up with a new idea that he communicated, personally, to the same French diplomat: "If nobody wants to embark on a military expedition, he doesn't see what could Europe do and he assured me -Manneville told Pichon this opinion - that he is inclined to think that Europe simply let the Turks and Bulgarians to make an agreement between them."¹⁵

The point of view of the French government on the issue of treaty revision practically coincided with the one of the British government. Pichon, the French foreign minister, was asking the French ambassador in London, Paul Cambon, Sir Edward Grey to transmit his consent in relation to the position expressed by the Foreign Office on August 7, 1913. In this way the two countries agreed that it was not necessary to undergo the peace treaty to a general revision "by way of a European conference or otherwise." According to the concept of the two Great Powers of the Entente Cordiale, "it would be sufficient that the Powers examined and changed their points of view, depending on which they deserved to make observations."¹⁶

On August 10th, 1913 the peace treaty was signed in Bucharest. In its preamble there was specified: "Their Royal Majesties of Romania, the King of

¹³ D.D.F., 3^e série, tome VII, doc. no. 581, p. 623-624. Blondel to Pichon, August 8, 1913.

¹⁴ *Ibidem*, doc. no. 586, p. 627. Manneville to Pichon, August 9, 1913.

¹⁵ *Ibidem*, doc. no. 587, p. 627-628. Manneville to Pichon, August 9, 1913.

¹⁶ *Ibidem*, doc. no. 592, p. 631. Pichon to Paul Cambon, August 9, 1913.

Greece, the King of Montenegro and the Serbian king, on the one hand, and His Majesty the King of Bulgaria, on the other hand, inspired by the desire to end the state of war that existed in present between their respective countries, willing, out of a sense of order to establish peace between their peoples, which were so far tested, they decided to conclude a final peace treaty (author's underlignment).¹⁷ In his closing of the Conference, Titu Maiorescu, reached the pinnacle of his political career, said: "We can split being conscious that we have endeavored to defend the interests of the states which we represent, and with the feeling that the personal connections we created during our joint work will be the forerunner of the good relations to be established between our countries".¹⁸

The same day, Delcassé informed Pichon that he met Tsar Nicholas II who declared him the following: "Finally, peace has been concluded. It will last as long as it will be possible. three years, four years. It is always like this. Let's take advantage of it". The French diplomat asked in reply: "Does Your Majesty therefore consider the treaty in Bucharest as definitive". "Yes, replied the Tsar, but now it must act to implement the Treaty of London. We did accept the unpleasant parts, such as Albania. The other parts should not remain a dead letter." Recounting this question the head of French diplomacy, Delcassé showed that "this allusion to the reoccupation of Adrianople by the Turks is significant. Here it is another fact which shows that Russia does not think to resign."¹⁹

Delcassé explained in another report on August 10th, 1913 that Berchtold informed Petersburg that "the Treaty in Bucharest should be reviewed, especially in the Serbian-Bulgarian frontier side. He noted the points on which the review should be done. In reply, to divert Austria from this project, however, to prevent its success, Sazonov had the intention not to protest the award of Cavala to Greece". Delcassé encouraged Sazonov in this attitude, but he was skeptical about attracting Greece with the Triple Agreement. He said that "in the case of Greece, far away to consider it in the future as a friend of the Triple Entente, it will switch to the Triple Alliance camp, especially after Italy under pressure manifested by Germany gave up supporting the claims of Bulgaria upon Cavalia."²⁰ Such lack of insight is forthcoming revision of the peace treaty. However, it is evident that diplomatic chancelleries of the Great Powers, began to develop projects based on new realities and political state in Southeastern Europe, established by the end of the Second Balkan War and Peace Treaty in Bucharest.

Pressure from Germany and other foreign policy considerations have led the government in Vienna to give up the idea of revision of the peace treaty. It was basically accepted by all the Great Powers. Their agreement was expressed, inter alia, in the telegrams sent from the European capitals addressed either to King Carol I, or to the Prime Minister Titu Maiorescu. The Emperor Franz Joseph of Austro-Hungary, the German Emperor Wilhelm II, Tsar Nicholas II of Russia,

¹⁷ *Green Book*, in tome Titu Maiorescu, *Romania, the Balkan wars and the Cadrilater*, tome published by Stelian Neagoe, Machialvelli Publishing House, Bucharest, 1995, p. 232. It will be cited *Green Book*. For the text of the treaty, see *Ibidem*, p. 232-239.

¹⁸ *Green Book*, p. 231.

¹⁹ *D.D.F.*, 3^e série, tome VII, doc. no. 597, p. 634-635. Delcassé to Pichon, August 10th, 1913.

²⁰ *Ibidem*, doc. no. 598, p. 635, Delcassé to Pichon, August 10th, 1913.

French President Raymond Poincaré and others They sent messages to King Carol I.²¹ The Head of Government, Titu Maiorescu, was congratulated by S. Sazonov, Russian Foreign Minister, Count Berchtold, the Head of the Viennese diplomacy, the Marquis of San Giuliano, the Italian Foreign Minister, Sir Edward Grey, the Head of Foreign Office, prince Bülow and others.²²

Political circles and public opinion in European countries, following closely what happened in Bucharest appreciated particularly, with certain exceptions, which are explainable, in the case of Austro-Hungary and partly in Russia, the position and role of Romania, which had been credited mainly for the quick conclusion of hostilities and for establishing of peace that was meant to be a right and lasting one.

In Romania, the peace laid down in Bucharest was received generally positive, even enthusiastic, both by public opinion and political circles. There were also present dissenting opinions, which was natural if we consider that the politicians of the time expressed their opinions, then or later, in connection with the Treaty in Bucharest, according to the interests of political parties to which they belonged and had distinct and different visions about the way they analyzed the activity of the government during the two Balkan wars, but also in relation to the Romanian foreign policy outlook.²³

Towards the end of 1913, when the passing of time made possible a more lucid perspective in assessment of the activity of the government during the Balkan Wars and of the results of the Peace Treaty in Bucharest, parliamentary debates were held on this topic.²⁴ Although there were present critical speeches appealing to the government, especially from the opposition, especially the Liberals, led by I.I.C. Brătianu, the Parliament approved the activity of the Government and of the Prime Minister Titu Maiorescu. The Romanian Prime Minister, on the verge of withdrawing from power and politics, endowed with exceptional oratorical talent, as the great erudite man of culture that otherwise reflected his true vocation²⁵, delivered a speech that remained famous in the annals of Romanian parliamentary life.²⁶ Justifying the government's overall activity during the Balkan Wars, and being preoccupied by drafting the Green Book, Maiorescu highlighted a realistic policy pursued by the Romanian state in accordance with the great national interests. Responding to criticism from opposition Maiorescu said, among other things, with legitimate pride: "*Whatever you would interpret and misinterpret from the acts against our action, the reality is that it has brought as result the Peace of Bucharest. Naturally, as the French proverb, many roads lead to Rome, perhaps it would have been other*

²¹ Central Historical National Archives, Fond Royal House, dossier 40/1913.

²² Archive of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, dossier 71/B/13.

²³ A very good review of the main points of view of personalities of political or cultural life regarding the Treaty in Bucharest see in Gh. Zbucea, *Romania and Balkan wars. 1912-1913. South-Eastern European Historical pages*, Ed. Albatros, Bucharest, 1999, p. 307-330.

²⁴ See the Debates of the Meeting of the Deputies, 1913-1914, no. 1-16, meetings in November-December 1913; see also the Debates of Senate, 1913-1914, no. 5-6.

²⁵ About the personality of Titu Maiorescu see the excellent monographic study Z. Ornea, *Life of Titu Maiorescu*, tome I-II, Bucharest, 1987.

²⁶ See the text of speech in Titu Maiorescu, *Romania, Balkan wars and Cadrilater*, p. 241-254.

means of success. But what would have been, if it had not been what it was? What would it have been, if it had been what it wasn't? This leads to endless human possibilities. Reality exposure limits what it is and not what it could have been; reality is Peace of Bucharest, reality is that we have reached this result without having exposed the country to dangers and we lifted the prestige of Romania, as you all admitted that it is exalted.”²⁷

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LEGIONARY MOVEMENT'S EXILE IN THE NAZI GERMANY (1941–1944)

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Abstract: *After the “rebellion” from 21-23 January 1941, the leaders of Legionary movement ran to Germany to protect against general Ion Antonescu’s repression. They hoped that Adolf Hitler will support legionaries to reorganize and, eventually, to take over control of Romania. But the Nazis banned political activity of Legionary movement, and isolated the activists of organization in camps. Hitler used the legionaries from Germany to pressure Ion Antonescu in the context of military operations in Eastern front. This special situation of Romanian extremists helped them after the war to defend against accusations of crimes against humanity. The legionnaires sustain that organization was a victim of Nazism, and its members was interned in concentrations camps. Accidentally or not, this rhetoric saved Legionary movement’s exile from trials after the war. No leader of the organization was not judged by western military courts in Nürnberg trials, or other legal actions.*

Keywords: *Legionary movement; World War II; Exile; Romanian Fascism; Nürnberg trials.*

Although the legionaries that had fled Romania after the “rebellion” from 21-23 January 1941 were not allowed to carry out any political activities in Germany, they did not obey these rules and tried to get organized according to the group’s internal norms. Taking into consideration the fact that they experienced a period of “persecution”, they established a special leadership structure, named the “Commandment”. In reality, the “Commandment from Germany” included the true leaders of the organization although in Romania the coordination of the Legionary Movement was maintained by the “third persecution commandment”. The leadership from Berlin included the 14 “cadres” that had remained in Berkenbrück after the splitting up of the legionaries on 19 April 1941. These were the following: Horia Sima, Vasile Iasinschi, Constantin Papanace, Ilie Gârneață, Corneliu Georgescu, Viorel Trifa, Dumitru Grozea, Constantin Stoicănescu, Ștefan Cerna, Virgil Mihăilescu, Gheorghe Dragomir-Jilava, Traian Borobaru, Ilie Smultea, Nicolae Smărandescu.

From a hierarchical point of view the structure of the movement’s leadership, and implicitly of the “Commandment from Germany”, did not change. Horia Sima, although contested by some voices, was the absolute leader of the Legionary Movement according to the organization’s principle stating that the leader had to be supported for better or for worse. However, the German authorities refused to

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have Sima as their discussion partner, as they considered him responsible for the events of 21-23 January 1941. Moreover, he had offended Hitler by refusing to participate in the reunion of Romania and Germany that had taken place on 14 January 1941.

Consequently, in the relations with the Nazis the main contact person was Vasile Iasinschi. He had a good relation with Horia Sima too, who did not object to this situation. The second person in the hierarchy of the relations with Germany was Constantin Papanace, a leader of the new generation, like Sima and Iasinschi. However, Papanace had a conflict with Horia Sima because the Macedonian claimed that he was more justified to run the new "Commandment". Nevertheless, the Germans could not leave Horia Sima out because they knew that he was supported by the majority of the legionaries from Romania, and especially by the active nests. Therefore, when there were consultations on important issues, the Germans accepted the fact that Iasinschi and Papanace consulted first with Horia Sima after which communicated the official standpoint of the Legionary Movement.

After the settlement of the legionary leaders in Germany, in the spring of 1941, the Nazis designated two official representatives of the Reich in the relations with the movement. Franz Rademacher was appointed from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and commissary Legath from the police authorities. Through these two officials the legionaries maintained contact with the German authorities or with their families in Romania. From an administrative point of view, the "Commandment from Germany" was the responsibility of SS major Wolf, the head of the *Gestapo* in the region Frankfurt/Oder. He visited the group in Berkenbrück almost every week to bring them food cards and to inquire about their current needs. Rademacher and Legath came to Berkenbrück irregularly, usually when a serious issue arose that needed the consultation or the information of the "Commandment from Germany"¹.

After the transfer of the group from Berlin to Berkenbrück, the legionary leaders became aware of the fact that the German authorities had planned to keep them in a vegetative state without allowing them to have any claims of taking political actions in Romania. Although Horia Sima had a tensed relation with the Germans, he suggested the writing of a memorandum to Hitler to justify the violence of the events of 21-23 January 1941 and to request assistance to start again the political activities. Despite the fact that not all the members of the "Commandment from Germany" were thrilled by the idea of sending a memorandum to the *Führer*, it was finally sent at the end of April 1941. The memorandum was not officially transmitted via Rademacher or Legath but it reached the Chancellery of the Reich via the legionaries living in Berlin legally. A copy of the memorandum was also sent to Himmler. Hitler was not at all pleased by the legionaries' action and he replied to Horia Sima (the only signer of the document) that if he did not cease all political activities, he would be extradited to Romania. A week after the "incident", the Berkenbrück group was visited by Rademacher and Legath who informed the legionaries that they had been wrong

¹ Viorel D. Trifa, *Memories*, Limes Publishing House, Cluj-Napoca, 2003, p. 77.

to contact the Chancellery in “unofficial” ways. Moreover, they were told that Ion Antonescu had the full support of Hitler and it would be better for them to stop their political activities². The memorandum had been sent in a totally unfavorable context when a plan for invading the Soviet Union was being prepared in Berlin.

After 22 June 1941, the legionaries from the “Commandment” requested *in corpore* to join the war effort against the Soviet Union. To avoid being accused by Antonescu that they tried to return to Romania, they asked to be enrolled in the *Wehrmacht* or in the Finnish army. This time, the petition was sent officially via Legath without giving rise to protests. The answer came on 5 August 1941 when Rademacher, Legath and Wolf visited the legionaries in Berkenbrück to inform them about the decision of the Chancellery. The legionary delegation included Sima, Iasinschi and Papanace. The Germans informed them that their requests for volunteer enrollment had been rejected by Hitler, like he had decided in the case of the white Russians and the Ukrainians exiled in Germany. The motivation for the rejection targeted Horia Sima again because he had offended the *Führer* by not participating at the bilateral meeting organized in January 1941. After that visit, the legionaries received a new regulation stating that their attempt to leave the house would be considered an escape attempt.

Against this background, in the summer of 1941, some legionaries from the “Commandment from Germany” started contesting the leadership of Horia Sima. He was held responsible for the deadlock of their relations with Germany and for the incorrect management of the organization which led to the “divorce” from Ion Antonescu. The most fervent voice against Sima was that of Constantin Papanace, an old rival of Horia Sima. Gradually, he gained more supporters, among whom Dumitru Grozea and Viorel Trifa. However, Sima still had the support of Vasile Iasinschi who recognized Sima as the organization’s leader although he was the representative of the Legionary Movement in its relations with the Germans.

The first consultations between the Germans and the legionaries took place in November 1941. At the beginning of the month, Rademacher and Legath arrived in Berkenbrück to present to the “Commandment” a proposal of solving the Romanian-Hungarian disagreement. The Germans suggested the colonization of the Romanians from north-western Transylvania to Transnistria. To compensate this, the borders between the two states would be abolished by establishing a customs union. The legionaries rejected the idea of giving up the Transylvanian territory and accepted negotiations only regarding the customs union. The Germans, seeing the legionaries’ attitude, stopped consulting them on the issue of Transylvania.

Realizing that they could not obtain political concessions from the legionaries, the Nazis tried to break up the unity of the “Commandment from Germany” by launching a debate about the organization’s leadership. At the end of 1941, Rademacher, the representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the relation with the legionaries, started supporting the change of Horia Sima from the leadership of the movement in order to improve the situation of the Legion in

² Horia Sima, *Prisoners of the Axes’ Powers*, Metafora Publishing House, Constanța, 2005, pp. 35-39; Viorel D. Trifa, *op.cit.*, p. 77.

its relations with Germany. His statements had fed the tensions within the “Commandment”, which had begun in the summer. However, the legionaries feared that this proposal of the Nazis was a trap and did not make any public declarations against Sima. Nevertheless, the attitude of Rademacher made the “commander” to take a stand. On 9 January 1942, Rademacher and Legath announced their arrival to Berkenbrück. Usually they came without prior notice and therefore the legionaries thought that they would request the change of the leader. Before the arrival of the two officials, Horia Sima accepted for the first time that it was possible that he left the leadership of the Legionary Movement if the Germans would ask it in exchange for the re-launching of the political activities. Sima then said that the order of his succession would be: Vasile Iasinschi, Corneliu Georgescu and Constantin Papanace. The “commander” did not wait for the Germans’ suggestion and on 9 January 1942 he announced that he was ready to step down from the movement’s leadership if the Germans would change their behavior towards the movement. Rademacher was surprised by the gesture of Sima and told him that although he appreciated his intention he thought that his withdrawal was not necessary. The Germans had probably analyzed the support Sima had within the movement, especially among the group in Rostock, and decided that his change would create unwanted tensions. However, the Germans did not give up the tactics of pressuring Horia Sima. In the summer of 1942, Rademacher stopped coming to Berkenbrück and launched a rumor saying that he would not return there until Sima would not be changed. He went to Rostock instead to see for himself the support the “commander” enjoyed there. However, as Nicolae Petraşcu, a close and faithful collaborator of Sima, was the leader of the group in Rostock, he did not succeed in obtaining the “repudiation” of Sima by the largest group of legionaries living in Germany.

Rademacher represented the “hard line” of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs with regard to the legionaries. Legath, on the other hand, was not that radical in his discussions with the legionaries, and the latter found an ally in their relations with the Chancellery of the Reich. However, on 4 June 1942, Legath came for the last time to Berkenbrück because he had been transferred to Poland. He was replaced with capital Ahrens. The latter was less flexible with the legionaries treating them according to the official instructions. He was a professional policeman who had started his career before the Nazis had taken over power in 1933. The inflexibility of Ahrens and the cease of the visits of Rademacher affected the legionaries’ state of mind and they lost hope to re-establish their political activities. Ahrens did not get involved in the dispute regarding Sima’s leadership. However, during his visit from 4 December 1942, when asked why Rademacher had stopped “inspecting” them, he told the legionaries that he had heard him say that he would not return to Berkenbrück until the “commander” gave up his position. This kind of statements and the news from the eastern front that the legionaries received via the radio, changed their state of mind³.

³ Viorel D. Trifa, *Memories, cited works*, pp. 78-88; Horia Sima, *Prisoners of the Axes’ Powers, works cited*, p. 135-139.

Against this tensed background, various rumors about their inevitable transfer to a concentration camp starting spreading among the members of the “Commandment from Germany” in Berkenbrück. The causes were manifold: the “crisis” of the leadership, the situation on the eastern front after the failure at Stalingrad, and the tensions between the legionaries in Rostock.

Throughout his activity as leader of the Legionary Movement, Horia Sima was not at all sincere with his colleagues from the “persecution commandments” regarding his actions. He was rather suspicious and from a political point of view he wanted to take over power by any means, even revolutionary-terrorist means. That was why he only revealed his plans to his closest collaborators.

This also happened during the stay of the “Commandment from Germany” in Berkenbrück. Although from the perspective of the relations with Germany he was the “black sheep” of the group, he had not stopped trying to initiate and continue planning conspiracies. In parallel with his actions regarding the improvement of the relations with Hitler, Sima began communication with Italy to contact Mussolini.

The relations between Horia Sima and the legionaries in Rome were mediated by Constantin Stoicănescu. The latter had been a close and loyal collaborator of Sima and an active messenger of the Berkenbrück group. Stoicănescu secretly left the house in Berkenbrück several times a week and met with legionaries that were not under house arrest. Thus, he found out that in Italy lived a legionary named Mihail Enescu who had gone to Spain in 1941 and had helped establish the organizations there. Mihail Enescu received instructions to infiltrate the circles of Mussolini to prepare a meeting between the Italian leader and Horia Sima.

In the summer of 1942, Sima told Mihail Enescu to speed up the contact with the Duke because he had come to the conclusion that the Nazis did not offer him any perspectives. The “commander” tried to convince Mussolini to take over the re-launch of the Legionary Movement at the European level by supporting the “Latin Axis” of Rome-Bucharest-Madrid-Paris. Mihail Enescu, from his position of a small civil servant, did not have enough relations to infiltrate the circles of Mussolini. However, he managed to get close to a well-known journalist in Italy, Mario Appelinus, who had influence over the Duke. There is no reliable information about the relation between Mihail Enescu and Mario Appelinus but the Romanian legionary informed Sima that he could come to Italy to contact Mussolini because the latter like the idea of the “Latin Axis”.

Thus, at the beginning of September 1942, Horia Sima planned his departure to Italy. The situation in the Reich was unstable given the suggestions of Rademacher and the contesting voices within the “Commandment from Germany”. The escape to Italy was prepared by Constantin Stoicănescu, who was helped by Tiana Silion. Traian Borobaru, Sima’s secretary, was also included in this “conspiracy” because he had to get to Italy as well to help Sima go ahead with the organization. The two hoped to cross the border into Italy with the assistance of Rome by giving them passports. However, Mihail Enescu did not manage to get them the necessary documents. The “conspirators” decided then to acquire for themselves Romanian passports that would be forged by Petre Ponta, a legionary

drawer living in Berlin. Petre Ponta had previously forged for them other travelling documents that they had used in the spring of 1940⁴, when a group of legionaries led by Horia Sima left Berlin to return to Romania to carry out the revolution against Carol II.

Nonetheless, there were not many Romanians in Berlin willing to risk their necks to help Horia Sima in the fall of 1942. Most of the legionaries were hiding on the territory of the Reich and did not have the necessary documents to allow them to transit into another country. At the end of December they finally found a “volunteer” to give up his Romanian passport to Horia Sima: Vladimir Klein, a student from Bukovina. However, he was married and on his passport there was the picture of his wife as well. Therefore, the “conspirators” got Tiana Sillion involved in the expedition to Italy. The photographs in the passport were changed by Petre Ponta. Thus, Sima was ready to go to Italy. Traian Borobaru could not get a hold of forged documents and had to promise that he would cross the German-Italian border on his own via the Villach border point located in former Austria.

Only a handful of people knew about Sima’s departure. From the Rostock group only Nicolae Petrașcu was informed. He was supposed to keep it a secret and act with caution when the inevitable investigations would follow Sima’s flight to Italy. From the members of the Berkenbrück group, apart from Stoicănescu and Borobaru, only Vasile Iasinschi had been informed about the departure. Sima asked Iasinschi to give the alarm after lunch when Sima would have already crossed the German-Italian border at Brennero.

This took place on 15 December 1942. Helped by Stoicănescu who obtained a car for him, Sima fled from Berkenbrück immediately after dinner. From Berlin he took the train to Rome accompanied by Tiana Sillion as his wife. She returned to Berlin on 17 December. Sima was taken over by the legionary organization in Rome and was housed in the home of Elena Bucur, radio broadcaster at Radio Roma.

The “mission” of Horia Sima in Italy was a big failure. At that moment the situation of Mussolini was rather distressing: the Germans were quivering on the eastern front, the Allies had landed in Africa and were getting ready to invade Italy. Mihail Enescu did not manage to arrange a meeting between Sima and Mussolini. Appelinus kept putting Enescu off claiming that the *Duke* was not in Rome and that he would let Sima know when he could see him⁵.

In the meantime, the situation of the legionaries in Germany had become extremely complicated. On the morning of 16 December, the Berkenbrück group noticed the disappearance of Sima, Stoicănescu and Borobaru. The legionaries got really worried when they saw that the three had not returned for lunch. According to his understanding with Horia Sima, only after lunch did Vasile Iasinschi give the alarm and let Hartig know that Horia Sima was missing. Hartig sensed that something bad was happening and directly informed the head of the *Gestapo* of

⁴ Ilarion Țiu, *The Legionary Movement after Corneliu Codreanu*, 1st vol., *The Royal Dictatorship (February 1938-September 1940): the mechanisms of the generation change*, Vremea Publishing House, Bucharest, 2007, p. 158.

⁵ Horia Sima, *op.cit.*, pp. 173-186.

the Frankfurt/Oder region, major Wolf. The latter came to Berkenbrück accompanied by two police agents. The legionaries were not allowed to leave the house not even to go out for a walk. Then an investigation at the SD headquarters in Berlin was initiated⁶.

From the members of the Berkenbrück group, Constantin Stoicănescu, a close collaborator of the “Commander” was believed to have helped Sima flee. Stoicănescu revealed that Sima was in Italy to contact Mussolini but claimed that he did not know his exact location. The *Gestapo* mission in Rome could not carry out any actions on Italian territory and therefore, major Wolf accompanied by Stoicănescu went to Rome to convince Sima to return to Germany. Stoicănescu took Wolf to where Mihail Enescu lived but could not find Sima there. Enescu was asked to inform the “Commander” to return to Berlin because his departure made the relations between the legionaries and the Nazis even worse.

Sima did not comply with the warnings and refused to voluntarily return to Germany. Moreover, he continued to try to meet Mussolini. But the *Duke* was not willing to fight with Hitler because of Sima and ordered the Italian police to resolve the issue of the “Romanian legionary”. On 26 December 1942, Mario Appelinus invited Sima to his house to have him meet a close collaborator of Mussolini. However, that was a trap. Sima was arrested by the chief of the police in Rome, quaestor Senise. Only Sima suffered from the whole operation, the other legionaries living in Italy and involved in his stay in Rome were left unharmed and were not fired from their jobs.

Sima was taken to the airport where he was taken over by Ahrens, the representative of the German police responsible for the legionaries. On the evening of 27 December, Horia Sima was again in Berlin at the SD headquarters at 8 Alexanderplatz⁷.

The gesture of Horia Sima came in a totally unfavorable moment for the general state of mind of the Axis’s leaders. In Stalingrad, the Soviet army had defeated the German offensive, while the Allies had landed in Northern Africa and were completing the final assault to remove the German-Italian troops from the continent. Ion Antonescu reacted radically when he found out about the departure of Horia Sima. In the first days, it was not known which route he would take, and it was believed that he would come to Romania to prepare a “revolution” in line with the rumors that had been circulating after the “rebellion”. The immediate measure taken by the marshal was to imprison all the known partisans of Sima in the camp in Târgu Jiu. At the diplomatic level, he instructed the Romanian military attaché in Berlin, general Ion Gheorghe, to make thorough inquiries about the “free legionaries” that were still living on the territory administered by the Reich⁸. Later their names were given to the German authorities and they ended up in camps.

The Berkenbrück group was taken to the SD headquarters in Berlin and detained in the building’s basement without being allowed to talk among them.

⁶ Viorel D. Trifa, *Memorii, op.cit.*, p. 88.

⁷ Horia Sima, *Prisoners of the Axes’ Powers*, cited works, p. 188-191.

⁸ Gheorghe, Ion, gen., *An Unhappy Dictator: Marshal Antonescu (Romania’s path toward the satellite state)*, Bucharest, Machiavelli Publishing House, 1996, p. 276.

Vasile Iasinschi, Constantin Stoicănescu and Ilie Smultea (close collaborators of Horia Sima) were questioned by SS general Müller. The Germans did not treat the legionaries with violence and they only asked them about the circumstances of Sima's flight and whether they knew what he was going to talk to Mussolini about. Stoicănescu was divided from the group as he left on 22 December with major Wolf to Rome to search for Horia Sima. On the following day, 23 December, the Berkenbrück group was taken to the train station in Potsdamer Platz in Berlin and put on a train in the direction Weimar. From there they were transported to the Buchenwald camp. However, they were not put together with the common prisoners, but in a house built in the forest next to the camp. Each of them had his own room but they were not allowed to communicate among them. Nevertheless, they did not respect the instruction because the bathroom and the dining room were common spaces. The building was surrounded by a two meter high wall and the legionaries were allowed to walk only from the house to the wall and back. On 23 January 1943, Constantin Stoicănescu was also brought there accompanied by Ahrens⁹.

The Rostock group received the same treatment as the "Commandment from Germany" after the departure of Horia Sima to Italy. On the morning of 19 December 1942, *Gestapo* forces and a company of soldiers came in the neighborhood where the legionaries lived. They were told not to exit their huts. Initially, 50 legionaries were arrested, among whom was Nicolae Petraşcu. The group members packed their belongings quickly and they were transported in buses to the restaurant "Sportplast" in Rostock. Towards the evening the second group arrived, led by Mile Leter. All in all, there were 130 legionaries. The following day, on 20 December, they were put on third class train cars and taken to Buchenwald. At first, they were detained in the camp but they nevertheless did not have the same status as the common prisoners and they did not wear the striped uniforms. They had the right to organize themselves autonomously and to wear their own clothes. However, they were not allowed to communicate with the rest of the prisoners. In the spring of 1943 they were moved to new barracks build in the small wooded area of Fichtenhaim, 1.5 kilometers away from the main camp. The legionaries were put in five barracks enclosed by barb wire fences, the surface of the complex having about 1,000 square meters. They were put to work and their assignment was to repair binoculars for the soldiers¹⁰. The other approximately 200 legionaries from the first group remained in Rostock at the request of the factories where they worked, which needed the work force. Their leadership was taken over by Gheorghe Costea, who was appointed in this position by the Germans¹¹.

The legionaries from the "Commandment from Germany" were not informed about the arrival of the other legionaries to Buchenwald. By mistake, the luggage of a member of the leading group was taken to the Rostock group. Realizing the error, a legionary wrote in a notebook found in the suitcase that the legionaries from Rostock were in Buchenwald. When the suitcase was finally brought to its

⁹ Viorel D. Trifa, *Memories, cited works*, p. 91-95.

¹⁰ Horia Sima, *cited works*, p. 199-204.

¹¹ Viorel D. Trifa, *cited works*, p. 91-95.

rightful owner, the message was also found. However, the Berkenbrück group did not stay for long at Buchenwald. On 24 February 1943 they were informed that they would be transferred to Dachau, a town 20 kilometers away from Munich. The transportation took five days, by train, in groups of two. Again, the legionaries were not detained with the rest of the prisoners but were put in the building that served as prison within the camp. Each of them received their own cell and was given an allowance of 50 marks per month for personal needs. They were not allowed to contact the other detainees and for the daily walks they were assigned a courtyard especially built in front of their cells. After a while they were permitted to take walks in the camp's big courtyard and even to communicate with other detainees, with the tacit accord of the guards. The latter were nationalists from the countries occupied by Germany, who had entered a conflict with the Reich. The Romanian legionaries were given also a radio to which they could listen to Radio Bod. Thus, they knew what was happening in Romania. They were not allowed to communicate with the exterior, and their only occupation was to read the official newspapers and the books from the camp's library¹².

The group that remained in Buchenwald was constantly "refreshed". After the transfer of the 130 legionaries from Rostock, in January 1943 legionaries from various locations across the territory administered by Nazi Germany were brought to the camp. Thus, even legionaries who had legal documents were detained because they were considered dangerous by the authorities. In Buchenwald were taken: Petre Ponta, Mircea Dimitriu (a student living in Berlin) and many others. In the summer of 1943 was brought to Buchenwald the group of legionary women run by Tiana Silion, whose fiancé, Emil Popa, was already there. Tiana Silion had been arrested by the German authorities after her return from Rome, questioned at the SD headquarters in Berlin and later detained in the women's camp of Ravensbrück. She had written several memoranda asking to be imprisoned together with the rest of the legionaries and in June 1943 she arrived to Buchenwald with the wife of Petre Ponta (who, although was German asked to be with her husband) and with the wife of Vladimir Klein (the student who had given his passport to Horia Sima in December 1942 to travel to Italy)¹³. On the night of 26/27 January 1944 the last of the 90 legionary workers from Rostock were brought to Buchenwald. At the time, all the legionaries from Germany were thus detained¹⁴.

Horia Sima was separated from the two groups. He was taken to the SD headquarters in Berlin on 27 December 1942 and was the object of an investigation run by general Müller. He was not subjected to any physical hostility; he only received verbal reprimands regarding the "putting in the stocks" of the relations between the Legionary Movement with Nazi Germany. He was also informed that his fate would be decided during the meeting between Hitler and Antonescu that would take place on 12 January 1943. However, nothing happened to him after that meeting. Later he was taken from the SD headquarters

¹² Ibidem, p.98-101; Chioreanu Nistor, *Romanian Legionaries at Buchenwald*, 2014, <http://miscarea.net/nistor-chioreanu-legionarii.htm> (June 2014).

¹³ Horia Sima, *cited works*, pp. 2-5-207.

¹⁴ Viorel D. Trifa, *cited works*, pp. 95-97.

from Berlin, joined by Traian Borobaru and taken to Buchenwald. Borobaru had been apprehended in former Austria while he was on a train on his way to the border crossing of Villach. The two legionaries were housed outside the camp, in a villa, just like the rest of the Berkenbrück group. Their conditions were the “bed & breakfast” type, they had a whole floor to themselves, with bedrooms and a dining room.

At that point, there were three groups of legionaries in Buchenwald, not knowing about one another. However, after the departure of the group led by Iasinschi, Horia Sima and Traian Borobaru were no longer held there. The Germans decided to have the two close to the capital and in April 1943 they were moved to Oranienburg. There they received the same comfortable treatment. They were not put in the main camp for common detainees but in the camp’s prison. The two were given six cells, including three bedrooms, a lavatory and a dining room. They were allowed to receive the official newspapers of the government, books from the camp’s library and even books from the outside, from Berlin. During the last part of their imprisonment, Sima and Borobaru were joined by archeologist Alexandru Randa¹⁵.

During the “camp phase”, the legionaries were casted by the Germans authorities into the shade. Practically they did not matter politically anymore. The legionary leaders were given bed & breakfast housing in the camps’ prisons and the rest of the legionaries from Germany worked in the camps for the German war industry. In Romania, the lack of information from the leaders caused a big confusion. In the summer of 1943, the “persecution commandment” decided to stop spreading any rumors about the fate of their leaders because they had not received any signals from them anymore. Even the police did not have information about the situation of the legionaries from Germany. As long as they were house arrested they had received information about them. However, when the legionaries living legally in Germany were also put in the camps, the Romanian authorities stopped having any information about them. The internal reports of the Police are full of wrong data, most likely fabrications or assumptions made by the police agents to justify their “operative field work” carried out on the territory of the Reich¹⁶.

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PEUT-ON PARLER D'UN INDIVIDUALISME CONTEMPORAIN?

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*Désormais, nous vivons pour nous-mêmes,
sans nous soucier de nos traditions
et de notre postérité
Gilles Lipovetsky*

Abstract: *Our communication defines the contemporary individualism in particular in the conception of Gilles Lipovetsky who speaks on the present time as an era of emptiness. The article presents some points of view of the philosophers where there is either praise or criticism of individualism.*

Keywords: *individualism, freedom, narcissism, hedonism, democracy.*

Le Dictionnaire Robert définit l'individualisme de la façon suivante: théorie ou tendance qui considère l'individu comme la suprême valeur dans le domaine politique, économique, moral. Il s'agit d'une indépendance et d'une absence de conformisme, d'un rejet des modes.

1. L'individualisme contemporain est défini comme un terme ambigu

La notion d'individualisme est assez ambiguë et difficile à être définie. Comme en général les mots en isme l'individualisme traduit une abstraction; Il s'agit également d'une tendance de la société, une façon de se comporter au sens psychologique, une doctrine philosophique si nous nous rapportons à l'hédonisme et même à une attitude non conformiste, voire anarchique. Ce terme pourrait évoquer aussi des aspects éthiques si nous nous rapportons à des jugements dépréciatifs concernant les comportements égoïstes. «On a associé à la notion d'individualisme les concepts d'individu, de personne, d'individuation, d'individualisation, on pourrait ajouter individualité, personnalité... et aussi par opposition les notions de collectif, de lien social ou politique. Fut posé le rapport de l'individu et de l'individualisme au désir, à l'autre, à la loi, à telle ou telle conception de la liberté (liberté-caprice du «c'est mon choix!», liberté réfléchie de la délibération et assumée de ses actes), de la responsabilité»¹.

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¹ <http://www.philotozzi.com/2007/11/atelier-philosophique-sur-lindividualisme-contemporain-71/> consulté le 1 juin 2014.

2. Quelques questions s'imposent:

1. L'individualisme pourrait-il être compris comme un progrès d'adaptation dans le monde contemporain dans un moment historique où l'on aurait moins besoin vitalement des autres?

2. L'individu est paradoxal. Car il affirme sans cesse sa différence, sa singularité. Faut-il alors s'étonner des problèmes que lui pose la relation dans le cadre de la société?

«Cette idée d'individu serait à défendre contre toute tentative qui tendrait à mépriser son originalité et sa différence, humilier sa dignité, le priver de sa liberté et de ses droits. L'individualisme serait ainsi congruent avec l'idée démocratique, qui doit faire respecter tout individu quels que soient ses origines familiales ou ethniques, sa religion, ses idées, son sexe etc.»².

Voilà pourquoi on entend par l'individualisme dans la société contemporaine une tendance de chaque individu d'être distinct de tout autre, original, épris de liberté qui désire d'être pris en compte, respecté dans son existence et accepté dans sa différence par autrui et par les normes des groupes auxquels ils appartiennent.

L'homme contemporain éprouve un puissant désir de liberté par rapport aux autres individus, il ressent toute loi comme une contrainte qui entrave sa liberté d'agir selon ses désirs. «Il tient pour valeurs l'épanouissement personnel, le souci de soi, l'hédonisme du plaisir et de la consommation, l'engagement révocable, revendique le droit d'exprimer ses émotions et ses idées, de vivre sa vie comme il l'entend et de se réaliser pleinement sur cette terre»³. Cette idée d'individu serait à défendre contre toute tentative qui voudrait mépriser son originalité et sa différence, humilier sa dignité, le priver de sa liberté et de ses droits.

Dans cette caractérisation de l'individu de la société postmoderne on trouve certaines traces de la conception judéo-chrétienne de la personne et en même temps des éléments de l'idéologie démocratique du respect des droits de chaque homme et de chaque citoyen. L'homme contemporain est aussi considéré comme sujet par la psychologie moderne, conséquence de la mort de Dieu diffusée par certains philosophes⁴ nihilistes qui le libère de certains tabous et lui permettent le libre choix de son existence. La première édition du livre de Nietzsche contenait une dédicace adressée à l'anniversaire de la mort de Voltaire Cette dédicace fut supprimée plus tard ainsi qu'un premier feuillet qui portait l'épigraphe suivante

² Ibidem <http://www.philotozzi.com/2007> consulté le 5 juin 2014.

³ Ibidem <http://www.philotozzi.com/2007> consulté le 18 juin 2014.

⁴ La forme critique de l'individualisme de Nietzsche est liée à sa notion de surhomme et de noblesse d'esprit, car il exprime la résistance que les consciences individuelles (les esprits libres) peuvent opposer à la normalisation sociale étatique et au conformisme ambiant. Ce non-conformisme n'a rien à voir avec l'individualisme étroit du "chacun pour soi et Dieu pour tous". Nietzsche voulait promouvoir une nouvelle noblesse, une élite libérée du fardeau des idées reçues et appelée à dépasser le stade communément appelé humain», *Humain, trop humain. Un livre pour esprits libres (Menschliches, Allzumenschliches. Ein Buch für freie Geister)* est une œuvre du philosophe Friedrich Nietzsche. La première édition, chez Ernst Schmeitzner, 1878 et a pour dédicace: «Dédié à la mémoire de Voltaire en commémoration de l'anniversaire de sa mort le 30 mai 1878».

dans laquelle il exprime son idéal de la libération de l'homme de sous le fardeau des idées reçues:

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«Pendant un certain temps, j'ai examiné les différentes occupations auxquelles les hommes s'adonnent dans ce monde, et j'ai essayé de choisir la meilleure. Mais il est inutile de raconter ici quelles sont les pensées qui me vinrent alors: qu'il me suffise de dire que, pour ma part, rien ne me parut meilleur que l'accomplissement rigoureux de mon dessein, à savoir: employer tout le temps de ma vie à développer ma raison et à rechercher les traces de la vérité ainsi que je me l'étais proposé. Car les fruits que j'ai déjà goûtés dans cette voie étaient tels qu'à mon jugement, dans cette vie, rien ne peut être trouvé de plus agréable et de plus innocent; depuis que je me suis aidé de cette sorte de méditation, chaque jour me fit découvrir quelque chose de nouveau qui avait quelque importance et n'était point généralement connu.

C'est alors que mon âme devint si pleine de joie que nulle autre chose ne pouvait lui importer»⁵.

Par conséquent, vu la complexité du sujet, l'individualisme reste un concept ambigu.

2. Eloge de l'individualisme

Côtés positifs:

- D'un côté il y a toujours un aspect positif de sortir l'individu des normes trop rigides, de l'oppression de l'institution et des règles imposées, de donner libre expression à la liberté et à la responsabilité de sujets qui choisissent et s'assument leur avenir, déterminent le sens de leur vie.

Il faut reconnaître toutefois qu'être solidaire dans un monde fondé sur la concurrence économique, sportive, affective c'est une illusion car «L'enfer c'est les autres» affirmait J.P.Sartre. «Autrui menace ma liberté d'individu par les hiérarchies inégalitaires de fait et la revendication de sa liberté à mes dépens. Il est donc pour moi un éventuel coupable dont je suis la victime possible. Et vice versa. La course à la liberté individuelle instaure un processus de victimisation, qui fait appel au renforcement de la loi, qui diminue d'autant la liberté individuelle de chacun. Ainsi s'instaure une société «libérale-répressive». Car je veux à la fois plus de liberté, donc moins de loi, et plus de sécurité, donc plus de loi».⁶

3. Critique de l'individualisme

- Un point de vue négatif concernant l'individualisme serait le sentiment de chacun d'être le créateur de ses propres valeurs, et de s'assumer le présent et l'avenir de sa vie. La conception de l'homme moderne d'être le centre du monde diminue le sens que l'individu donne à la vie en relativisant les lois imposées par la

⁵ Nietzsche, *Humain, trop humain. Un livre pour esprits libres*. En guise de préface, *op.cit.*

⁶ www.philotozzi.com/2007.

société. La conséquence de cette attitude est l'indifférence qui se manifeste dans tous les domaines mais surtout dans l'enseignement où l'on constate la perte presque totale du prestige et de l'autorité des enseignants. Le discours du maître est banalisé, désacralisé dans l'apathie scolaire faite de scepticisme voire d'indifférence envers le savoir résultant de cette hyper sollicitation, de cet excès des informations, des media et des moyens techniques de plus en plus sophistiqués. Dans ce cas, l'acceptation générale des valeurs communes devient de plus en plus difficile; la désinstitutionnalisation des individus affaiblit le sentiment de solidarité, d'appartenance à une communauté à une citoyenneté et rend plus problématique la coexistence des individus conscients de leur différence, de leur individualité. Cette attitude de l'indifférence ne s'identifie pas à l'absence de motivation comme l'affirme Gilles Lipovetsky, «elle s'identifie au peu de motivation, à l'anémie émotionnelle». Et l'auteur de «l'Ère du vide» continue dans ce sens: «L'homme indifférent ne s'accroche à rien, n'a pas de certitude absolue, s'attend à tout et ses opinions sont susceptibles de modifications rapides: pour atteindre un tel degré de socialisation, les bureaucrates du savoir et du pouvoir ont à déployer des trésors d'imagination et des tonnes d'informations».⁷

Toutefois, il ne faut pas négliger l'existence d'un certain égocentrisme qui ne doit pas être assimilé à l'égoïsme car on peut chercher son plaisir avec les autres, tout en ne nuisant à personne. Plus que jamais l'individu moderne, moins attiré par les institutions, a besoin d'amour qu'il trouve dans la famille-refuge, d'amants, d'amis, de relations avec autrui pour exister. Revendiquant son droit d'être différent, il se sent seul en relations avec les autres humains et attiré par la solitude, il cherche pourtant le contact avec ses semblables. Mais l'indifférence va au-delà des proches, le privé l'emporte sur le public, la dimension sociale et politique de la personne peut moins se développer. Avec le culte de la spontanéité, du présent, de l'authenticité, l'engagement est plus émotionnel dans diverses associations humanitaires et les relations sont éphémères d'où la prolifération des divorces.

*«On peut se demander si ce sentiment de liberté n'est pas quelque part une illusion, l'ignorance de ses déterminismes psychiques (inconscients cf. psychanalyse), sociaux, culturels, propre à ceux des classes moyennes qui dans la vie tirent leur épingle du jeu (analyse marxiste). La situation du marché de l'emploi et de l'insécurité sociale rappelle le principe de réalité économique (exploitation capitaliste), qui semble enfermer l'individu dans un processus de précarisation. L'exacerbation du désir par l'idéologie de la consommation (le bonheur par le toujours plus) semble tenir de la tyrannie de l'avoir plus que de l'accroissement de l'être».*⁸

Alors on pourrait s'interroger si le sentiment de liberté accroît celui de responsabilité, donc de culpabilité car si c'est mon choix et que j'échoue, je suis responsable de ma vie, l'échec c'est donc de ma faute (et non celui de Dieu, de ma famille, de ma condition sociale). En effet nous ne savons pas si le désir impératif

⁷ Gilles Lipovetsky, *L'ère du vide, Essais sur l'individualisme contemporain*, folio essais, op.cit., Editions Gallimard, Paris en 1983 et 1993, p. 63.

⁸ <http://www.philotozzi.com/2007>.

de jouir de tous les plaisirs de la vie n'accentue pas les sentiments désagréables de la fatigue de soi et ne nous mène pas à la dépression, à l'anxiété devant la mort inévitable face à laquelle nous nous sentons seuls.

A quel point la prédominance du narcissisme multiplie les blessures?

Dans cet individualisme contemporain il s'agit d'un ego surdimensionné ce qui le rend encore plus fragile parce qu'il est, à la façon de Narcisse, un être vulnérable: l'individu aime son ego mais il le hait en même temps. Il s'estime à mesure qu'il se dévalorise. «*A vouloir être et devenir tout, on finit par n'être presque rien, car on ne peut que se faire des illusions, confronté aux limites du réel et de soi-même*»⁹.

Selon l'opinion de Gilles Lipovetsky exprimée dans son livre *L'Ère du vide. Essai sur l'individualisme contemporain*¹⁰ «*le narcissisme est indissociable de cette tendance historique du transfert émotionne: égalisation-abaissement des hiérarchies suprêmes, hypertrophie de l'ego, tout cela à coup sûr peut être plus ou moins prononcé selon les circonstances, mais, à la longue, [...] le mouvement semble bien irréversible parce que couronnant la visée séculaire des sociétés démocratiques. Des pouvoirs de plus en plus pénétrants, bienveillants, invisibles, des individus de plus en plus attentifs à eux-mêmes, «faibles», autrement dit labiles et sans conviction, la prophétie toquevilienne ¹¹ trouve son accomplissement dans le narcissisme postmoderne*».

Un monde d'égaux fondé sur des ego rend perceptible la moindre différence, et permet que les individus s'interrogent: pourquoi l'autre et pas moi? Cette moindre différence accentue aussi le communautarisme, qui est conçu comme un

⁹ Ibidem, p. 4.

¹⁰ Gilles Lipovetsky, 1993, *L'Ère du vide. Essai sur l'individualisme contemporain*, Gallimard, folio essais, Paris, p. 20.

¹¹ *De la démocratie en Amérique* (publié en deux livres, le premier en 1835, le deuxième en 1840), est un texte classique français écrit par Alexis de Tocqueville sur les États-Unis des années 1830, dans lequel il décrit puis analyse le système politique américain, et expose les possibles dérives liberticides de la passion de l'égalité chez les Hommes. On pourrait considérer que Tocqueville fait œuvre de visionnaire dans ce qu'il affirme: "Il y a aujourd'hui sur la terre deux grands peuples qui, partis de points différents, semblent s'avancer vers le même but: ce sont les Russes et les Anglo-Américains. Tous deux ont grandi dans l'obscurité; et tandis que les regards des hommes étaient occupés ailleurs, ils se sont placés tout à coup au premier rang des nations, et le monde a appris presque en même temps leur naissance et leur grandeur. Tous les autres peuples paraissent avoir atteint à peu près les limites qu'a tracées la nature, et n'avoir plus qu'à conserver; mais eux sont en croissance; tous les autres sont arrêtés ou n'avancent qu'avec mille efforts; eux seuls marchent d'un pas aisé et rapide dans une carrière dont l'œil ne saurait encore apercevoir la borne. L'Américain lutte contre les obstacles que lui oppose la nature; le Russe est aux prises avec les hommes. L'un combat le désert et la barbarie, l'autre la civilisation revêtue de toutes ses armes: aussi les conquêtes de l'Américain se font-elles avec le soc du laboureur, celles du Russe avec l'épée du soldat. Pour atteindre son but, le premier s'en repose sur l'intérêt personnel, et laisse agir, sans les diriger, la force et la raison des individus. Le second concentre en quelque sorte dans un homme toute la puissance de la société. L'un a pour principal moyen d'action la liberté; l'autre, la servitude. Leur point de départ est différent, leurs voies sont diverses; néanmoins, chacun d'eux semble appelé par un dessein secret de la Providence à tenir un jour dans ses mains les destinées de la moitié du monde."p. 438

individualisme de groupe: je me rassemble avec certains, selon un critère d'appartenance, parce que je diffère d'autres. Ce phénomène est aussi saisi par Gilles Lipovetsky. Et voilà ce que l'écrivain philosophe écrit encore dans *L'Ère du vide*:

«L'ultime figure de l'individualisme ne réside pas dans une indépendance souveraine asociale mais dans les branchements et connexions sur des collectifs aux intérêts miniaturisés, hyper spécialisés: regroupement des veufs, des parents d'enfants homosexuels, des alcooliques, des bègues, des mères lesbiennes, des boulimiques»¹²

Une analyse du sentiment de la liberté pourrait également nous amener à quelques conclusions intéressantes sans avoir tout de même la prétention à l'exhaustivité: les individus ont chacun la responsabilité du choix de leur vie et ils doivent par conséquent s'assumer aussi les échecs et être conscients que l'impératif de la jouissance accentue le désarroi, le sentiment de solitude et celui de la précarité sociale et économique. On constate alors **le primat du narcissisme** dont parle Gilles Lipovetsky dans *«L'ère du vide, essai sur l'individualisme contemporain»*:

«loin de dériver d'une prise de conscience désenchantée, le narcissisme est l'effet du croisement d'une logique sociale individualiste hédoniste impulsée par l'univers des objets et signes, et d'une logique thérapeutique et psychologique élaborée des le xix e siècle à partir de l'approche psychopathologique p. 76.¹³

Tout s'explique selon Lipovetsky par la société de l'hyper consommation, une société narcissique:

La consommation narcissique peut alors entraîner un malaise diffus et envahissant, un sentiment de vide intérieur et d'absurdité de la vie, une incapacité à sentir les choses et les êtres. Ainsi, alors que l'immense majorité se dit heureuse on assiste à la montée inexorable du stress, des dépressions et des anxiétés. De plus, la société d'hyperconsommation n'a pas éradiqué la pauvreté et la précarité, l'abondance continue de se déverser de façon différenciée.¹⁴

Pour conclure à cette brève étude nous croyons que dans l'avenir l'individualisme ne cessera de s'affirmer comme une expression de tout système démocratique. Beaucoup d'analystes: philosophes, sociologues, anthropologues qui se sont penchés sur l'individu et sur celui de son rôle dans la société sont d'accord à remarquer que la société contemporaine est en train de vivre une sorte d'accomplissement de l'individualisme. Devant cet affranchissement des normes, de la religion de la tutelle de L'Etat, de la domination de la famille, du travail, l'individu est désormais seul face à lui, même s'il paye cette liberté au prix de la solitude, de la souffrance et de la dépression. L'individu devient ainsi un déraciné, un désocialisé

¹² Gilles Lipovetsky, p.21.

¹³ Ibidem p.76.

¹⁴ Interview de Gilles Lipovetsky: „La dimension existentielle de la consommation“ ITW réalisée par Boris Chabanel en décembre 2012, Grand Lyon, Direction de la Prospective et du Dialogue Public, www.millenaire3.com (consulte le 9 juin 2014).

dans une perpétuelle quête d'identité. Telle est l'homme de l'ère du vide que nous présente notamment Gilles Lipovetsky dans ses nombreux livres et essais.

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2. *Les temps hypermodernes*, Paris, Grasset, 2004. (avec Sébastien Charles), coll. «Nouveau collège de philosophie», rééd. poche, Hachette.

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4. *L'esthétisation du monde: Vivre à l'âge du capitalisme artiste* de Gilles Lipovetsky et Jean Serroy 2013, Gallimard, Paris.

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